

PREFACE.

AS we take up our pen once more on issuing a new volume of FAITHFUL WORDS, feelings of thankfulness to God are uppermost. For thirteen years we have been permitted to engage in the humble service of issuing our Magazine, and each of these years has aroused fresh and increasing interest. We have had abundant testimonies of good received through reading its pages, and our friends who so kindly write for it have neither grown weary nor threadbare, but, on the contrary, have been given freshness and zeal for the work. The circulation of the Magazine goes on increasing, not so widely as we could wish, it is true, but we trust to begin the new year with 65,000, having left off the old with 60,000.

The harvest is great, the labourers are few. Cries for spiritual help arise on every hand. Some seek counsel, some need care. Children and grown up people ask, "What must we do to be saved?" and "How shall we best live for God?" Some long for peace, some sigh for liberty.

Many patient and unknown workers in the harvest-field—toilers amongst the poor—continually solicit help in the shape of tracts and grants of our Magazine. We may, perhaps, stir up some to help in this direction by recounting an incident of last Christmas. A working man had, the previous year, distributed several dozens of FAITHFUL WORDS monthly in the poorest districts of the east of London. The people said they could not keep the monthly numbers clean, and preferred to subscribe for the volumes. Last Christmas our friend took about 500 volumes to these poor homes; each of these volumes had been purchased by the poorest of the poor, who had laid by, as they could afford it through the year, a penny, and frequently but a halfpenny, at a time, to secure the book at its close. Let it be remembered that in many of these homes FAITHFUL WORDS was almost the only book possessed! Better far than helping in giving money is that help which emulates the example of our friend. There are dozens of villages where the Gospel never comes, into which, by love and wisdom, it might be brought by a magazine. And it is ever the case that where people buy the Magazine they value it more highly than when they receive it as a gift.

So many a dear friend and companion has fallen by our side since we commenced editing FAITHFUL WORDS that our dear readers will enter into our feelings when we ask them, Is eternity your concern? How vain is a life spent—let us say misspent—for time! We do not now refer to the foolish spendthrift who casts away his golden moments, and dies without being rich toward God, but to the Christian who lives for himself, or for any other aim save Christ's glory. Take care of the moments and the hours will take care of themselves; live by the moment for God, and the days will return to you in eternity laden with blessings. If you are a young Christian don't be afraid of hard work. Very few Christians die of spending and being spent for God. The saying is, "It is not work but worry that kills," and if a Christian be in communion with God he will not worry, but will work bravely on and heartily for the Lord. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.



A WORD IN SEASON (see p. 82).

Faithful Words

For OLD and YOUNG.



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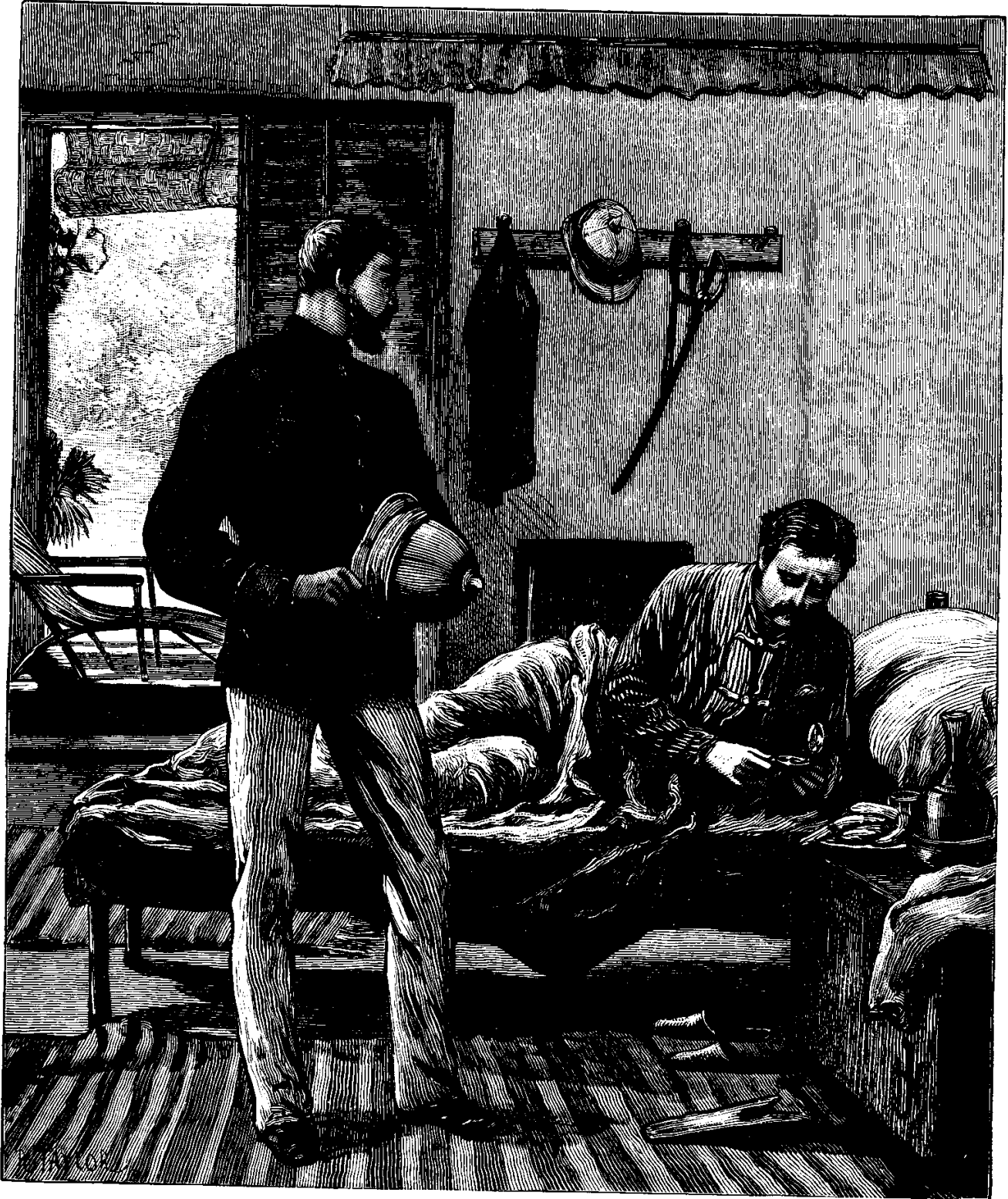
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FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE TIME HAS COME—I MUST CRY FOR MERCY.

DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

HOW many there are who refuse to close with the gospel offer of a free and full salvation! They do not mean to be lost, but are content to quiet their consciences by resolving to come to Christ upon their death-bed. To such I address the following true story.

I was a boy of about fourteen years of age, and in church one Sunday, listening to the clergyman, when he said—

“My brethren, just before I came to service this morning, I attended at the bedside of a poor woman, a member of this congregation, who was dying. I spoke very earnestly to her about her soul, and she listened with great attention. When I pointed out to her the danger of meeting her God unforgiven, she *cried for mercy*, and a few minutes afterwards she died. I believe she was heard and forgiven, and that she has gone to heaven.”

I may be misquoting the preacher’s exact words, but the impression they left on my mind was, that a man might live as he liked, and that on his death-bed he might *cry for mercy*, be forgiven, and go to heaven. As I sat in the church, I said to myself, “That is exactly what I will do, and I will enjoy life in my own way.” I deliberately formed this resolution, and lived accordingly. I joined in all the pleasures going on around me, but notwithstanding, I used to feel quite shocked when any one talked about the possibility of going to hell. “No, no,” I used to think, “I am going to *cry for mercy* on my death-bed.”

Years passed on, and I joined the army, and, in 1870, sailed with my regiment for India. I lived a careless, godless life, trying to forget the eternity which lay before me. However, the thought sometimes would strike me, “What will be the end of the life I am leading?” But Satan always prompted this answer in my heart, “On my death-bed I am going to *cry for mercy*.”

I was very fond of shooting, and used to spend a great part of my spare time out in the jungle with my friends. During the first

year of my life in India, I obtained leave of absence for a few days, got wet through while shooting, and returned to the cantonment suffering from an acute attack of illness.

I was living at that time in the same bungalow as one of our regimental surgeons, G., with whom I was on very intimate terms. When he came to my bedside to prescribe for me, I saw that he looked very grave, so I said to him—

“What do you think of me, G.? Will you kindly tell me honestly if you think I am going to die, as I wish to know?”

G. replied, with some hesitation, “To tell you the honest truth, I think that you are so ill, that unless you take a decided turn for the better within an hour, you will probably be dead in two or three.”

“Thank you,” I answered. “Now will you kindly leave me by myself, and come back to see me again at the end of an hour?”

G. left me alone. “And now,” said I, “the time has come of which I have thought so often; I must *cry for mercy*.”

I looked at my watch as G. left me, and noticed the exact time. After lying quiet for a few minutes to collect my thoughts, I looked again at my watch, and found that a quarter of an hour had slipped away. I was startled, but repeating to myself, “Now I must *cry for mercy*,” lay back on my bed.

My thoughts flew to my home in England, and I wondered how those I loved would hear of my death, and what they would think and say, and again I looked at my watch. I had only twenty minutes left! In deep distress I tried to think of the words in which I should “*cry for mercy*,” but could not think of any words whatever. Then I sank down upon the pillow, and realized to my horror that I was so weak from my illness that, do what I would, I could not collect my thoughts sufficiently to cry for mercy.

Once more I looked at my watch. Two or three minutes only of the hour were left me. I thought I should probably soon become unconscious. This roused me to a desperate effort, and raising myself on to my knees, I tried as a last resource to say the Lord’s prayer.

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I began "Our Father, which art—," but this was all that I could remember. I was too ill to recall what came next, and fell down upon my bed in anguish, fully realizing that on my death-bed it was *too late to cry for mercy*.

It pleased God, in His love, to restore me to health and strength, but, through His mercy, I thought no more of repenting on a death-bed.

After some years had passed, I found myself again in England. When staying in the country I was induced to attend a mission service in a neighbouring village, and there heard the Gospel of a free and full salvation preached by a cousin of my own. He pointed out that 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' and that if any man came as a sinner to Christ, believing in Him, and trusting in Him, that that very moment Christ would receive him, however vile and sinful he might be, and would give him eternal life. "Now," cried he, "is the accepted time."

In a moment it flashed across my mind, "What folly to delay accepting this loving call!" Through grace I came to Christ then and there, and since that moment have been blessed with the knowledge of my perfect safety for time and for eternity.

Reader, the same offer of a free and full salvation is made to you. Whoever you may be, or whatever your circumstances may be, you may take the water of life freely, "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.)

After having read my story, can you risk the salvation of your never-dying soul by putting off coming to Christ till your death-bed? May the Holy Spirit teach you your need of a Saviour, and that "*now* is the accepted time."

E. H. F.

WHY ARE YE TROUBLED?

HAS not Jesus spoken, "Peace be unto you"? He Himself says, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" Whence arise these thoughts? They are

the clouds and mists of earth! See the living Saviour standing before you: He died to save you—He shed His blood to cleanse away your sins. Do you doubt Him still, or question His perfect work, or His perfect love? It is Himself who speaks, "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself." It is He Himself who shows to His troubled people His hands and His feet, once nailed on the cross for their salvation.

Lord, Thy hands and Thy feet were once nailed to the cross of wood for me! I doubt Thee no longer, I question Thee no more—I trust Thee fully. Thou art risen from the dead. Lord, I embrace Thee with my affections. Thou lovest me—how much I know not yet—but Thy own wounds proclaim Thy love to me. Lord, let Thy love silence every questioning thought. Thou hast said, "Peace be unto you! Why are ye troubled?"

THE NATURE OF THE DISEASE SIN.

SIN is not a passing complaint, but a constitutional disease. It is in the very man himself; he was born with it. Too many are inclined to regard sin merely as an infectious sickness, which seizes hold of us, and not as that terrible indwelling thing which corrupts man's whole moral self.

No human efforts can remedy this constitutional fault, the only salvation is in the death of Him who died for us. God condemned sin in the flesh.

A WORD TO SHEPHERDS.

THERE is all the difference possible between leading and driving the sheep. It is the difference between going before and following. The Christ-like influence of the spiritual shepherd will lead the sheep. He must be the first in every good word and work.

Driving the flock is poor occupation. True, it may seem profitable here, but in eternity it will stand for less than nothing.

How does the Good Shepherd help you? By leading you, and most gently, too. Then why try sheep-driving? It is not like the Master, oh! shepherd of the flock of God.

A HOPELESS DESIRE.

SOME while ago, the newspapers contained the notice of the suicide of a young man. The world promised him much. There was nothing known against him amongst his friends. The cause of his end was a mystery.

Amongst his papers were found the following lines:—

“To sleep the sleep—the sleep of death!
No more to live in this world of care,
And grudge it not my parting breath,—
For without gold is little comfort here.

“No future life do I hope to have,
Nor wish for fabled paradise;
But eternal sleep, from all care free,
By an easy death is paradise for me.”

Many breathe the hopeless desire—“No future life do I hope to have!” and would gladly welcome the assurance from beyond the grave that there is nothing, and that when they die they will be nothing. How smoothly, then, would the way of pleasure and of sin run! “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”

Whether the *disbelief* in a future for the man who is without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world is growing, it is hard to say, but, unquestionably, the *doctrine* is increasing. We divide between the belief and the doctrine, since, let men say what they will, there is within the human breast a voice which, in spite of all reasonings, declares there is a future for *me*!

“I was about to put an end to myself,” said a dejected woman to an evangelist, the other day.

“That is more than you could do, poor sinner; you were about to begin life in a new state of existence, that is all,” was the reply.

Escape from the coils of the enemy of souls, poor sinner; seek salvation, for you need it. Yes! need it you do, for, if you die as you are, your eternity of endless misery will begin.

A TESTIMONY TO CHRIST FROM A YOUNG JAPANESE.

I WOULD ask you to pay a brief, but earnest attention, with prayerfulness of spirit, to the few words of one who for years past

was searching for Christ, and at last has found Him; or rather, let me say, of a lost child, whom the ever-merciful Father, by His lovingkindness and forbearing grace, found out and brought back to Himself.

On the 17th of December, 1880, after travelling over the distance of 11,000 miles, from the eastern extremity of the earth to the western extremity thereof, I found myself in the heart of your great metropolis. Two years had elapsed; and the same foreign sojourner, who at that time was “without Christ,” and knew nothing of the “glad tidings” from heaven, is now standing up amidst the happy sons and daughters of this blessed land to speak of Him who is so near and so precious to us.

The meek, the pure, and the lowly Saviour was not acceptable to me. My sin was too great. I could not trust Him, who thus kindly invited all the sinners of this world. But the Lord pitied me. He invited me to come to Him by day and by night.

With eagerness I got hold of many books written by infidel writers against the sacred Bible and against Christianity, and perused them with certain relish. I joined also a society in London, which met every alternate Sunday evening, with the object—as it was called—of spending the dull Sunday evenings in a lively and more profitable way.

All this, I feel sure, was the work of devils, but, like the work of devils, it was soon destroyed by the power of One, who is superior to all in love, as well as in strength.

After a time there arose a curiosity in me to know by my own effort and enquiry what kind of a book this Bible, against which I had read and heard so much, could really be. I read first the four Gospels, chapter by chapter, and day by day. That which was a mere curiosity at first, now gave place to a real interest, and an increasing desire to learn more and more. I proceeded then to the several Epistles, and went on and on with a humble spirit to be taught the truth and nothing but the truth. The whole of the New Testament was thus read through in a short space of time. Then I began with the Old Testament; but it was not necessary to

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finish the whole of it before God opened my eyes to the solemn truth—"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." I looked up unto Jesus, and in Jesus and in none else I have found my personal Saviour. I thanked God, and rejoiced "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

In Christ Jesus I have discovered the true Son of God, who came down upon the earth to live even as "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and to die a death of shame, in order to restore the lost sinners to His, your, and my Father. Verily, "He was wounded for our transgressions—He was bruised for our iniquities." Oh, what shall we do to thank Him for this wonderful work of self-sacrifice and love?

My conversion, as I think is the case with many, was a slow and gradual process. When I went for the third time to hear the earnest appeals of Mr. M., and when he said to us—the numerous undergraduates assembled before him at Cambridge—"Who among you, tell us, will stand up for Jesus?" I, or rather HE, raised up my right hand, and I exclaimed, "I will!"

Oh, it was a heart-thrilling moment—the final moment of decision—the beginning of a new existence!

When I came back to my rooms, the first thing I did, after thanking God, was to put down the following words in my diary:—

"Until this day I was dead. This day I was born again. From henceforth I shall be ready to fight any battle under Christ's banner against Satan and all his hosts."

I WANT FOR NOTHING.

"**W**ANT for nothing!" Perhaps some of my readers will say, "Ah! there are not many who can say that." Let me give you a picture of the one who said to me, "I want for nothing," and of her surroundings. Enter with me a tiny cottage, with ceilings so low that there is scarce room to stand upright. The narrow mullioned casement shuts out almost as much light as it admits, and as we enter the room, the steam from the wet clothes drying at the fire rushes out into the cold fog of

a bitter winter's day. The damp has penetrated to the poor little bedroom, which we reach by climbing up the dark, ladder-like stairs which lead to it.

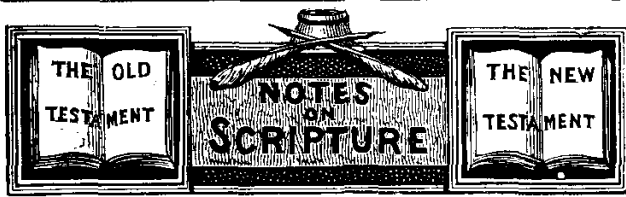
Here lies one whose frame is constantly shaken by her racking cough. Her emaciated hand is feebly put out to touch our own. A radiant smile lights up her wasted features as we speak of Jesus who loves her and will soon take her home. We speak of her sufferings, of her husband, of her family, of the little ones especially, so soon to be without a mother's care and love! Her eyes fill with tears, knowing that she must leave husband and little ones behind her in this hard world, and in poverty, yet she says, quietly and calmly, "I want for nothing."

Do you ask how such a thing can be? Ah! here lies the secret. This woman, so poor and helpless, is trusting in One who is able to meet all the deep need that surrounds her—the Lord who had told her not to be troubled about anything, for He would care for her.

It had not been always so with her; she had murmured, as others do, when hard times came, but one day she discovered the glorious Person who had thought of her and loved her—yes, loved her, even unto death; she learned that His blood had washed away her sins, and that she was fitted to enter those gates, the very material of which speaks of stainless purity—the gates of pearl. God had shown her that she was utterly unable to make herself fit to enter there; she knew that there was an eternity before her, to be spent either in heaven or hell. She fled to Christ and found pardon and peace, and, believing in Him, was given joy unspeakable and full of glory. The light of the glory was so near and so real to her, that she felt no need, only peace and joy. The Lord's bright presence enabled her to say in reality, "I want for nothing." o.

YOUR RELIGION.

SEE to it, that yours be a religion that will make your daily life savour of eternity. Too many christians are busy with the outside of things; we want more eternity, eternity, eternity!



An Exhortation and a Warning of Our Lord.

OUR PERSONAL REGARD FOR HIMSELF.

LET your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." Such is the position and character to which the Lord exhorts us.

Girded about, an eastern servant is in no idle attitude; his long garments are gathered up about him, and he is ready for his master's call. The loins are figurative of strength, the girdle bound about them braces up its wearer; so, we may say, a believer, who is braced up in desires for Christ, is practically ready for his Lord's return.

Every believer is made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, through God's grace, but practical readiness for the Lord at His coming is dependent on our love to Christ. No believer can wear the girdle for another—each must have his loins girded about for himself. Solemn, then, is the exhortation of our Lord to us each one, "Let your loins be girded about."

In the East, in tent life, the lights are usually kept burning at night time; in the palace, in its lord's absence, the lights burning brightly bear witness that a welcome awaits him.

How will the Lord be welcomed by us? What is the light we keep burning for Him? The light is for His eye, let us remember. Does our heart say, "Even so, Lord Jesus," in response to His word, "Surely I come quickly"? If so, a heart-welcome of ours awaits our Lord at His coming.

The eastern lamp needs constant trimming, frequent filling with oil, frequent tending of the wick; its light cannot be turned up like a gas-burner, as some almost think they can produce their spirituality

when occasion may require. Each servant is responsible to his Master for the state of his own lamp. Being filled with the Spirit will alone enable us to maintain the bright witness of welcome to our coming Lord, who says to us, each one, "Let . . . your lights be burning."

Love is a good watchman. A hired attendant may fall asleep by a sick bed-side: love keeps the eyes of the true nurse open. We may be able to explain the meaning of texts about the Lord's coming, but it is love to Him that keeps us waiting for Him. The love of a faithful servant is beautiful indeed, even in a house on earth; highly esteemed is this faithful love to Himself by our Lord and Master in heaven. He will never forget it. The truly faithful servant waits and watches for Him, even though He come not till the third watch. Not a moment's delay by the faithful servant precedes the opening of the door upon his Master's knock. Ready in heart, ready with welcome, they open unto Him immediately.

"Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching." Blessed now as His eye rests upon them, blessed by and by, as He shall gird Himself, feast them, and serve them. Let us heed our Master's words, "Ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."

OUR REGARD FOR HIS INTERESTS.

Our personal attitude towards our Lord affects our regard for His interests on earth. Those who love Him will do for Him that which He loves to be done. He has made us stewards for Him to give their portion of meat, in due season, to His household, according as He has given to us. The weary need rest; the anxious, peace; the broken-hearted, comfort. Sinners need the gospel; the sick, visiting; the aged and the poor, comforting. Need, deep need, exists everywhere: in city, in village, in the rich man's house, in the humble cottage. Who, then, is that faithful and wise steward, faithful to the Lord to dispense His gifts, wise

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towards His household to dispense according to the need of souls? There is little time left in which to serve Him. The Lord is coming: He is very near. Rest and glory are close at hand for His people. Let us live for Christ's interests while we may; serve Him in serving His people, love Him by caring for what He loves.

Remember, fellow christian, that if you are enriched with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, you are favoured with the peace thereof, not only for yourself, but as a steward of that grace, that you may feed poor longing souls with His divine word of pardon. If you have been taught by God of Christ in His present glory, and of the christian's heavenly position with Him, you are a steward of this grace to convey to others this blessed word of God. Every good thing in God's gospel, which we possess, we hold as stewards of our Lord for His interest and glory, to communicate thereof to others.

But the meat must be given in due season, for the food a child needs is not that which the young man or the father in Christ requires. The wisdom necessary to a steward is gained by knowing the mind of his lord, and we must needs be frequently with our Lord to receive His instructions relative to His household.

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing!" Ponder over those words. How sweet, how encouraging they are. Labour on, spend and be spent for Christ. You have only one life to give to Christ on earth; let Him have every moment of it. Yet why does the Lord say servant instead of servants? Why does He speak to us in the singular? Is it not that but one here and one there of His servants are truly faithful and wise in the work to which He has called us all?

THE SOLEMN WARNING.

Let us also give heed to our Lord's warning of the servant saying in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming." No change of doctrine in christian truth relative to Christ's coming is necessary in order to produce this change in the servant's heart. Decay begins

at the centre—by and by the evidences of spiritual decay declare themselves in worldly ways; but He who searches the heart says, "I have against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." If we cease to love Christ fervently, we lose the love of His coming, whatever our doctrines may be, and we become like the sere leaves of autumn, instead of the fresh green growth of spring. Dryness of soul and deadness of soul are closely allied to each other.

Now mark the downward course of faded love to Christ from the starting point. Self asserts itself; the work of the Lord is forsaken; idleness ensues, and mischief follows; jealousy of others fills the heart that once overflowed with love to the Lord's work; the servant gives up his Lord's interests and betakes himself to his own, strives with his fellows, and, as a result, begins to beat the men-servants and maidens. Heavy are the blows that fall from the tongues of idle servants, and dark is the picture the Lord portrays of these idle men striving for the mastery, while sinners are perishing and saints are starving.

One more lower step, and mark it well. The idle servant begins to eat and drink; he is self-indulgent; ease and self-pleasing surround him; and his jealous heart wraps itself about in garments of self-gratification.

Yet one last word. It is the downfall of the servant: he is drunken—he wallows in his own shame, a spectacle to the world.

Christ is near: even this day He may come. Have no to-morrow but glory, no to-day but His return. Blessed are those servants whom He shall find doing His will, ready with a welcome, and waiting for Him!

WORDS BY THE WAY.

"THE *dead* in Christ shall rise first." This is His way: He will give the first glory to those who passed through death's gateway. He will give them the priority. But it will be a very short start, for we, too, which are alive and remain till His resurrection-voice is heard, shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

FAST ASLEEP.

HERE is our little russet-coloured friend fast asleep: it is hard indeed to awake him. The children will throw him up, and catch him in their hands, but on, on he sleeps unconcernedly. They will straighten him out of his ball shape, but he heeds them not; on he sleeps. Really, it seems as if almost anything can be done to our pretty little dormouse without awaking him, so cozily is he curled up in his warm fur.

Ah! it is winter! It is the cold that has enwrapped him in this deep sleep. Lay him out before the fire, and see how soon he will thaw into a bright, cheery existence.

Why do we speak of our little dormouse? Well, christian friend, it is because, may be, that amongst our readers there is a believer curled up, as it were, in his own fur, and fast asleep. What is to be done? Such need awaking, for is it not written, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead"? (Eph. v. 14), and a christian asleep is, to all outward appearance, a dead sinner. He is bidden first to awake, and then to leave the company in which he is found.

But what is to be done? Try violent measures? No, such will avail little. Here is the awakening secret—lay him out before the fire, get him into the warmth, and then instead of being selfishly taken up with his own things, he will become diligent in love to others.

What is it to be thus rolled up? It is simply being absorbed by our own interests, selfishness, and self-occupation. Fill the heart with Christ, and His love will constrain His followers to do as He did.

THE ECHO.

I STOOD before some towering rocks and called my child's name. The echo answered that dear name, and then all around there arose a repetition of the name I loved to hear.

The evangelist is but a voice; he repeats the name of Jesus till the hard heart hears and echoes back its sweetness; and again others take up the name, and call from one to another: "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!"

The Pharisees.

A PHARISEE! What strange feelings arise within us as we repeat the title—Pharisee! Not pleasant ones either—for nobody now-a-days regards the bearer of it with esteem, but in the times of our Lord the Pharisee was held in the highest religious honour by the people of Israel.

Our picture of him, lifting up his hands in prayer at the corner of a street in the midst of the crowd of people, helps us to form a clear idea of what this truly wonderful being was like—for wonderful he really was, at least, judging from the standpoint of the ideas of the western part of the world.

Imagine the gay street of a busy city at about the hour of evening prayer, which would be three o'clock in the days of which we speak. The people are in full throng, when a gentleman of dignified mien, attired in flowing garments fringed with blue, crosses the road. Before he reaches the other side of the narrow street the hour of prayer arrives; at once he draws the corner of his garment over his head in such a way as to have the blue fringe hanging over his eyes, lifts up his hands towards the synagogue, and, utterly unconcerned as to the presence of the people, repeats his prayers.

The working men near him are profound in their respect. One lowers his tools from off his shoulder and regards with greatest reverence the holy man, while another stops with the load upon his shoulder to do him homage. Two gaily dressed young women observe him through their thin veils with mingled feelings of admiration and amusement; for, though they know it is the correct thing to look upon the holy man with awe, yet, worldly and fashionable as they are, they do not quite accredit these devotions performed in public. The children are half frightened, half wonder-struck. A travelled Greek passing by beholds him with curiosity, for he has heard of the people of Judea, and the name of Him whom they worship, but never in his own heathen land has he seen any man so utterly proud, so vainly-satisfied as this gentleman, the Pharisee.

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THE PHARISEE.

Now let us examine him a little more carefully. Look at the little square box on his forehead ; see also another upon his left arm. They are both bound to their place by a long strip of leather. What can they be ? Hardly ornaments ! What, then ? They are phylacteries, or frontlets. Inside these strange little boxes, of about an inch square, are written certain passages of scripture. I have one now before me, such as the Pharisee of our Lord's times wore. Do you say, "What an odd thing to wear ? Well, in the East, charms are worn, which, it is supposed, prevent evil influences from hurting the person who bears the amulet or charm—and, indeed, religious charms are worn by people in our own land with the same foolish, nay, wicked, notion. Charms are the fruit either of devil-worship or of superstition.

Do you think God meant that His people should wear these frontlets ? This is a disputed point ; but it would seem by the plain words of the texts that God intended a spiritual thing, and that as the spiritual meaning of His word failed in Israel, they adopted the letter only, and that placed on their heads and not written in their hearts. But more about this by and by.

When God brought Israel out of idolatrous Egypt, He said that what He had done should be "for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial (or frontlets) between thine eyes" (Exodus xiii. 9, 16) ; and again He bade His people, "Lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes." (Deut. xi. 18 ; vi. 8.) It is easy enough to take a Bible-text and put it before us, and yet all the while to have our hearts far, far from God ; and the Lord Jesus said of these Pharisees, with their phylacteries, "Do not ye after their works : . . . all their works they do for to be seen of men : they make broad their phylacteries" (Matt. xxiii. 3, 5), for no doubt they had larger boxes on their heads and arms, in which the texts were kept, than other Jews, and they wore them almost at all times, while the other Jews used them only at the time of prayer.

Our Pharisee is lifting up his hands. This is the attitude of supplication, as we read in 1 Tim. ii. 8, and in many passages of the Old Testament, one of the earliest being Moses spreading out his hands towards heaven, when supplicating God at Pharaoh's request. (Exodus ix. 29.) In various Psalms the lifting up of the hands is spoken of ; for example, see Psalm cxxxiv. 2. It is a figurative expression for prayer, just as St. Paul says, "I bow my knees."

Prayer should be observed at fixed seasons as well as be made to God constantly ; but when parade is made of prayer, it is self, not God, we are thinking about, and the body only takes the attitude of prayer—no real prayer goes up to God. So when the blessed Lord saw the pretensions of these poor, proud men, He solemnly reminded them of God's words by Isaiah, "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." (Mark vii. 6.) Having in view such a scene as that we have portrayed, the Lord said, "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are : for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men . . . But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." (Matt. vi. 5, 6.) Let us seek for real speaking to God in prayer about what we really want—praying, and saying our prayers, are so very different !

A rabbi taught that as it was impossible, because of the necessary duties of life, and sleep, to meditate in God's law day and night, for the fulfilment of that text it was sufficient to wear the tephillin, or phylactery ! This is not unlike the idea of the Chinese, who turn their prayers round and round by a windmill, and imagine that the more times the prayers roll round the more useful to them they will be. Alas ! there is a good deal of windmill praying even in christian countries ! We mean *saying* prayers, and thinking such repetitions will do people good. But all who in their hearts believe God Himself hears prayer, speak to Him when they pray, and this faith in the living God does away

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with formalism. How closely allied are the vanities of praying to make a parade of oneself, as did the hypocrites, and of using vain repetitions, as did the heathen of whom Jesus spoke. The hardest heart we read of in the New Testament was that of the Pharisee.

What means the fringe or blue ribbon that hangs from his outer garment, the corners of which he has drawn over his eyes? When God had led Israel into the wilderness, He bade Moses tell them to put fringes upon the borders of their garments, and to put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue, and they were to look upon it, and remember the commandments of the Lord. (Num. xv. 38, 39.) It was in no sense a display for others to see, but a reminder to the wearer of the words of God to himself. But the Pharisee displayed his blue fringe, and hung it over his eyes while at his prayers, so that he might see the things around him through that colour! He enlarged the borders of his garments for all eyes to behold, quite forgetful that the blue fringe was for a testimony for himself!

We must leave till another occasion the account of their origin, and various other interesting things about the Pharisees.

Bible Subjects.

REDEMPTION.

WE will endeavour to enter upon a little Bible study with our young friends, and so fulfil the request of many. Let us begin with a subject—we shall find a profitable and practical one in redemption.

Both in the New and Old Testaments we find redemption; in the New, its plain doctrines; in the Old, types and figures of the doctrines. As is the safe plan, we will go first to the plainly-expressed truths, next to the pictures or illustrations of them. If we attempt to explain the meaning of one of God's illustrations, without first taking the plainly-given meaning of the truth which He illustrates, we shall be in danger of allowing our imagination to run its course; and, as a

result, may find ourselves falling into some false doctrine, some wrong thoughts of God.

For our subject we need keep before us the redeemer, the ransom, and the redeemed.

The redeemer is the person who buys out what another has acquired; the ransom is the price paid; the redeemed what has been purchased.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Redeemer. The price paid for our redemption—the ransom—is spoken of in the following verses: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give HIS LIFE a ransom for many." (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45.) "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave HIMSELF a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times." (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) And again in this passage, which, though it does not give the word *ransom*, states what it is, "redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) HIS LIFE, HIMSELF, HIS BLOOD, are thus spoken of as the price paid for our redemption.

Observe the precious ransom was bestowed of His own voluntary will; the Lord came to give His life, and He gave Himself. Thus not only is the priceless gift present to our eyes, but also the boundless love that bestows it.

In the verses quoted, the context in each case will help us to see why His life, Himself, His blood, are variously mentioned as the ransom, or the price by which we are redeemed.

When the Lord spoke of His coming to give His life as the ransom, the end of His ministry on earth was near; He had ministered to man for some years. He had fed the hungry, healed the sick, and taught man about God, and the end of His life-service was at hand. But His blessed mission from heaven to earth was not His life-service only; that would not have effected our redemption; His serving man in His life would not redeem man. The only price at which we could be released from sin's captivity and doom was that of His own life. It was necessary that He should die—should surrender His life—to ransom us.

The blessed Lord in His life-ministry re-

lieved men from much of the suffering and sorrow sin had brought into the world; but God hates sin *as sin*—it is utterly contrary to His holy nature—and by no means short of Christ's giving up His own blessed life could satisfaction be made to God.

In the next passage we read that there is "one Mediator between God and man—the Man Christ Jesus." Here God and man are presented to us: the holy God, sinful man; the Man Christ Jesus stands between the two—between God and the human race. No other mediator does the Bible speak of between God and man save the incarnate Son, the Man Jesus our Lord.

But it is the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for man, blessed be His name—Himself in all His perfection, and nothing less is the ransom price for guilty sinners.

He gave Himself not merely for the Jews, but the Gentiles also, a ransom for all, and the price He paid by the gift of Himself stands before God as of such value, that whosoever pleads this gift shall be redeemed.

The testimony hereto is being borne now in these Gospel times of grace, the joyful-news is being spread abroad over the earth, that the Man Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the ransom for man. Let us seek to witness to this great fact with hearts brimful of love to Him who has redeemed us; let us endeavour to spread the Gospel to every creature—to all.

"The precious blood of Christ" is ever a sentence of sweetness to every believer's ear and heart. Not all the wealth of the world could have procured our ransom, nor could its riches have bought out from the vain traditions of the religion of shadows one single soul. The reality alone could do this—the blood of Him who died for us. The blood witnesses His death—His actual death. "The life is in the blood thereof," say the Scriptures, so when we speak of "the precious blood of Christ" we speak of Him who has given His life, who has given Himself, the ransom.

We close this opening of our subject at this point. Will you search the New Testament Scriptures for next month on redemp-

tion, and try to classify the texts according to their different teachings?



It Seems Like a Cart Load.

DEAR children, I will relate a little of the work of the Spirit of God in a dear boy, aged seven, of whom I had the privilege to take care.

It was indeed good of the Lord to bring me in contact with this dear child, for I can rejoice with the Good Shepherd, who says, "Rejoice with Me, for I have found My sheep which was lost."

I had been with this little boy, whom I shall call Edward, for some months before there was any sign of God working in his soul; indeed he seldom spoke of the Lord Jesus, though he held His holy name in great reverence.

Edward's was a happy home, for—

"Happy the home, when God is there,
And love fills every breast."

I was first led to think God was working with little Edward when he spoke to me of an uncomfortable feeling—to use his own words, "It seems like a cart load." I explained to him that God was making him feel he was a sinner; that sin was the "uncomfortable feeling," and that only Jesus could take it away. Jesus says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.)

Nothing more was said for some time; but one afternoon shortly after he said, with much feeling, "Nurse, if you had ever such a little bit of faith, would it do? because I have."

I at once saw it was no light thing with Edward, and how glad I was! I think I shall never forget that afternoon! We spent it together, talking of the precious Lord Jesus, His sufferings and death, and how He delights to receive every poor sinner who comes to Him. Jesus says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." This little boy had come to the Lord, and was full of

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the joy of the Lord, which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it.

Speaking afterwards of the Lord, he said, "Nurse, I *know* He has forgiven all my sins."

I said, "How do you know?"

"Because I feel inside me He has."

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John v. 10.) The Lord, true to His word, had taken away this dear boy's load of sin.

Do come to the Lord Jesus like this little boy, owning your sins, and acknowledging that you have no power to save yourself. Oh, I do wish I could so speak of that blessed Son of God, and His power and willingness to save you, that you might trust Him now! This little boy, so full of his new-found joy, wanted to know how many more in the house were saved and knew their sins forgiven. Those who are saved themselves, if the love of Christ is filling their hearts, are anxious about those dear to them.

Once when little Edward was repeating the hymn—

"I can't help loving Jesus,
Since He has loved me so;"

as he came to the second verse—

"Perhaps He'll come to-morrow
To call His saints away,"

he said, "I am sure I should be glad to see Him here to-day. When I used to say that hymn I used to think, 'I don't want Him to come,' but now I do."

Dear child, if you do not know the Saviour's love—if you cannot say He is my Friend; He offers to be your Friend to-day. Do not let Satan deceive you. Jesus *is* coming, and the time is short before His coming. But for whom is He coming? Only those who are sheltered by the blood. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) Will He fetch you?

This little boy I have been telling you about, said one day,—



IT SEEMS LIKE A CART LOAD.

"Nurse, I feel I do love Him so little."
Yes, we do love Him so little.

"Not one thought, or look of love,
To Thee I've ever brought,
Yet I may come, and come again to Thee,
With this the empty sinner's only plea,
Thou lovest me."

Edward still lives, bright and happy, shining in his little corner, not keeping the good news to himself, but trying in his little way to follow Jesus.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good." (Ps. xxxiv. 8.) He has such a safe place for His lambs! He carries them in His bosom (Is. xl. 11); and remember "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12).

I AM GOING TO JESUS.

I WAS asked to go and see a little girl who was dying. I knew that she had been ill for some time, and had not many hours to live. As my companion and I approached the cottage where little Mary B. lived, we heard sounds of weeping. We found Mary's father and mother standing near her bed, unable to keep down the sobs that would rise. This was their only, their darling child, and the thought of losing her was very sad.

"Well, my child," I said, "and are you not sad to leave the world?"

Mary's face had been turned to the wall, but when I spoke to her she turned to me, her whole countenance radiant with heavenly joy. "Ah, no," she said, "I am so happy, for I am going to Jesus."

My dear little readers, if you were going to die, would you be happy too? Would you be willing to enter eternity so fearlessly?

Ah, you need not fear; Mary was a little child like you, sinful and failing, but she believed that Jesus had washed all her sins away, and that when she died she would go to Him, for He has said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR.

A NEW year has opened to you, dear children, and one year added to the eight, ten, or twelve you have lived makes a great difference to you. When people come to be fifty or sixty years of age, one year more does not seem very much; still, by the year that is gone, we have all come a year nearer to eternity.

The Lord will make you happy who come to Him—He loves to make children happy. Full well does He know what a child's heart is, for He was once a child Himself. He knows your trials and your pleasures. And because He loves you, He bids grown-up people "Suffer the little children to come unto Him, and forbid them not." The blessed Jesus welcomes you each one to His bosom, and there you will be truly happy. No love is so sweet, so dear as His.

In a little while He will come for all who love Him, and He will take them all home to the house of God the Father, where are many lovely dwelling places, and beautiful and bright things for all who love Him. Jesus will have everything ready to make His own so glad, and it will please Him very much to see all His dear people full of joy at home—yes, so very much that He Himself will be satisfied.

*Our English Bible.**THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM.*

SOME of our readers may have followed the history of our English Bible from the beginning, as it was traced in the short sketches which appeared in this Magazine last year. They will remember the strong opposition which the very idea of such a thing as the word of God being given to the common people, in their own tongue, had to encounter, and the dangers which threatened those who, not counting their lives dear to themselves, undertook the perilous task of translating it, and sending it abroad among their countrymen. We are now coming to a time in our country's history when the most serious opposition to the free course of the word of God through the land came, no longer from those in authority, but from the people themselves—those very "workmen, servants, husbandmen, and labourers" who had been forbidden, by the last proclamation of Henry the Eighth, to read either in public or in private the translations of Tyndale and Coverdale. That it should have been so is a sad commentary upon the long centuries of ignorance and error at which we have taken a passing glance. To the people, accustomed to darkness, the light came as a thing to be feared.

One year after the proclamation of which we have spoken, every restriction upon reading or possessing the Scriptures in English was removed, and, within a short time, an English Bible—the version known by the name of the Great Bible—and the Commentary on the Gospels, by Erasmus, was placed in every parish church.

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A story is told of our boy-king, Edward the Sixth, which, if true, shows that he revered the Bible. At his coronation, which was celebrated on the Sunday after his father's death, with great pomp and splendour, in Westminster Abbey, it is said that when the boy's eye—he was but ten years old—fell upon the three swords, which were, as part of the ceremonial, carried before him, he asked, pointing to them, "But where is the fourth?" As those around him did not understand his meaning, he said, "Where is the Bible? The word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, ought to be preferred before these swords." We are told that the young king went on to speak to the nobles who pressed around him, each eager to do him honour, of the Bible as the only source whence he could hope for strength and wisdom to govern his people aright.

The language said to have been used by the young Edward on this occasion seems far beyond his years, but if the story is true, we at least see that he had right thoughts as to the responsibility of a king, and that he began his short reign in a spirit of humble dependence upon God, and a desire to know His will, as revealed in His word.

But anxious though he might be to seek the good of his people, the boy-king was too young to rule the kingdom, especially in such troublous times.

Of the sixteen councillors appointed by Henry in his will to take care of the kingdom during the childhood of his son, Edward's uncle, the Duke of Somerset, was made president. He, as guardian of his nephew and protector of the realm, was the real ruler, and governed until overthrown by his rival Warwick, who was also uncle to the young king.

Naturally amiable, and a great favourite with the people, Somerset sought to keep his place in their affections by repealing all Acts against heresy, enriching himself in the meantime by plunder from the monasteries.

The Act of Six Articles, sometimes called the "Bloody Statute," sometimes the "Whip with six strings," was immediately done away

with. This Act had enjoined upon all persons belief in those of the doctrines of the Romish Church which are most plainly contrary to the teaching of Scripture, and the penalty for disobedience was in some cases death. About the same time it was ordered that all images should be removed from the churches; the Book of Common Prayer was compiled, and by the passing of the "Act of Uniformity" all were obliged to use it. This was soon followed by the publication of a book of homilies—the word means an exhortation to a general gathering of people—and the "Forty-two Articles of Religion," which set forth the doctrines held by the English Reformers, and were made binding on all the clergy by Act of Parliament. By a second "Act of Uniformity" a person going to any religious service where the Book of Common Prayer was not used became liable to imprisonment; for, although Somerset gloried in being called the peoples' friend, he did not scruple to make all conform to his own thoughts of what was fitting in matters of religion. Surely amid all this planning and arranging for the worship of God those solemn words from the lips of Him who was the Revealer of the Father would have sounded strangely out of place—"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

The year 1549 dawned upon a distracted England. It was a time of terrible distress throughout the country. There was not work enough for the labourers; those who had been employed or supported by the religious houses were now homeless, for the monasteries which had sheltered them no longer existed. There were no poorhouses, no means of relief for the old and sick, and the country swarmed with poor folk who wandered from shire to shire, until the terribly severe laws against vagrants frightened them from the high roads to miserable hiding-places, where they must too often have perished, no man regarding them.

Those who survived, hungry and hopeless, lent a ready ear to the startling tales told by the homeless monks, as they assured them

that all would be well if they could but bring back again the good old times before these changes in religion, which were the cause of all the want and misery, came about.

As we look back upon this time we can see that the first Parliament of Edward had done good work in sweeping away at one stroke all the old persecuting measures, and better work still in freely giving the Scriptures to the people. Yet we can understand that many, amid such sudden changes, knew not what to think.

The humblest farm labourer might now, if he had but so much learning as would enable him to spell out the words in the old black-letter printing, read for himself openly the sacred books which but a short time before had been sealed to all but the rich or learned. This was an unspeakable boon, but there were many to whom it as yet meant nothing. Leave to read did not profit those who were unskilled in letters, to whom all books, Latin and English alike, were objects of reverence perhaps, but could be nothing more. Very rapid changes were taking place, and we may well believe that to the country folk in the remote villages it seemed as if all which they had been taught to hold sacred was passing away.

In some of the large towns, especially in London, a wild zeal for reform led some of those who now began to be called "Protestants" to many lawless doings. The name Protestant came from Germany, and was first given to those who protested against a law passed by a great council to forbid all changes in religion. Rumours came of churches being spoiled and plundered of their sacred treasures. Men said that even the great church of St. Paul in London had become a place for idle lounging, and gossip, and for the changing of money, and that the images of Christ and of the blessed Virgin were cast down from their high places and made of no account. Surely, if such things were true, the country-folk thought they had fallen on evil days, indeed. A panic, lest in the general wreck they should lose all they held dear, seized them, and the men of the west country armed themselves with such

weapons as they could procure, and began to form in wild, disorderly bands, demanding with one voice that Latin prayers should be restored, that they should be allowed to worship God as their fathers had done before them, that the images and paintings which had been torn from the churches should be replaced, and that all who would not worship the sacrament should die as heretics.

Perhaps it was not unnatural that untaught people should think there was some special charm, some effectual grace in words which they could not understand. Surely God, who is so pitiful, looked in His compassion upon these poor people, in their blind ignorance trying to rivet more closely around them the chains which had bound them so long.

At first preachers were sent to teach them, among them Miles Coverdale; but sterner arguments were soon brought to bear upon the misguided people. They gathered in wild mobs about Exeter, and held the town for six weeks, but were at last attacked and beaten by the king's soldiers, and Coverdale, whom we find preaching the thanksgiving sermon after the victory, was made Bishop of Exeter.

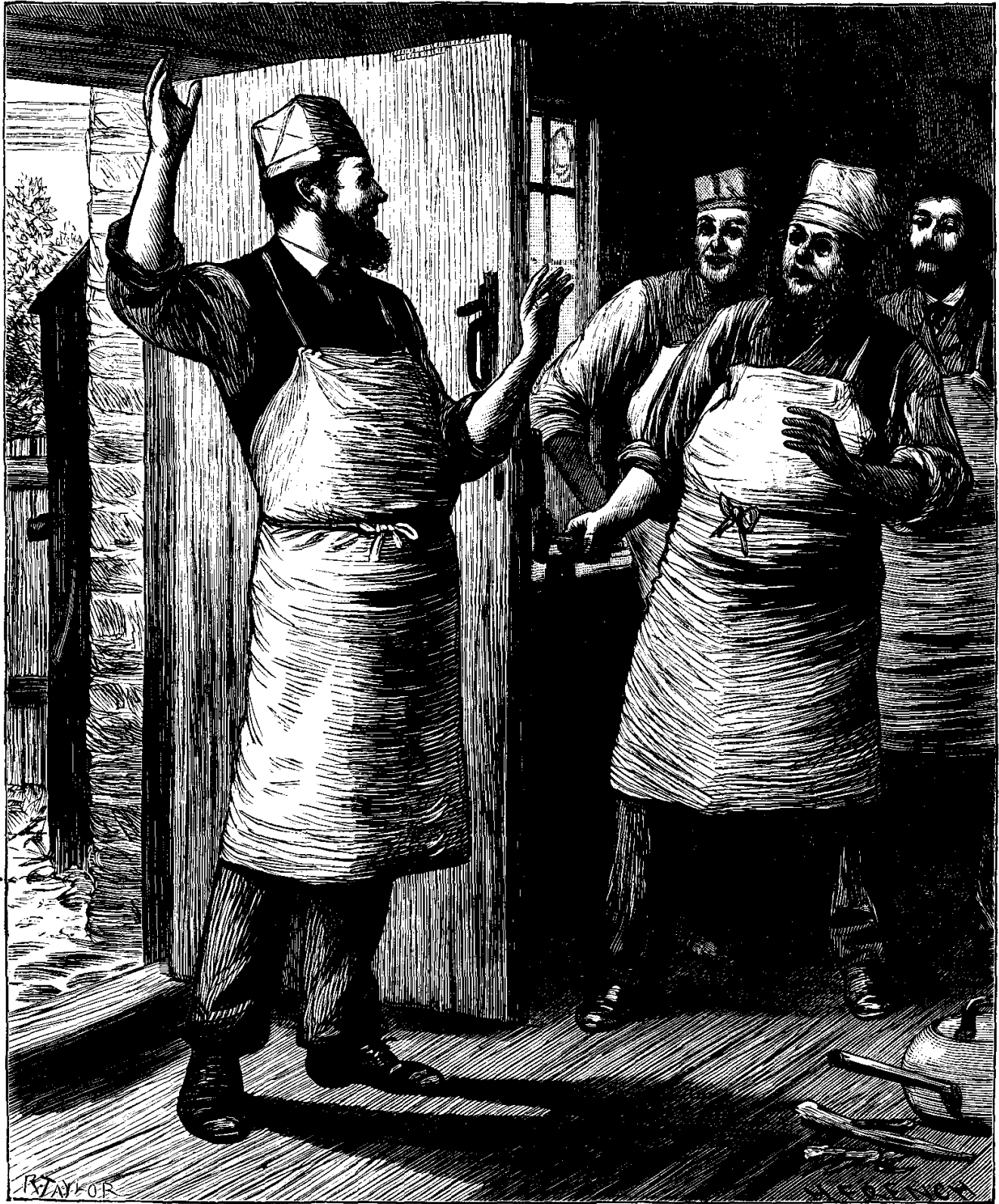
There were also formidable risings in Norfolk and in Cornwall, and much misery on every hand, with but little power to relieve it, though the young king showed a desire to care for the destitute poor, and was active in founding hospitals for the sick.

In his reign, too, though no new translation of the Bible was made, a great many editions were printed. It was a time of great freedom for the circulation of the scriptures, and for the preaching of the gospel; beclouded though that "good story of God" might be by the traditions of men, yet, for those who had ears to hear, it came as a message of peace and deliverance.

The time was short, how short none knew; alas for those who did not embrace the opportunity which that brief day of good tidings afforded! a time was coming which would show whether the word had indeed been received into the heart, or had merely fallen, as a pleasant sound, upon the ears of those who heard it.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE MAN WHO THOUGHT HE WAS FIT FOR HEAVEN.

*THE MAN WHO THOUGHT HE WAS
FIT FOR HEAVEN.*

ONE Sunday night I sat down and looked back over my past life, and said to myself, "If ever there was a man who deserved to go to heaven, I am he! What more could anyone do for salvation than I have done? I am never out of my place at church; my attendance at the Sabbath school is most regular; if a sick person needs visiting, I am always ready—a good husband, a kind father; conscientious in my dealings with others—upright and honest; such am I."

This was not the first time I had thought thus complacently, and in consequence had felt quite satisfied that, so far as I was concerned, all was right.

But, in spite of this, something within me seemed to say, "If I were you, William, I would ask God to show you if there is anything more needed than all this, and also to show you if you really are quite fit for His presence."

"Yes," I thought, "I will ask God to show me anything wrong in myself that wants putting right." So I went upstairs and said, "Oh, God, show me if I am wrong, and show me where I am wrong, if there is anything wrong about me." I was in earnest, really wishing to be right.

From that moment I began to see all sorts of evil things in myself, not only learning that I had done some wrong things, but that I myself was a vile, hateful creature, lost, ruined, undone. I also saw that I was all wrong in fancying that good deeds had made me fit for God. The more I cried to God, the more wretched I became. I began to see myself in my true colours, and felt, as God looked me through and through, that I was lost. Oh! I shall never forget the misery of those five weary months: I was too wretched to work, eat, or sleep.

I made up my mind to go to my religious instructor and tell him my case, and see if he could help me. I did so, but he did not understand me a bit. When I told him I was lost—a vile sinner, longing to know how to be saved, and taken out of this state

of misery, he evidently did not know what I meant.

Then I spoke to other religious friends, but they only said, "You must have committed some very dark deed that no one knows anything about, and it troubles your conscience."

My poor wife was quite amazed at me. She knew I had not committed any dark deed, but she could not understand how a good-living man could be so wretched about his state before God; she thought, poor thing, that I was going crazy.

But I had come to the light. For the first time for nearly forty years my eyes had been opened to see my true condition before God. I had learned that I was lost. My real state was laid bare before me, and I had learned that in God's sight my nature was as bad as that of the worst criminal that ever lived.

My fellow-workmen ridiculed me; they thought me out of my senses. Ah, those five weary months! I was almost distracted. Not a friend in the world that I knew who could help me.

How I longed for salvation, and for that which would deliver me from the "wrath to come." At last one morning I opened my Bible and threw myself down upon the floor, and cried from the depths of my soul in the words I read there in Psalm lxix.: "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul . . . O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from Thee. I am in trouble; hear me speedily; draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it."

I cast myself upon God, for nothing but His mercy could avail for my soul, and then went out to work, looking up to God for an answer to my cries.

Whilst at work, and still looking to God, all at once a sweet and holy sense of the pardoning love of God filled my soul. It descended upon me like dew from heaven, and a holy, joy possessed me. It was as though heaven itself filled my whole being. The Spirit of God had come upon me. I was so filled with happiness that I dropped my tools, ran straight into the workshop, and called out to the men, "The Lord has saved my soul."

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It was just as if a thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of my comrades. For months they had been teasing and bantering me, and I had been cowed before them, feeling myself a poor ruined sinner. Now I was as bold as a lion.

"Yes," I said, "He has saved my soul, and He is ready to save yours." This was too much for them. They all hastily left the shop.

Away I went home, and told my wife the good news, but she, thinking it was only a new phase of my complaint, wrung her hands, and cried, "He is now clean gone mad!"

Full of joy, love, and praise, I wanted someone to praise the Lord with me. "Well," I thought, "if my friend did not understand my case before, he will do so now."

So off I went to tell him the good news, but my joy seemed as strange as my sorrow had done before.

After that I told any who seemed likely to be interested, but no one cared for my story, or entered into what I felt, till one day venturing to say to a gentleman, for whom I was working, "I hope, sir, this new building will prove a good thing for you," he replied, "For my part, I do not think much about it; these things sit very lightly on me; I have something far beyond all this world can give."

"Perhaps he will understand my case," I thought. So I told him what a self-satisfied Pharisee I had been, and also how God had opened my eyes, and how He had made me see myself lost, and had saved me when I came to Him as a poor lost sinner. As I told the gentleman this, I heard him say, "Bless the Lord!"

My heart danced with joy. I had felt that I ought to praise the Lord, but never could get anyone to join me before in blessing Him. This gentleman gave me a book, in which I read of one similar to myself, and I learned that there were others who had passed through somewhat the same deep exercise of soul.

After this I was asked by a friend to go

to a prayer-meeting, and, when I told of the Lord's goodness to me, there was such a chorus of voices, saying, "Bless the Lord!" that I felt, "This is just what I want—christian companionship with people who can bless the Lord."

Now I can praise the Lord for saving me, and not only so, but for many years I have spent my time, when not at my work, in telling others of the Saviour.

Such is the story of one who, like many others, was quietly gliding into the lake of fire, self-satisfied and self-deceived. His case is that of thousands. Is it yours, my reader? Do you know what it is to be lost? Do you know what it is to be saved? You are either one or the other. In hell all are lost, and as the wail of those who neglected mercy rises from the abyss we hear them cry, "Is this mercy clean gone for ever?" and sadly, solemnly, comes back the echo, "Gone for ever." In heaven all are saved, and were you to ask, "By whom or by what?" their reply would be, "We are here wholly, solely, and entirely through the blood of the Lamb that was slain on Calvary."

Reader, to-day you are neither in heaven nor in hell, but to-day you are either saved or lost—fit for heaven, or fit for hell! Which is it? Have you hitherto thought yourself right? Let me persuade you, do as our friend did—go straight to God, and go to Him *now*, and say, "If I am wrong, O God, show me where and in what."

Let me tell you this, that, if you have never been to God as a lost sinner, you have never been to God at all. You may be even a preacher of the gospel, and yet after all be lost. Preaching will not save—good works will not save: there is salvation only in Christ. Good works, in a scriptural sense, flow from salvation, but never produce it. The grace of God first brings salvation; then teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. Salvation first; good works next. Reverse the order, and you will never get one or accomplish the other. For a work to be really good it must not be selfish. Test your good works, and see if they do

not proceed from a selfish motive, instead of a pure, unaffected love for God.

"We love Him because He first loved us," is the christian's motto; we serve Him because He died for us, is the power that constrains a truly saved man to work for Him. All other motives are worthless. The love of Christ is the grand power from which all true service flows. Is this your own? If not, get alone with God at once; cry to Him to open your eyes, and may He in His mercy save your precious soul 'ere it be too late—'ere you are found among a multitude who recount their "good deeds," and who hear the voice of Him, whom no hypocrite can deceive—"Depart from Me: I never knew you."

There were three distinct epochs in the life of this man.

For many years he was lost, and did not know it, and yet was quiet and undisturbed. This was the death-like peace of false security.

Then for five months he was wretched and unhappy because he knew he was lost.

Now for many years, saved through the finished work of Christ, he is filled with true peace and abiding joy, delighting to tell others of this great salvation.

How do you stand this moment, dear reader?

H. N.

A TESTIMONY TO GRACE AND LOVE.

THE night when she passed away I can never forget. As we sat around her bed, she would now and again speak of the joy that was filling her soul. We had been reading some scripture to her, and, when we had finished, we noticed that she lay with her eyes looking upward with a fixed gaze.

"What do you see?" I asked.

Raising her poor thin arms, with what seemed to us an unnatural energy and strength, she held them straight out, as if to receive someone, and said, "I see Jesus, *like that*."

She spoke no more, but soon afterwards quietly fell asleep, to awake in His likeness.

W. T.

HOW DO YOU READ GOD'S WORD?

DO not read the Bible through the spectacles of your own feelings, but read God's word as it is written.

"What does everlasting life mean?" said one to us the other day.

"What it says—everlasting," was the answer.

"Yes, but what is that?"

"Everlasting."

"Well, but I do not believe that; I can't believe it."

"Why can't you?"

"Because I feel I may be lost yet."

Our poor friend had his "I feel" spectacles on, and could not see the blessed word of God, *everlasting life*, through them.

People have all sorts of coloured spectacles, which they use when reading the word of God. They never dream of using them when reading an ordinary book, for the simple reason that if they did not read what the writer says, but kept altering his words in their minds as they went on, they would not understand his meaning.

But we must finish our story. Our friend saw this much—that in the word of God it was written, "hath everlasting life," and he did not believe it in his soul. What was he to do? Read the word through the "I feel" glasses, and not believe what God said, or read the word just as God had spoken it, and feel as a consequence the blessedness of the truth?

By the grace of God, he threw away his "I feel" spectacles, and took God's word as our God has said it, and now he rests on the word, and not on what he feels about the word. But as the result of faith he feels how blessedly true the word is.

How do you read God's word? As it is written, taking the very word as the living God has said it, or as you feel or think the words mean?

Ponder over this gracious scripture, "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John v. 13, R.V.)

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WINNING THE PRIZE.

AT a Sunday-school gathering the other day, simple prizes were offered to the children for running races. Amongst the runners in one race was a little girl, who had a bun in one hand and a mug in the other.

"Child," we cried, "you cannot run like that."

But she did not wish to risk her present possessions for the prospect of a future prize, so she clung to her treasures, yet would not forego the hope of gaining the reward. She entered the race, with bun and mug: what her fate was it is needless to relate.

That little child in the race is too much like many a believer, to be altogether forgotten by us. How many resemble her! Both hands full of the treasures of this life! and hence, though entered for the race, too encumbered to run, only creeping along to glory.

The thought of the value of the prize lends wings to the sinner. Only let the christian get a sight of Christ in heaven, and he will say, "That I may win Christ." Certainly every believer is won by Christ for the glory, but when we see Christ as our prize, whom we have to win, it makes the world as a racecourse to us, ground to be got over as quickly as possible.

COMING JUDGMENT.

THERE were three tramps loitering by the way; "Come," said we, "and hear of Christ now from yonder preacher."

"Religion won't do for us, master," said one; "we chaps live by lying."

"Man," said we, "you will have to stand before God's judgment seat and tell the truth there. What say you to that?"

"I know it—I know it will be so," he replied, "but I'll chance it—I'll chance it."

Oh, wayfarer to eternity, are not you like this tramp? is not your heart saying, "I'll chance it"?

I WILL NEVER BOW.

DEATH-BED repentances are not always real, and consequently are not always to be trusted, but it is seldom that the gospel

does not receive a hearing at such a time. A man may despise God's message in the days of health and prosperity, but when the world is slipping from under his feet, and he begins to feel that all alone he must face the dread realities of death and eternity, it is seldom that he does not wish to seek for help and comfort. Then the servant of the Lord is usually a welcome visitor, even though there may not be divinely-given faith in his message.

Not long since, a servant of the Lord went to visit a young man, a spiritualist, who was rapidly sinking.

The love of God and the work of Christ were laid faithfully before the young man, but he turned a deaf ear to all that was said. At length he roused himself, and with all the energy he could command gave expression to the enmity of his heart in the solemn words, "I will never bow to the name of Jesus." In the day of his strength he had sought after Satan's enchantments, and now in his dying hours he breathed out the spirit of his master. But God is not mocked, and He has written that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth," and, "the scripture *cannot* be broken."

Reader, be warned by this solemn story. There is nothing new in receiving communications from the unseen world; but these communications are not from departed spirits of men, as is supposed, but from demons. The wickedness of going to demons for wisdom has existed in all ages and in all lands, and the word of God prepares us to expect a great development of lying wonders in our times. Enmity to the Lord Jesus, and the yielding of the will to the control of another, are moral features of the evil in the present day, and are sufficiently plain indications of the real course of its character. Flee from spiritualism as you would from pestilence, for if you touch it, it will stick to you. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners"; and remember, "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus Christ. D. D. C.

THE LIVING GOD.

MAN is not his own master, and creation is not its own creator; man is a subject, and creation was formed by God.

There is a great effort, in these days of wonderfully-developed intellectual power, to do away with the idea of God—His existence is found to be a source of annoyance to the proud heart that cannot bear control. Hence, creation, with its indisputable witness to the skill and design of its Creator, is explained away by a variety of conjectures, which fail to satisfy any but their makers. The bold and unqualified statement in Gen. i. 1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," is intolerable, and why? Is it because science is able sufficiently to furnish a disproof? Can she show clearly that God did not create, and that "the things that are seen" resulted from natural causes, independent altogether of the power of a master-hand and master-mind creating according to a plan already conceived? In short, that there was no God at all—that His being was wholly unnecessary for the calling into their present condition these starry heavens and this fair earth? No; but such is in substance the effort of the talent of this far-advanced age. Absurd folly! "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness."

But lying at the root of all this foolish attempt to disprove creation, there is the spring of rebellion against God. The idea of man being subject to Him—that all my ways, nay, my thoughts, are taken notice of by Him, and that I must hereafter render account to Him, is just what my natural heart cannot bear. What right has anyone to look into the private affairs of my life, to investigate the secrets of my soul? Why should I not take my way according to my own pleasure, and have the sole control of my own matters? In a word, why may I not be my own master? Just because "*God is*," and because He has authority over all creation. Against this, man kicks, and hence the effort to deny, not only creation, but God too. "*There is no God*," so says the heart of "the fool"; and such is the language of the natural

heart all the world over. Yet, spite of all, "*God is*," and He is "*the living God*," and in knowing Him the christian finds his chiefest joy.

If God's existence be the source of the sinner's fear, it is the spring of the christian's peace. Do away with the idea of a God of love, and you rob the heart of more than life itself. Ah! it may be, that yon bold atheist, so daring in his blasphemies whilst in health and vigour, has, in moments of sickness, when the dark clouds are settling on his guilty soul, a lingering hope that, after all, if there be a God, He is a God of mercy, and that his well-merited doom may yet be mitigated in some unknown way, by that very mercy, which at other times he could afford to despise.

Whilst to the christian, the very thought of God revealed as light and love, known by the soul as God and Father, fills the heart with joy.

See that beautiful boy, the pride of his mother's heart. The most skilful physician in the place has just retired from his death-chamber; the last words that fell from his lips on the agonized ear of that nursing mother, were, "I can do no more." Science and attention have done their best, and, now, humanly speaking, all is over. But a throne of grace spreads itself out before her. On bended knee she sobs into the ear of the living God her cry for help, nor does she cry in vain. The fever abates—the struggle with death becomes more vigorous, the fight more equal, the foe is being worsted, he yields, he flies, and the child is restored to his mother. "With God all things are possible." When man proves his inability, God's arm is there to succour.

Blessed be His name, He is "*the living God*," and, if so, His ear is open, His hand omnipotent, and His heart always ready to bless.

True, He might have seen the need of permitting a different issue. It might have been for the injury of that mother had her boy been restored to health, and the living God might have not answered the mother's prayer as she wished. Nay, but in allowing

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the thorn—the messenger of Satan—to lacerate the flesh, He would have made His grace sufficient, and would have led the humbled suppliant to say, “Most gladly, therefore, will I glory!” Whatever be the way, God is good; for to deny me my own way is no proof that He does not love me. He is the living God, whether I am gratified in my desire, or whether that desire be taken up by Him and shaped in a better mould, so that with one that is divine I receive a lasting gratification.

Now let us look at three of the many occasions in which this expression comes before us in the New Testament.

1st. “Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and the true God.” (1 Thess. i. 9.) This is an instance of conversion. Idolatry had marked these worshippers; now they serve no dumb, inanimate stock or stone—they serve the living God. Not one bit of service is forgotten, nor one tear shed that is not treasured by Him. The prophets of a Baal may cut themselves in order to get the ear of their inattentive deity, and become the laughing-stock of an Elijah; but our God hears, and gives the very answer that meets the need of His children, in such a manner as most glorifies Him and best suits them. What a stay to the heart of the servant of Christ thus to know that He is the living and true God! May he labour on in faith and joy!

2nd. “We both labour and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour (preserver) of all men, specially of those that believe.” (1 Tim. iv. 10.) Now, this fact is much overlooked. A special care is taken of those who believe, yet the preserving care of the living God is not confined to His children. He preserves all, His rain falls, His sun shines on all. The field of the infidel is just as fertile as that of the saint. No favouritism is shown in these matters, seed time and harvest are promised to a world that is hoary in sin, and the seasons return with constant regularity irrespective of the condition of men; God is pledged to this, so long as the world lasts, and fail He cannot. Oh, for grateful hearts for

mercies so undeserved! But a shield of special preservation is thrown over the saint, and in a thousand ways, known only to such an one, does the untiring, unforgetting grace of his God appear for his help and comfort.

3rd. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Heb. x. 31.) Here His hands are hands of judgment. Ah, these are fearful hands! If Baal could not bless, neither could he curse. An idol is utterly powerless in either case. He need not be loved, nor need he be feared. But the living God, having power to bless, has power also to act in judgment. He who led His people, in grace, out of Egypt, chastened them, in holiness, when in the desert. He who acts in mercy to-day will be found in judgment by and by, and it is only a question of time. All your life long, dear reader, grace has lingered over you, and has spoken of pardon and life eternal through the blood of Christ. What has been your reply? Mark, grace must give place to judgment. A little while and that outstretched hand must take up the sword. Oh, hearken while you may. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

J. W. S.

CUT FLOWERS.

ON a bleak February day a citizen of a great city, in the midst of the roar of the streets and smoke of the chimney forests, suddenly found himself before a shop window filled with the sweetest of roses and other flowers. The sight was as refreshing as the odour was sweet, and for a moment the din of the streets and the smoke of the chimneys were forgotten. But while gazing upon the gentle reminders of calmer scenes and fresher air, he remembered that the roses and the mimosas were all cut flowers. Not one of them grew, or had grown, nay, nor ever could be grown in that shop window. Cut flowers, memories of other scenes—not growing flowers, part of the sweet scenes themselves. What a difference!

True spiritual graces are not cut flowers, brought up from the country to be shown

and sold; they belong to the scenes where they grow. The cut flowers seemed to say, "There are places on the earth where we grow; there is blue sky and a beaming sun, but not where we now are—in this shop window."

Cut flowers! Ah, this spirituality soon fades; it is only imported spirituality; it is not grown of the person who bears it. Perhaps it came with someone from a heaven-like religious meeting, to be worn for a few days; perhaps it was brought away from some interview with a truly holy christian on his death-bed, to fade away at home.

The Hyssop.

"THE hyssop that springeth out of the wall," of which the wise king spoke (if it be correct to regard the asuf of the Arabs with the hyssop of the Bible), is a familiar sight in Jerusalem. Among its stems doves frequently build their nests. Our artist tells us that he often witnessed in the "holy" city the scene he has depicted for us. The asuf has a pretty flower, and bears a berry like a caper.

Hyssop is first mentioned in the Bible upon the occasion of God bidding Israel take a bunch of it and dip it in the bason wherein was the blood of the paschal lamb, and then, with the hyssop, sprinkle the side-posts and the lintels of their doors in Egypt. This command indicates that hyssop was common enough where Israel was in bondage. God did not bid His people obtain some very rare thing in order to carry out His command, which should ensure their safety, but a common little plant, which was within everyone's reach. And thus in the work of redemption: the blood has been shed, and what we want with which to apply it is no great thing, but that which is at the hand of a child—the simplicity of faith!

The cedar of Lebanon is a figure of strength. The mighty and deeply-rooted tree and the hyssop are emblems of the great and the small things of earth. When the leper—type of the sinner—was cleansed (Lev. xiv.), both the great and the small

were dipped in the blood of the sacrifice offered for his cleansing, together with scarlet wool—figure of man in his greatness; scarlet being the royal colour of the Bible. A bird was sacrificed, and into its blood were dipped the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet wool, and also a living bird, and the blood was sprinkled by the priest on the unclean man.

The priest speaks to us of Christ who cleanses us from our sins in His own blood, and the living bird speaks of Christ alive to die no more. His blood has been once shed, and He lives for ever. The cedar, the scarlet, and the hyssop, dipped in the blood of the sacrifice, teach us the nothingness of everything great or small on earth, and of all this world's glory.

In the case of the purifying of any of the people of God who had sinned (Num. xix.), we again read (ver. 6) of the cedar wood, and hyssop, and the scarlet. They were all to be burned in the burning of the sacrifice, the ashes of which, with water, became "a water of separation . . . a purification of sin."

We know that all the things of this earth, and all the glory of the world, have no place before God since the cross of His Son. When God the Holy Spirit applies to our erring souls the sufferings of Christ for sin, this is indeed as "a water of separation" to us. The great and the small, and the glory of the world, what are they but ashes to us when His sufferings are present to our souls!

He who applied the purifying water sprinkled it with hyssop upon the person whose purification was necessary.

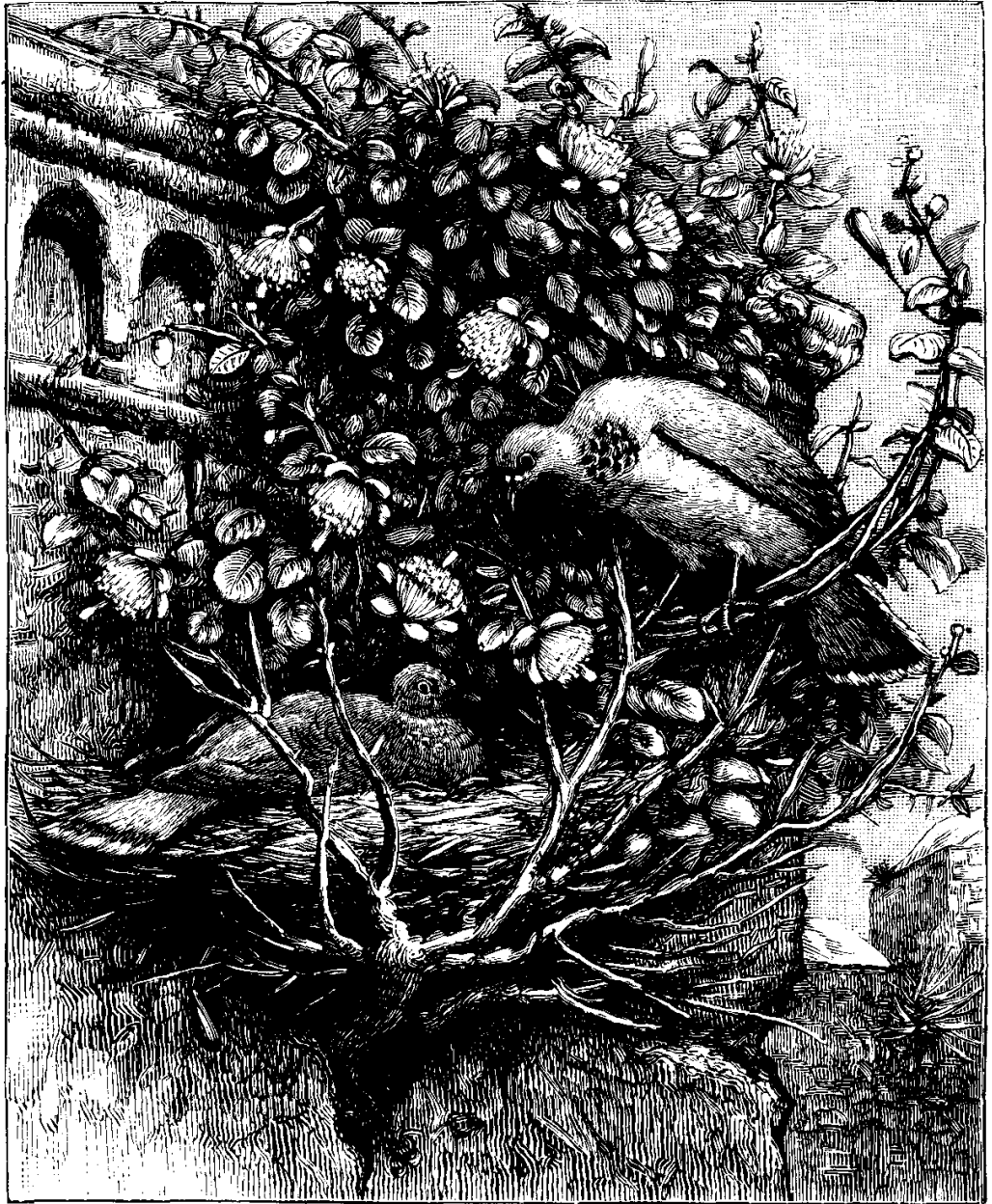
King David prayed God, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin . . . Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Ps. li. 2, 7.) David had transgressed against God, and felt the evil of his iniquities. He was God's child and servant, but he had sinned, and he felt the solemn need of purification. The christian who has sinned, in like manner needs cleansing, and "if we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us

our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.) Our water of purification is the suffering of Christ for our sins, brought home to our souls by the Spirit of God.

When our Redeemer was crucified, and cried, "I thirst," one filled a sponge with vinegar—that sour wine so commonly drunk in Palestine—and put it upon hyssop, and lifted it to His mouth. In all probability they put the sponge upon a hyssop plant, placing it among its stalks, and attached that to a reed and gave Him to drink (Mark xv. 36). The common little plant used by the ordinance of God for dipping and sprinkling was near to the Redeemer's cross. It

may have been springing out of the wall of Jerusalem, "outside the gate," near Calvary, or it may have been "in the garden" "in the place where He was crucified." Be that as it may, the Spirit of God has brought the hyssop close to us in the record of our Saviour's sufferings and blood-shedding, and we are thus reminded of its sacred use in the shadows of olden days given to man ages before Christ's death.

The dove is an emblem of the Holy



A COMMON SCENE IN THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

Spirit. Under the figure of this bird of love and mourning the Holy Spirit of God descended and abode upon the loving, mourning Son of Man. In the fact of the dove building her nest in the asuf plants that spring up out of the walls of Jerusalem we seemed to hear a little voice reminding us of how the blessed Spirit of God directs our hearts to the memories of the precious blood of Christ, and in this spirit commend these few thoughts to our readers.

The Pharisees.

WHAT do we know respecting the origin of the Pharisees?

We shall have to go back in Israel's history to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to obtain an answer to this question. When at the end of the seventy years of which the prophet Jeremiah spoke (Jer. xxix. 10, & Ezra i. 1), a few of the children of Israel (Ezra ii. 64) returned to their own land from the captivity in Babylon, they found Jerusalem in ruins, and the temple of Jehovah a desolate heap. All the glory of the olden days had departed because of the sins of God's people. But at Jehovah's bidding, through His prophets, the temple was rebuilt (Ezra vi. 14), and the walls also of Jerusalem were restored. (Neh. iv. 6, & vi. 15.) Thus once more Israel—or rather, a remnant of their nation—was re-established in their own land.

When the temple was finished, "the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had *separated themselves* unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land," kept the feast of unleavened bread, which accompanied the Passover. (Ezra vi. 21.) Note the words, *separated themselves*. The people of Israel were denounced by the princes for not having *separated themselves* (ch. ix. 1) from the heathen; the people were bidden, *separate yourselves* from the people of the land (ch. x. 11), and the seed of Israel is said to have *separated themselves* from all strangers. (Neh. ix. 2.) We say note the words, *separated themselves*, for the meaning of "Pharisees" is *The Separate*.

Separation from evil (Neh. x. 28) and separation to God (v. 29) was then the origin of the idea of the Pharisee. But the origin and the end were as distinct from each other as are light and darkness. And as we read these words of God about the Pharisees of the last time—"These be they who *separate themselves*, sensual (or natural), having not the Spirit" (Jude 19), we are appalled at the ingenuity of our fallen nature, which so adroitly turns the divine principle of holiness into that most corrupt thing—self-glorification.

In the temple as rebuilt, the ark of the

Lord was not (2 Chron. v. 9), nor had this new temple the glory-cloud as Solomon's (ch. vii. 3). That visible token of the divine presence had retreated from the earth and gone to heaven, as Ezekiel, the prophet, had seen in his visions. (Ch. viii., & xi. 22, 23.) Moreover, the sacred Urim and Thummim on the high priest's breastplate, from or on which in some way God communicated His mind to His people, were no more. Hence Israel had its temple, but not the true glories of the temple.

It was, then, at this time, when the absence of these tokens of God's delight should have rendered His people heart-broken and humble, that the pretentious sect of the Pharisees rose into power. They had lost the spirit of the *separation* God requires, and had seized upon the letter, the word—The Separated. Instead of being separated from sin and iniquity, and to God, they were separated from the people of God by their scriptural knowledge (see John vii. 48, 49) and their traditions (Mark vii. 3-8), and to themselves by their own proud thoughts about themselves.

But were the Pharisees at the first what they were in the time of our Lord? No; for undoubtedly there was real zeal for God to contend against the inroads of what in the remote times we refer to was "modernized religion," time serving, and worldliness. Against these things the earnest and faithful separated ones of about 300 years before our Lord stood nobly, and, indeed, many died for the truth. But as the years rolled by, the true became corrupted, and the false took its place; so that God describes those who *separate themselves* as walking after their own ungodly lusts. (Jude 18.)

What were the distinguishing doctrines of the Pharisees? Briefly, we may say their doctrines were having their traditions as well as the written word of God. Had they confined their belief to the Scriptures, their conduct would have been condemned by the Scriptures. But they laid aside the commandment of God to hold the tradition of men. Hence said our Lord to them, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may

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keep your own tradition." (Mark vii. 9.) When once men depart from the written word of God, and allow ever so small an amount of human tradition a place of rule in their souls, it is like letting water through a dam—beginning as a trickling stream it grows into a rushing torrent, carrying the conscience before it.

We find the Pharisees wasting their time and pouring contempt upon God in discussing the veriest trifles, as, for example, whether an egg laid on a festival should be eaten or not; whether poultry should be eaten with milk; what kind of wick and oil candles used on the Sabbath should have! One rabbi said that boiled suet might be used for such candles, another equally wise rabbi said the contrary. These vain questions occupied their minds! It seems as if it were one of God's judgments on self-satisfied traditionists, that they should be given over to occupation with petty trifles about which no truly earnest soul, having eternity before him, would dare to spend five minutes of his precious lifetime.



He died for me!

ONE Sunday afternoon, some few months ago, as I was on my way to the Sunday-school, a little boy stepped up to me, and said, "Please, Mr. R., George H. is very ill in bed: will you go and see him?" I promised compliance, and went on my way to the school. At the school we commended George to the care of the Lord, and, school being over, in company with one of our senior teachers, I started off to the house of sickness.

George's mother opened the door to us, saying that he was quite unconscious; that he had not spoken a word of recognition for several days, and that his sight was entirely gone. The first cause of illness was over-study at the day-school, and he was very clever for nine years of age. "Oh, sir," the

mother cried, "the doctor says he cannot last longer than three days at the outside!"

Poor little fellow, as he lay there slowly panting for breath, how we felt for him, and what silent prayers issued from our hearts for him! This dear face, once so bright at our children's special services—now so sadly changed—how our hearts bled for him! George had been one of the best behaved boys in our school. I could well remember, three years previously, when he was only a little fellow of six years old, how he came to my desk to have his name enrolled in our register; and then, ten months later, how he waited, after the school, and said, "I want to know more about Jesus;" and, again, how, after some conversation about the loving Saviour, George was satisfied that he was no longer lost, but saved, and that the loving Saviour had washed all his sins away.

The Bible says, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. vii. 20), and well, through the Lord's grace and mercy, did George testify to Christ's saving power in his life and conduct. Oh, that there were many more little soldiers such as he!

These thoughts passed through my mind as I stood by the bedside of that poor feeble lamb of Christ's flock.

The kind teacher who had accompanied me spoke to the little fellow, and asked him several questions, but all to no purpose—no signs of recognition whatever.

"Darling," said she, "do you feel any pain?"

No response, but a low moan.

"Mr. R. has come to see you. Do you remember Mr. R.?"

Still no response. So I said to Mrs. E., "Just ask him if he knows Jesus."

So she took his thin hand in hers, and said, "Darling, what has Jesus done for you?" In an instant his face beamed, and he slowly, but distinctly said, "He died for me."

This was said so distinctly that his mother, who was standing by, expressed her surprise at this sensible recognition of what was being said to him, and these were the only

intelligible words he expressed till he passed away on the following Wednesday morning to be with the One who had done so much for him, and who had prepared a mansion beyond for him.

But what a blessed testimony—He knew Jesus, and he could testify in the hour of suffering, “He died for me.” He did not even know his mother, but he knew Christ Jesus. Oh, sweet Name! What fragrance there is in it!

Yes, George could say in the midst of intense suffering and pain, “He died for me.” How beautifully do the Master’s own words come in here, with sweetness unsurpassed, with melody unruffled, and with tenderness unequalled, “I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” (Matt. xi. 25.)

W. H. R.

GOOD NEWS.

“OH, I have something so good to tell you,” said a little girl of thirteen some time since, as she turned to her friend a face beaming with joy which this world can neither give nor take away. “I know that I am saved—that the Lord Jesus died to put away my sins; it was all shown to me as plainly as possible last evening. This was the text: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.’ (John v. 24.) Mr. — said that anyone and everyone who really believed Christ’s word has everlasting life; not life to be had at some future time, but that very moment. God’s word says so, therefore it must be true.

“I saw it all clearly, and knew that it meant me. I do believe God’s word—I have everlasting life. That word ‘hath’ rang in



“GOD’S WORD SAYS SO, THEREFORE IT MUST BE TRUE.”

my ears till I did not know how to contain myself; I felt as if I must jump up and shout out for joy, for I had everlasting life, and should never, never come into condemnation, but had already passed from death unto life. I can see now how the good Lord Jesus has done everything for me, and I am so glad, so full of joy and peace this morning, that my heart feels as if it can hardly hold so much.

“I wanted to tell you the first of all, before saying a word to anyone else about it, because it was through your teaching in the Sunday-school that I first began to think or care about such things at all, and then to long to know the Lord Jesus as my own Saviour. When you used to speak of Him as if you loved Him so much, and really

longed to see Him, I often wished that I did, too, and now I know that I do; oh! isn't it wonderful! I can never thank Him or love Him half enough, I am sure."

With heartfelt thanksgivings and tears of grateful joy the "sower and reaper rejoiced together." It was indeed the Lord's doing, and marvellous in their eyes.

Surely only those who have known what it is thus to receive unexpected answers to the prayers of perhaps years will understand, how thoroughly ashamed this one felt of her want of faith, and how a sweet sense of contrition mingled largely with her joy.

Years have passed, and the bright, happy young believer, who from that memorable day went on her way rejoicing, has had like others "to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"—to meet with trials and temptations of various kinds, but "the joy of the Lord has been her strength," and the Lord Himself her All. Her quiet, unassuming, consistent life has not been without its influence already upon others, and He who began the good work in her will, we know, perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. E. G.

Bible Subjects.

REDEMPTION.

THERE are not very many texts in the New Testament which speak of redemption. Perhaps we had better look first at Romans iii. 24, "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." We have already seen that *His* LIFE, *HIMSELF*, *His* BLOOD, are spoken of as the price paid for our redemption—our buying out—and in the chapter from which we quote a verse we have God giving in the most solemn way the awful state in which the sinner is by nature. Only one ransom price could buy the sinner out of this condition—"Under sin" (v. 9). "All under sin" is the terrible word about Jew or Gentile, all under it, and none with any power whatever to get above it. A ransom such as could buy out the sinner from the bondage was necessary, and thanks be to God, it has been provided for us, and

has been rendered to God. Because of this, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, God freely justifies us who believe. The ransom price paid on behalf of sinners magnifies His glory. It is of full and sufficient value in His eyes, whatever unbelieving man may see its worth to be. *Through* it, and not through any less value does God justify us. Utterly bound in sins were we—nothing could loose us from them, but the blood of Jesus, and He has "loosed us from our sins by His blood" (Rev. i. 5, R.V.), and that because He loves us.

The redemption through which God justifies us is *in* Christ Jesus; it is in no other person, and nowhere else.

Never let us lose sight of the great and solemn reality that God hates sin because it is sin; in Him is no darkness at all, and all sin is opposed to His holy nature. Hence as we speak of redemption, we must not simply think of what we feel we need, but we must seek to consider, poor indeed as such considerations will be, God's just wrath against sin. As we think of this, what blessed words of calm to our souls are these, "Being *justified* freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

This consideration leads us to similar texts, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.) The redemption is through His blood, not through His spotless life, His holy works, His wondrous prayers, no, nor through His resurrection, but through His blood. The price paid was His blood, His dying for us, nothing less. Keep very closely to this *THROUGH*. "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts xiii. 38), says God to us, and *through* His blood the redemption for forgiveness is ours.

We are bought out of our bondage to sin and to Satan, and are forgiven every transgression and sin we have committed. A transgression is the overstepping a straight line, and such are our sins done against the plain word of God; but others of our sins may be simply our wicked ways done in ignorance of God—none the less calling down upon us

His judgment. Thanks be to His name, the blood of Christ His Son has answered for them all.

Now let us look at the word *in*—"in whom we have redemption," in the person of our risen Redeemer. *Through* His death on the cross; *in* Him in the glory. This is the most gracious word. He has accomplished the work of redemption once for all, and *in* Himself the redemption is secured for ever. He in glory lives the witness of the eternal value of His work. The redemption is not in our hands, but in Christ, who lives in heaven, to die no more.

It is said *we have* it: not we hope to have the redemption—the forgiveness some day—no, but we have it now. It is a present and continual *have* that is our portion; we are having the redemption. There is no break in this *have*; it is not said we *had* or *shall have*, but we have, or are having it. We have it now, and the next moment we have it, and so on—it is an everlasting *have*. Let us thank God for this.

Only one further text on this subject shall occupy us at this time; we shall find it in Heb. ix. 12—"Having obtained eternal redemption." Christ our Redeemer has obtained—not a redemption for a short time, such as we shall see by and by was known amongst the Hebrews in their land—but an everlasting redemption. As we read the Epistle to the Hebrews we find the word "eternal" often occurring. Everything that Christ touches is seen, in the epistle to those whose temple and services were about to vanish away, in a lasting character. What the law given by Moses did was temporary—what Christ did is eternal. So we read of eternal redemption obtained by Him. How different is this from many prevailing thoughts! There are numbers now who, like the Jews of old, regard the efficacy of the sacrifice as limited to a certain time. The blood of goats and calves shed under the law might effect a redemption for a short time, but the blood of Christ the Lord must, by reason of His Person who shed it, have an everlasting efficacy and effect—an eternal redemption.

This, and nothing short of it, is ours—

obtained by Christ, let us remember, not obtained by ourselves. The redemption *He has obtained* through His blood, and which *we have* through grace, is not one moment short of eternal.

Our English Bible.

"TO THE POOR THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED."

DURING the brief reign of Edward VI. a victory was won—a victory none the less real because it was accompanied by little outward show: the English Bible was, for the first time, given freely to the English people. At the beginning of his reign, as we have seen, a last effort was made to stop the circulation of the Scriptures; at the close—if those in the parish churches were included—it is reckoned that nearly two hundred thousand copies of the whole Bible or the New Testament in English were in circulation. The great boon of having God's word in their own tongue had been granted to our countrymen, and from that day to this it has never been taken from them. It is true that early in the reign of Queen Mary the old law forbidding the public reading of the Scriptures in the churches, was again enforced; but a time had come when it was no longer possible to deprive the people of their rightful heritage. In the case of many, too, by God's grace, the living truths of the Book, which had been making its way silently from populous town to quiet village and lonely hamlet, were, ere the time of trial for the word's sake had come, safely hidden in their hearts, whence no power could pluck them. So dear, too, had those truths, by God's grace, become to them, that, when that fiery trial did come, they were found ready, not only to give an answer concerning their faith in them, but to lay down their lives rather than deny them in any wise.

Time passed on, and brought with it the restoration of all those "rights," as they ignorantly counted them, for which the poor folk of the west country had clamoured and fought. Perhaps, if we pause to consider what those "rights" were, we shall be better

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able to understand the great struggle which continued during nearly the whole of the reign of the misguided and unhappy queen whose name is so miserably associated with the dark days of persecution, upon the history of which we are entering. Perhaps, too, we shall see more clearly than we have hitherto seen that it was in no mere wordy strife, no vague conflict, that the martyrs of Queen Mary's time suffered and died. The struggle was a very real one; and, if we have at all closely followed the history of the preceding centuries with respect to the endeavour on the part of that church which claimed then, as she claims now, authority over the souls of men to keep from them the right to know for themselves what God had actually spoken for them in His word, we shall understand that the conflict, when it came, was of necessity a close and deadly one.

To the mere spectator, it might seem as if the victory was with the strong, but those actually engaged in the conflict had no doubt as to which side was really the winning one. To sight, indeed, their cause was a feeble and suffering one; but to faith it was the cause of God, and of His truth, and in the face of the persecuting powers which seemed to have their will, they could say with the Hebrew children, in the presence of the fiery furnace, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is *able* to deliver us . . . but if *not*"—If no outward deliverance came, and we know that to these witnesses for the truth it did not come, they were able to commit the keeping of their souls to God, and to let the fire do its work upon their bodies. The Lord Himself when on earth, did not put forth His power to shield John the Baptist from a cruel death; rather He spoke to His "friends" those blessed words which were to be the strength of many a faithful witness, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do . . . even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

One of the things which the rioters of the past reign had demanded was that the English Bibles should be no longer read; they wanted still to have the Latin words

which they had been accustomed to hear every Sunday and saint's day, sounding with their familiar echo in their ears.

How little could Tyndale have thought, as he sat upon the hill-side in Gloucestershire so long before, and dreamed that dream which had now come true, that when the good day which should bring with it the free circulation of the Bible in a tongue "understood of the people," dawned, those very people should be the ones to refuse the light, and desire to sink back into the darkness and delusion in which they had lived so long! Yet that it should be so was but the natural consequence of the state in which they were. To those who are accustomed only to darkness, light comes as a strange and painful thing, and if this be true naturally, how much more terribly true is it morally and spiritually!

In those times of which we have been speaking, the fact that God has spoken to us in His word was not questioned, nor was it denied that it greatly concerned the creatures of His hand to know what He had to say to them. But the point which had been disputed in the early times, when Wycklyffe wrote and his gospellers preached, was the same point which was argued in the reign of Queen Mary. The grand question was whether, since God had spoken, all men, the lowly and simple, high-born and learned alike, might receive His message, clear and pure as He sent it, or whether it was a message addressed to men indeed, but committed to the keeping of the church, by whose authority alone any one had a right to hear or obey it.

It would seem that if a man had any rights at all, the first of them would be the right of hearing the voice of God from heaven, speaking directly to him, for himself. About what we count the important affairs of our everyday life we like to have certainty, and, therefore, are unwilling to trust to hearsay. How much more should we desire certainty in matters which concern the soul, matters upon which there is no possibility of being assured, save by the word of God, that word which speaks with its own divine authority!

We have seen how this right to receive God's message in His very words had been denied to the people. They were supposed to be quite too poor and ignorant to understand it for themselves. More than this, people so poor and ignorant could not be trusted to believe aright, even though it were God's word which, through His grace, they believed. Therefore the church, in her care for their souls, had decreed what was and what was not to be believed.

It was deadly error for any man to presume to search the Book for himself, and see what God really had said. Men were to believe what they did believe, not so much because God had spoken it, as because the church, within whose bosom alone salvation could be hoped for, had bidden them have faith in it.

Alas! that church oftentimes did but mock with empty husks of doctrine those souls who were hungry for the bread of life. There were multitudes, doubtless, all through those dark and evil days who learned from God Himself, by the teaching of His Spirit, where to find rest for their souls: for God ever "satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness," and His grace is above all the sin and folly of men. But although this is true, it does not lessen the guilt of those who sought to keep from the young, and poor, and unlearned the very words of Christ and His apostles, as well as those "holy Scriptures" of the Old Testament of which the Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, says that they are "able to make wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus."

We who live in a time when, and in a country where, the light of God's word shines unhindered all around us, do well to remember that without faith the holy Scripture itself does not profit him who reads; but rather the very fact of his having it in his hand condemns and judges him. The word is indeed "nigh" to all of us. Let us take heed that we be not as the multitude who were so near the blessed Lord that they were "thronging and pressing Him," yet knew not—perhaps were so little aware of who He

was, and of their own need of Him that they cared not to know—how to give that touch of faith, which alone would bring them into living contact with Him, and draw virtue from Him. The truth still remains that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," and how many can thankfully bear witness to that truth!

A touching little story is told of the effect which seeing even a few words of Scripture had upon a poor man in Ireland some few years ago. He picked up a torn leaf of a New Testament, and, as he tried to put the ragged edges together, his eye fell upon the words, often repeated, "And Jesus said"; "And Jesus answered, and said." The thought that the blessed Lord when on earth had spoken words, and that he knew nothing of them, came to him with such a shock of painful surprise that he was never satisfied until he had bought a Testament, there to read for himself what Jesus had said. The words of Christ came with their own power to his soul. He did not need the authority of the church to tell him whether he might believe them or not, but received them simply as the message from God, that "He has given unto us eternal life, and that this life is in His Son."

Many experienced a like shock of surprise and received a like blessing in the days when the Scripture first began to go abroad among the people in England. Those who were able to read found nothing there about any class of men to whom, by some mysterious authority, the word of God had been entrusted that they might deal it out, with niggard hand, indeed, to their fellows. On the contrary, as they read such words as these, "To the poor the gospel is preached," their eyes were opened to see how they had been cheated, of what was in value far beyond any earthly treasure, by those to whose keeping they had so blindly entrusted their souls, vainly believing that they would answer to God for them. For this is what the priests, as empowered by the church, undertook to do, though it is written, "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



WHERE IS THE BURDEN?

WHERE IS THE BURDEN OF YOUR SINS?

ONE summer's day, a friend of ours was resting for a few minutes in a wood, through which runs a shady path. As he was looking towards the stile at the end of the path, an aged man, with staff in hand, and having a basket on his shoulder, drew near, and with a sigh of relief laid his burden upon the stile, and then rested himself against it.

The aged man, his load, and his rest, spoke a gospel parable to our friend, who was not slow in availing himself of the occasion offered by it, when in a few minutes the burden bearer stood wearily before him ready for a chat. The old man stopped, and spoke of the heat, when our friend said to him, "You have a heavy load to-day."

"Not like it was the last three Mondays," said the old man. "I thought I could never get along under it," and as he spoke he leaned upon his stick.

"Well now, my friend, this basket on your shoulder and your weariness is quite a picture of a sinner weary and heavy laden with the burden of his sins. How about the burden of your sins? Is it on you still, or has God taken it off you?"

The hesitation of the old man evidenced that he was not fully assured his burden was gone, so our friend continued—

"Suppose now, I take the basket and put it upon my shoulder, and carry it for you up the hill, where then would your load be? The burden cannot be on two backs, you know."

"I know your meaning," said the old man. "Sometimes my sins weigh heavy on me; sometimes I don't feel them so much."

"Like the basket to-day, and like it was on the three Mondays you have spoken of; but whatever you feel your sins to be, they are either on you or off you. They cannot have been borne by Christ and be on you also; whatever the sense of your sins may be, the sins themselves are off you or on you. If you are one of God's people, your sins are not on you; they were laid on Christ, and are gone. The basket cannot be on your

shoulder and on mine at the same time. Don't you know how it is written: 'The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all'?"

"I have read that fifty-third chapter of Isaiah often and often," said the old man, thoughtfully, "and I have been down on my knees and have thanked the Lord for dying to wash my sins away many a time."

"But have you ever been down on your knees and thanked Him for having really taken the burden away? Not only for having died in order to take your sins away, but for having taken them because He has died?"

"I believe He died to put my sins away," replied the old man.

"But has He done it?" said our friend—"that is the question."

"Well, that is more than I can say," was the answer.

"You go down on your knees and thank Him for having died in order to wash away your sins, and yet you cannot say He has washed them away! What think you the people of the 'House' would say if, after you had brought away the linen to have it washed, you took it back dirty?"

"Why, they would say it wasn't clean, surely."

"To be sure; and is it not written, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin'? Do you think He leaves a spot where He has washed? His blood cleanses whiter than snow. By His blood we are made fit for God—more, the Father has made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. His work is perfect."

The old man could not rest with a child's simplicity on the word of God; he was looking into himself for the evidence of salvation, instead of believing God's word, and praising Him.

"Come now," said our friend, "praise God the Father for the blood of His Son, and for what that blood has done."

"It must come straight from the heart," the old man said. "I could say it to you with my lips, but it must come from the heart." And thus the conversation ended.

Our friend made enquiries, and found, as

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he supposed, that the old man was, indeed, a christian, and had been one for some years; but he was one of the many christians who lack confidence in God. He searched out the old man a day or two after, and finding him working in his cottage garden, he greeted him with, "How is it now with you and the load of your sins?"

"I have faith to believe I *think* He has taken it away," was the cautious reply.

"That is like a good straight road with the turnpike gate shut across it. Come, let us do away with the gate."

"I see what you mean—you don't like the 'I *think*.'"

"No, it is the 'i' in the 'think' I don't like; but make the 'i' into an 'a' and say, 'thank' instead of 'think,' and see what a difference it is—faith to believe and thank Him He has taken it away."

With a pleasant smile the aged man said, "It is I, it is self—that is in the way. I will drop the '*think*' out and stick to it, I have faith to believe He has taken the load away."

After a little cheering talk, our friend parted from the old man; and we, too, may leave him, thanking God for the wondrous salvation He has wrought for us helpless and undone sinners.

Sin is a reality, and our individual sense of sin is a reality, but sin and our sense of sin are widely different. Thousands have their sins upon them, but have hardly any sense of their sins, yet the wrath of God abideth on them. Many a believer is weighted under the sense of his sins, but his sins are all really gone from the sight of the holy God. God hath laid on the holy One, the blessed Lamb of God, the iniquity of us all; this is a wondrous reality for all saints, and it is our joyful privilege not to think whether our sins are borne or not, but to thank God and His Son for the cross. Reader, how do you read the Scripture? "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Do you thank Him or do you think about it? May God turn your *thinks* into *thanks*.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SERPENT.

THERE is a shepherd not far from us, who leads his master's flock through a wood up to the downs beyond. One summer's noon the shepherd brought the flock under the shade of the trees at the top of the wood, and then laid himself down to sleep, for he was weary. He had unloosed his jersey, for the heat was great.

So he slept; and while he slept a snake glided up out of the wood, and coiled itself up in the shepherd's bosom.

When he awoke he found the reptile next his skin, and was horrified; but it made off, as startled as he, so no mischief was done.

But the story has a parable in it, hence we relate it, and the parable is to the shepherds of the flock of God.

Sleep not, even in noonday heat, but watch unwearied by the sheep you tend; for if you sleep, a serpent will coil itself up in your bosom. Not a harmless creature, not even a viper, but worse—aye, worse, for Satan himself gets near to the heart of a drowsy shepherd.

Lay the sheep and the lambs in your bosom, pray for them, bear them there before the Lord and Master, to whom you must give account for all He has charged to your care. Let this be ever your wakeful spirit. Love keeps weary eyes awake, love keeps tired limbs active. Blessed shall you be at His coming if He finds you so doing. Sleep not, O shepherd of the flock of God, in the midst of your charge, lest the old serpent coil itself up and lie in your bosom.

It would be well if you sought a fuller manifestation of Christ's presence. All His are His for eternity, but too few of His have Him with them as a Friend daily in their lifetime.

"God is for us," we have learned to say; how far is it practically true that "God is with us"?

If you are walking in the peace of God, you will not mind the idle talking of people about you, save as far as you will be sorry for their occupation.

A SOLEMN WARNING.

WHAT a sad and solemn thing it is to witness the departure from this world of one who has lived his life here without Christ, and with no thought of the reality of an eternity so soon and so suddenly to open upon him! I have a painful remembrance of one, who was at the time of which I write my fellow workman, whose memory is well-nigh lost by those with whom the bright days of his life were wasted and spent. Alas, he had lived forty years, without knowing, for one hour, that true peace which comes only to the heart that knows God as a Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ as a Saviour.

Indifferent at first to the glad tidings of the grace of God, my poor friend at last took pleasure in making light of God's message of grace, and would pride himself upon his success in argument when disputing with some companion who tried to win him to listen while he gave a reason for his hope,—little did he think whose servant he was, while thus trying to shake the confidence of a simple believer in Christ; but the close of his earthly career was sudden and sad indeed.

At that time it was my lot to work in one of the large iron ore mines, so numerous in South Wales, and I lived near the mine, some two or three hundred yards from the pit's mouth. One evening, as I ascended the shaft, two men descended—they were to work all night in a dangerous part of the mine.

At six o'clock next morning I was awakened by a loud rapping at my window. One of the two men whom I had seen the night before begged me to get up as quickly as possible, and give what help I could. "Poor Charley G—— is killed," he added, slowly. Trembling, I sprang out of bed, and was soon beside him; together we descended the shaft, and I found that my companion had already brought the poor fellow's lifeless body to the bottom.

What were my feelings as I looked upon that covered corpse, crushed and disfigured, and then thought of the awful consequences of rejecting Christ, the only Saviour!

The One whom he had so often set at nought, that soul should now henceforth only justify—for had not He, the Friend of sinners, given him in life most blessed and gracious privileges? Quickly and without warning had come the end of that fruitless life. Had the one whom I had but lately seen full of life and health, fearing nothing, indeed gone—a Christless, unwashed, unpardoned soul, bearing his own heavy burden of guilt—into the very presence of the God whom he had so deeply offended?

My fellow workman told me in few words how it happened. While Charley was in the act of barring down a heavy piece of stone, another huge mass above him had broken loose, and come down upon him, crushing his head beneath its tremendous weight. We brought him to the top, and taking a door from its hinges placed him upon it, and solemnly and sadly bore him upon our shoulders up the road. Oh, how melancholy was the aspect of that beautiful summer morning!

This is but one, my reader, of the many sad instances which occur day by day, and bitter indeed is the remembrance of such. I pray you, if indeed you have been up to this time, if not a rejecter of Christ, yet indifferent as to His great salvation, think of these things.

Did you but know the reality of your danger, more eagerly than the drowning mariner seizes some floating spar, would you embrace the precious promises of the Gospel. Christ is able to save, and willing to save you. God grant that you may come to Him.

W. M.

HOW DO YOU STAND?

"SEE how you stand" is a commercial maxim, and it is little less than a crime against yourself and society if you neglect an insight into your affairs. But why go you on, day by day, careless as to how your soul stands for eternity? Is it a small thing that you are insolvent, hopelessly in debt? Will you make the crime blacker by not heeding the word of God, which not only tells your condition, but shows you the supply for all your needs?

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NEVER MIND FEELINGS.

VISITING among the people of a village in which some special services were being held, I came upon a poor anxious soul whose trouble was that she did not "feel right." "I have been looking forward to these meetings," said she, "in the hope of getting salvation; but, sir, I don't feel right yet."

I tried to draw her away from feelings, to faith in Christ, but apparently with little success. At one of the meetings this poor woman's anxiety was deepened, but she did not obtain peace. In the closing prayer, God was asked to make every unsaved sinner very miserable, and not to let any one have rest while out of Christ. That prayer was answered to the letter in the case of the seeking soul whose experience I am relating; but though her sorrow endured for a night, joy came in the morning.

The next morning, coming up the village soon after breakfast, I saw her at her door with her face as radiant as a sunbeam.

"It's come, sir! it's come!" was her grateful exclamation as I approached; "and this did it," holding up a little book.

I took it from her. It told of one who had been in exactly the same condition in which she was the previous evening. He had been asked to find anywhere in the Bible a text that said feelings had anything to do with salvation. As he could not find one, his friend quoted to him John v. 24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life"; adding, "according to God's book, if you believe on the Lord you have everlasting life. He says so, and whatever He says is true."

"But I don't feel that I have everlasting life."

"Never mind your feelings."

"Well, then, I'll stick to it that I am saved just because God says so, and never mind my feelings."

"That sentence did it, sir," said the good woman, pointing to the words quoted above; "and now I mean to stick to it that I am 'saved just because God says so, and never mind my feelings.'"

But I wanted a full, true, and particular account of this happy change, which was given as follows:—

"I went home last night wretched. I prayed, but got no better; I knelt up in bed and prayed, but still felt no ease. I seemed in hell, and there was no escape. As I could not sleep, I got up at five o'clock and came out to see if I could find anyone to pray for me, but no one was about. At last I saw the blacksmith, and he gave me this little book, and that last sentence brought light."

Assured that God's blessing was upon the little book, this young convert lent it that night to a shepherd who also was anxious to know himself saved, and upon the following Sunday I heard that it had been his guide to peace.

Some few weeks after, I saw these friends again, and both were happy in Christ, loving God's people, and praising His name.

My story is ended; and may the teller and the hearer, as believers in Christ, be able to say, however tempted, "I'll stick to it that I am saved, just because God says so, and never mind my feelings." W. L.

ON READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

SOMETIMES we read the Bible with a view to obtain comfort, and at others for instruction. One aim before us, when searching the Scriptures for instruction, should be to learn in what portions of the Bible we shall find the special and varied unfoldings of God's mind as He has chosen to give them to us. For example, we should open the New Testament in order to search out the truths relating to eternal life; while if we desired to know God's ways in His governmental dealings with us, as to the manner in which we spend our lives here, we should turn rather to the Old Testament.

The habit of searching out for the occurrence of some word in our English Bibles, and interpreting different verses in the same way, because the same word occurs in each, is not only a mechanical, but hardly a discerning method of Bible study.

We have observed this habit become a very great hindrance to the believer in grasp-

ing the truth. Picking out several words in short portions of verses from different parts of the Bible, and stringing them all together, is likewise not the way to interpret the word of God; though very striking gospel testimony is often thereby obtained. If this way of looking over the Bible be adopted as a system for interpretation, it will be fatal to our growth in the knowledge of the truth.

Another method of reading Scripture is that of searching for what we do not find in a chapter or portion. It is very useful to know that such and such a truth does not lie in such and such a part of the Bible, just as it would be useful, if in a coal mine, to know that neither lead nor gold was there. But the miner does not go into the mine to find out what is not there, but to find what is there. "We do not get this in this portion, or that in that portion," does not build up souls in Christ; the practical question for us is, "What do we get?"

A most important consideration in searching the Scriptures is to find something, and one equally important is to carry away with us what we do find. After all, it is but meagre profit to be able to say such and such things are in that chapter! The question which should exercise our hearts is, "How much of that verse or chapter have I got into my heart?" We may see Christ set forth as Saviour, or Lord, or Son, or High Priest, but how much of Christ, as Saviour, Lord, Son, or High Priest, have we got out of the portion into our hearts? That much, so gotten, is our own blessed treasure. Nothing, unless practically made our own, makes us really rich.

Whatever we win out of a mine is gone; no one else can win it; but whatever we are the richer for, by searching the Scriptures, in no way impoverishes the mine of God's word. The more we win out of God's word, the richer does it appear in our eyes.

Some read the Bible to know doctrine, some to know Christ and God; if we know a little more of Christ or God by any verse, we shall surely know the doctrine also; but we may find the doctrine and yet not Him of whom the doctrine speaks! Herein is a

terrible miss, both for time and eternity. This is the result of reading the Bible with our natural understanding, and not looking to God to teach us by His Spirit.

A young christian lately told us how he had sat up late at night to master certain truths of the Bible, because he wished to keep pace with others, and bring out new truth; and how he had impaired his health by so doing. Such knowledge would fail to help him in the hour of difficulty, or enable him to build up others in our most holy faith.

A man may study the Bible in order to show people how much he knows; but of what avail would that be to him for time or eternity? The letter of the Bible is insufficient unless the unction of the Spirit be communicated with the word. An old minister said to us, the other day, "The unction of the Spirit cannot be bought." No, never; it is of God and from God, and its results are to God.

We would say to our christian friends, who desire to teach others, be it by the sick bed, or with a companion, or in any kind of service for Christ—tell others what God has taught you. Do not attempt to teach what you do not know in your own soul. If we are walking with God, there is always unction in telling others what God has taught us, and that which we have made our own. The simplest truth of the Bible, if declared in the power of the Spirit, will move men's souls. Has God taught you by His Spirit that He is love? or has He taught you that "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin"? or that Christ is coming? Very well, these blessed truths will be for you like the pebbles in David's satchel were for him when he arose against the giant. But if you try to use truths you have not experienced, they will be like Saul's armour, too heavy, for you "have not proved" them.

ON, ON—TO GLORY OR JUDGMENT—WHICH?

AS sure as the sun rises in the east and hastens to go down in the west, so surely is man travelling on to eternity. Eternity, with open arms, stands ready to receive each,

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and all. No one can stay his onward march to eternity. As well might he try, with his puny efforts, to stop the daily motion of the earth, as to arrest his onward march to eternity. On, on, man goes.

Eternity is the grand or awful goal that each and all must inevitably reach. No giant power, good or bad, can arrest the march of the great human family towards eternity. Millions have entered eternity, millions are entering, and millions more will yet enter. Like a gigantic river sweeping on to the mighty ocean, so is the human family as it presses on to eternity; only with this difference—as the members of the human family enter eternity, they are respectively divided, the righteous entering into eternal bliss, the unsaved passing into eternal woe.

The 16th of Luke furnishes us with a scripture to this point. The rich man lived, died, was buried, but, alas, in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment—"tormented with this flame." The poor man lived and died (no mention is made of his burial), and the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom—the ancient figure of rest and peace. How different had been their lives, one without, and the other with God; how different their death, the one in his sins, the other with sins forgiven; how awfully different their eternity, the one "tormented with this flame," on the judgment side of that fixed and impassable gulf, the other in the enjoyment of eternal rest on the heaven side. How awful the contrast! and it lasts for all eternity.

In the light of Holy Scripture, "and the Scripture cannot be broken," man is travelling on to the one side or the other, to the woe side or the glory side. We cannot resist the conclusion; it is irresistible. God's word declares the solemn fact; we have but to bow at His feet, and say, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Most assuredly; whether in allotting to the believer in Jesus a place with Christ in glory, or in consigning the unrepentant, self-willed sinner to outer darkness for eternity, God will act in perfect justice, and the wide

universe will vindicate Him in all His ways.

Now, beloved reader, let us individualise the matter, and bring the consideration home to ourselves; let us each ask himself, How does it fare with me? Have I for myself taken in the situation? To eternity we are hastening; we know not what a day may bring forth; we cannot boast of having another day. Where, beloved friend, are you going? Towards eternity we are speeding, but on which side of that great gulf will you spend eternity?

Unsaved sinner, flee, without delay, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved. He is *able* and *willing* to save you. He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) By all that is dear, precious, and true, I beseech you to hasten to Christ at once. There is not a moment to spare; already the mandate may have gone forth from the lips of the Eternal, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." How would you meet Him? To which side of the gulf would He consign you?

Think, as you are impelled on with lightning speed, think, beloved friend, think—*Where will you spend eternity?* Where, soul immortal, will you spend the undying, never-ending ages of eternity? Will it be on the heaven side, or on the judgment side, of that fixed, immovable, impassable, unfathomable gulf?

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (Is. lv. 6, 7.) Where God's mercy and pardon are known, eternity is welcomed with joy and unspeakable delight. To follow the pernicious, soul-destroying way of unbelief, is to say like Baalam, "I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold Him, but not nigh." (Num. xxiv. 17.) To reject Christ NOW, is to ensure THEN, a place of eternal distance, on the judgment side of that gulf, which nothing can move. A.

EXTRACTS FROM SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

It is a small thing to see Christ in a book, as men see the world in a map; but to come near unto Christ, to love Him and embrace Him, is quite another thing.

LOVELY Jesus! must be our song on this side of heaven's gates. And even when we have won the castle, then must we eternally sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb who hath saved us, and washed us in His own blood!' I would counsel all the ransomed ones to learn the song.

As to your fears anent the health or life of your dear children, lay them upon Christ's shoulders, let Him bear all. Loose your grip of them all; and when your dear Lord pulleth, let them go with faith and joy. It is a tried faith to kiss a Lord that is taking from you.

G. V. WIGRAM.

My own conscience gets exercised about the little extent to which I am like a glass lamp, having Christ as a light burning within me, and the light shining out upon all around.

I TRUST you are walking as alive from the dead and living unto Christ. 'Tis simple; that they that live, that have Him for their life, hidden with God though He be, should do everything as unto Him—eat to Him, drink to Him, wake as for Him, and go to rest as in Him.

I WOULD rather act under God's measure of light vouchsafed to me, or not act because I had none such, than be the one to carry out the mind of any man, without my being assured his mind was God's mind for me.



Found in the Rock.

IN a ch  let on one of the mountains in Switzerland there once lived a poor man, whose wife had died, leaving two little children to his care. He was a very kind father, and his daily trouble was that he was obliged

to leave his little ones alone when he went to his work, as he was too poor to pay anyone to look after them during his absence. The neighbours would sometimes think of them, but not often, so the children would wander for hours over the mountain side, gathering the lovely flowers which grew there, forgotten by everyone except the father.

One evening, on his way home, the father noticed the clouds looking very black, and gathering very fast, and he thought to himself, "This is one of our sudden snowstorms coming. I wonder where my children are; has anyone thought of them? Are they sheltered from this storm? Oh, my dear little ones, how I wish I was with you!"

With an anxious and beating heart he hastened homeward as fast as the storm would let him, for the snow began to fall in such large flakes that he could scarcely see his way up the mountain.

He at length reached his home, and on opening the door of his ch  let, all was silent; there were no glad voices to welcome him. "Oh! my children, where are you?" exclaimed the poor father; "I will seek you until I find you."

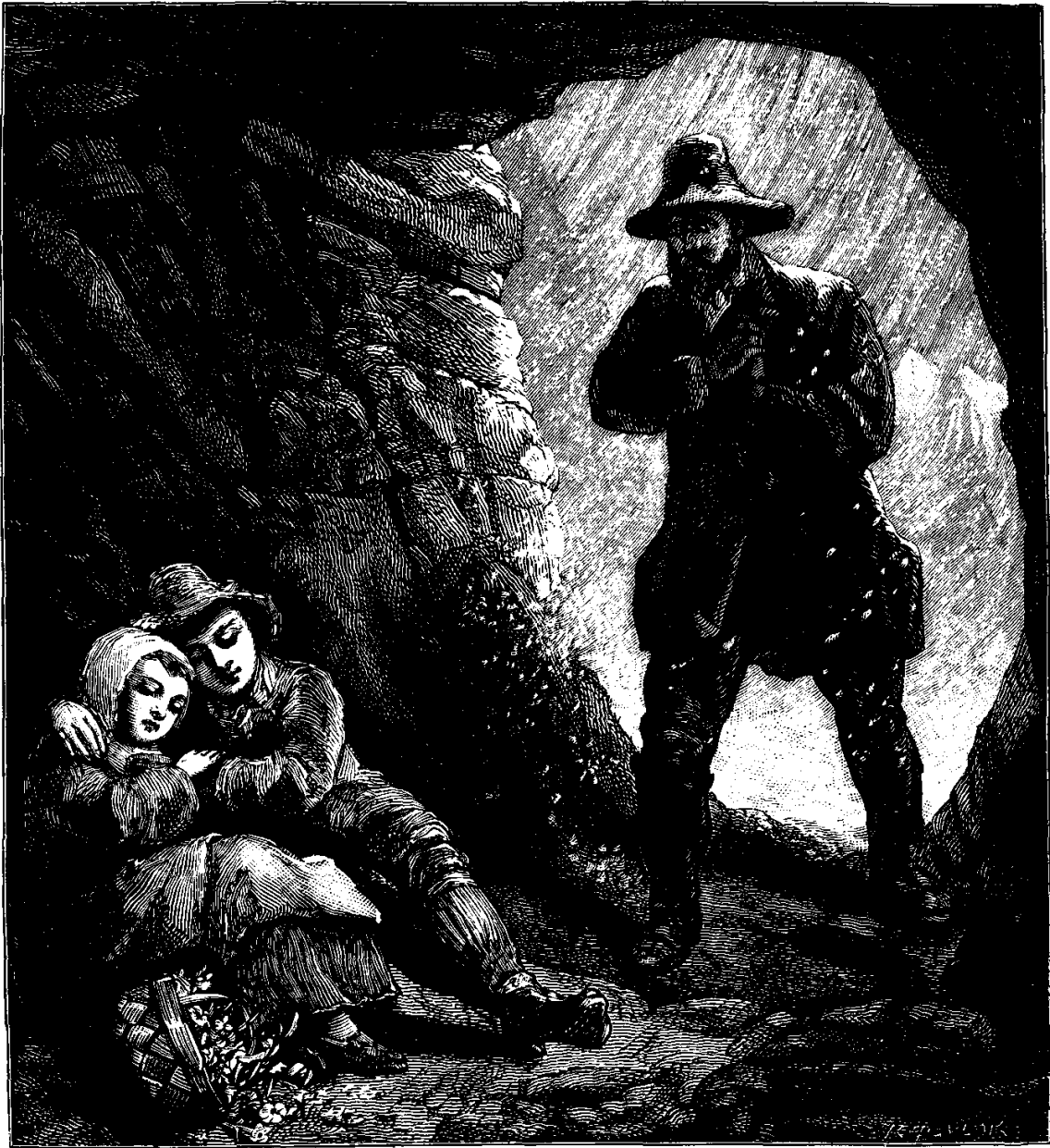
Onward and upward he went, calling them by name, but there was no reply to his call. He inquired of the neighbours if they could tell him where they were, but no one could help him in his great sorrow. The father, however, could not give up his children, so onward he went, while his heart was yearning over his lost treasures, now dearer than ever to him.

And did he find them? Yes; but where do you think they were? Safely sheltered in a cleft of a great rock, and fast asleep, with their little arms around each other.

The children had wandered far from their home—they had seen the storm coming, and had found a safe shelter.

And now let me ask any child who is reading this simple and true incident whether he is sheltered in Christ, the "Rock of Ages," the only Shelter, the only true Refuge for every poor, lost sinner? Will you, my child, be less wise than these children were?

They knew, young as they were, that



IN THE ROCK.

nothing short of a shelter in the rock could save them from the storm, so they found a small cave, into which they fled and were safe. Have you fled for refuge to Christ, the Rock of Ages? In Him you are safe for ever.

I AM THE LORD'S.

ONE evening, some years since, a little girl of about seven years of age lay upon

a low couch by the fireside, while her sister and some merry brothers were trying to play quietly at the table. Every now and then some little shout of delight, or funny speech, would make her at first almost wish to join them in their game. But the loving Lord Jesus, looking down with tender pity upon her, so filled her young heart with a sense of His love for her, that she soon forgot their simple merriment.

Why could she not join them in their play? Because the dear child was very ill—indeed it was evident that unless relief were quickly obtained she could not live. She herself was fully aware of this, yet felt no fear whatever, for the Lord Jesus had said in His word, “I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me.” Another verse had come into her mind as a sort of sweet answer to the first. “We love Him because He first loved us.”

At this moment her dear mother entered the room, and, bending over her with tender caresses, and loving but anxious looks, said, “Do you know, my darling, that you are very ill? Although you have not been obliged as yet to keep to your bed, the doctor has told me to-day that he is afraid he can do nothing more, and that, if you do not soon get better, he fears you cannot live. If it *should* be so (but, oh, I pray to the Lord that, if it be His will, He may spare you to me), *if* it should be so, tell me, dear, would you be afraid to die?”

Resting in the sweet sense of being one of the Good Shepherd's little lambs, beloved and cared for by Him, she answered quickly, “No, mother dear, I am not in the *least* afraid to die, because I *know* that Jesus loves me, and that, living or dying, I am the Lord's.” She felt sure that the Lord Jesus had done everything that was necessary for her in life or in death. Hence the calm of her soul, and the peace of her mind stayed upon Him.

“Did the little girl die?” some boy or girl may feel inclined to ask. No, the Lord saw fit to answer prayer on her behalf, and to spare her life. Her throat became better, and though she remained pale and thin for some time, yet health and strength slowly returned, and she still lives, rejoicing in the knowledge that, “living or dying, she is the Lord's.”

Many think that a child who, like this little one, is led by God's Spirit to give her young heart to the Lord, and who is therefore happy in the knowledge of His love to her, must surely be going to die soon, and so some perhaps feel they would rather not be

christians just yet, for fear they should die young. Yet if they were ill in bed, of course then they would want to know their sins forgiven, so that they might, as they think, “*die* happy”—but why not want quite as much to *live* a happy life?

Is there one who does not wish to live a happy life, and, if called to die, to die a happy death? Let me tell you, then, that there is no such thing as real happiness anywhere in this world apart from Christ, but He can and does fill the heart of every one who believes on Him, whether a little child or a grown person, with such joy and peace that there is nothing else like it.

The Lord Jesus Himself, when upon earth, rejoiced in spirit, and thanked His Father for revealing these wonderful things unto babes; and, although now seated in glory, He still delights in the praises of children. He still is saying, My child, “My son, give Me thine heart,” and shall not *your* answer be, “Lord, take it, and keep it for Thine own for ever”? so that whether you live, or whether you die, you may be the Lord's. E.G.

Bible Subjects.

REDEMPTION.

WE will spend a short time over some further New Testament texts on Redemption. In writing to the Hebrew strangers scattered abroad, the Apostle Peter says, “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation (or manner of life) received by tradition from your fathers.” (1 Peter i. 18.) For the precious blood of Christ, the spotless Lamb, sets us as pilgrims here, and we are making our heavenward journey under the Father's eye. What a joyful, yet solemn word is this for any in christian days, whose manner of life denies the pilgrim position into which believers are brought by the precious blood of Christ.

The Apostle Paul writes of the law, and its curse, under which the Galatian believers were putting themselves: “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.” (Gal. iii. 10.) He says, “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." (v. 13.) Through the grace of God this word has come to us who believe, "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ" (Rom. vii. 4); and solemn indeed it is when a poor sinner addresses himself to the law and not to Christ for salvation. God says, "The just shall live by faith"; but the law is not faith, but doing; for "the man that doeth them shall live in them." What then say the Scriptures to the doer "who continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them"? "Cursed is every one" who fails to do all that the law requires. Most blessed is the redemption from this awful curse for all for whom the blessed Lord Jesus Christ hung upon the tree!

Let us look at some of the passages which speak of the redemption of the body. We are now blessed with all spiritual blessings, but our bodies are still in this world where sorrow and death reign. The whole creation is in "bondage of corruption." Even the dumb beasts suffer and die. But the day of liberty is coming for our bodies, and that will be the day of deliverance for creation.

Our hearts are often bitterly sorrowful, and it is needful that so it should be. It is impossible to live many years on earth without having a broken heart, but, through grace, glory awaits us—"Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. viii. 23.) These poor, dying frames will before long be redeemed out of this sorrow-stricken world, and from corruption, and will be made glorious like unto our Saviour's. Then will be "the liberty of the glory of the children of God," and the day of joy of the creation. We are sealed with the Holy Ghost unto the day of redemption (Eph. iv. 30)—that is, the Holy Spirit dwells within us, as the Lord promised should be the case (John xiv. 17), and the Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance. The Holy Spirit was promised by the Lord, and now in having Him in us we have the realized promise of Jesus; and as we have

the earnest, so surely shall we have the promised glory. Looking on to that great day, the apostle says (1 Cor. i. 30) Christ Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We have the first three; the last, redemption, will soon be ours.

This contemplation brings us to the songs where the redeemed shall worship God and the Lamb. The word we read "redeem" is "buy" or "purchase" (see R.V.) in the texts in the Revelation. The purchased in glory shall ever sing the praises of their Redeemer, and this is our bright and joyous prospect. Our hearts awake on earth to sing His love, and praise His dear Name, Redeemer, the more we dwell on His dying love for us.

The Pharisee.

IN our last paper on the Pharisees, we saw how utterly they had perverted to their own advancement the reality of being the Separate Ones, from sin and to God. Before noticing their doctrines, let us for a moment consider our Lord Jesus, the true Nazarite, who was ever the Holy, the Undeiled, the Separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 26), and who now in heaven—having sanctified, or separated Himself from the very earth we tread (read John xvii. 19)—is the Separate One.

Our holy and loving Lord was at every step of His life the perfect Man; He ever walked with the Father, and apart from sin. His joy flowed from communion with the Father. This He speaks of as "My joy." (John xvii. 13.) His peace amidst the storms of life arose from the same source, and this He calls "My peace." (John xiv. 27.) His holy separation was marked by meekness, lowliness, and love, so marvellous that, as we consider Him, we can only wonder and adore. He, the Lord of all, is the pattern of humility for men, who are but dust and ashes, and this seems a greater wonder than His might and majesty in creating all things! He humbled Himself. His holy hand touched the unclean, and in His compassion He stooped to instruct the ignorant; He fed the poor, He ate with publicans and sinners,



WASHING OF HANDS.

none of which the proud Pharisees could or would do, and all of which they abhorred. He retired for nights of prayer, to pray to His Father in secret; He wept over sinners in their sins, and, while He denounced sin, invited sinners to Himself, and to His Father. Every way of our holy and loving Lord was different from those of the hard, proud, exclusive men who lived inside the hedge of their scorn of others to their own satisfaction.

The teaching of the Lord, as we open the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, is directly opposed to that of these separate ones. The kingdom He proclaimed, and its holy but gracious principles, was as different from their doctrines as heaven and earth. Yes, indeed, Jesus preached the kingdom of heaven; they proclaimed the pride of earth! Oh! for more of those blessings of His beatitudes, which, never let us forget, are in great part for us on earth.

What did the Lord mean when He warned His hearers of the leaven of the Pharisees? It was not "of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine" (Matt. xvi. 6, 12), which He declared was "hypocrisy" (Luke xii. 1), that He spake. Their doctrine, speaking shortly, was cleansing the outside of the cup and of the platter, but leaving the inside full of evil; and, like their doctrines, the Pharisees, who outwardly appeared righteous to men, were within full of iniquity. (Matt. xxiii. 25-27.)

Thus spake the Lord, who "knew what was in man" (John ii. 25), and never let us forget that in His perfection He was angry with hypocrisy and iniquity, as in His perfection He was full of mercy and forgiveness. The Lord's stern words to and of these religionists of His day express His holy hatred of deceit and lying. To speak lightly of sin is neither love nor holiness.

What were the two great principles of the Pharisees? One was purification. Under this head comes the washing of hands, which the Lord refused and exposed. The mode of washing the hands enjoined among them in our Lord's time, was to lift up one or both hands and to pour water upon them; this was required to run down to the wrist; if it did not reach the wrist, the purification was not considered complete. It was a system of purification, not cleanliness; what we may perhaps term the holiness of purified hands. How this ceremony originated need not concern us; but an important point about it is, that having created the ordinance, they sought Scripture to support it. We may always shun a religious tradition which, after men have received, they try to enforce by Scripture.

We remember the six water-pots of stone kept for the purposes of purification at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee; in some such vessels the water used for the washing of the hands was kept, and it was drawn out and

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poured over the hands with a little measure or cup. To such lengths did the Pharisees go in their outward notions and traditions of defilement, that even by carrying a portion of the Scriptures—say a book—the hands were considered to be defiled.

Our picture shows us what one of the washings before meals was like. The guest is seated in the outer room, and near him is a water-pot of purification. He holds up one hand, while with the other he pours water over it, which must reach to the wrist—no further. A slave attends upon him.

With all this form and ceremony about washing the hands, or cups and platters, these separated ones passed over “judgment and the love of God.” (Luke xi. 42.) They allowed the fatal principle of attributing a moral value to a ceremonial action. This allowed in the soul, is like a worm in the bud to the destruction of morality and spirituality. If our hearts do not go with our actions we are but acting a part, and that is hypocrisy. If we bow our bodies in the presence of God, and not our hearts, we are hypocrites; if we tell a man whom we do not wish to see, how glad we are he has called upon us, we are hypocrites. Remember, God searches our hearts. No ceremonial action, Godward or manward, save as the expression of what is in the heart, can be acceptable.

What was another great point with the Pharisees? Tithing. God had required tithes from Israel for His service. The Pharisees tithed most scrupulously, even to the stalks of plants, such as the mint, rue, anise, and cummin, of which the Lord spoke. On no account would they forego *such* a command of God. We hear of one holy Rabbi who had been so precise about tithes that (so it was said) he had trained his ass not to eat corn the tithe of which had not been taken! Yet, while such folly passed for religion, the Lord said, zealous as they were in tithes, they neg-

lected judgment, mercy, and faith. (Matt. xxiii. 23.) Any base soul can give tithes and maintain his baseness, but judgment is the outcome of honour. *Judgment*, upright and honourable judgment, God demands of His people, and woe the nation, the people, or the man who dares to neglect this. Do not we see that we, too, may be busy with our “tithes,” or what we recognize as our religious duty, and yet neglect judgment! while, as for mercy, in which God delights, how slow are we thereto! Judgment and mercy are the results of our disposition towards our fellow men, and if these are evil, we had better not speak of our faith in God!

The Pharisees had faith in themselves, and hence neither mercy nor judgment towards men came into their articles of religion. The Lord said of them, they strained out the gnat, but swallowed the camel. Let us not be like



A MORNING MEAL.

them; let us not even allow our indignation to pour out itself upon those whited sepulchres of 1800 years ago, but let us beware of the meshes of our own religious strainer, and see to it, in the sight of God, that we are honest and upright in what we do. Let us see to it that, while careful in the outward observances of religion, and watchful lest ever so small a wrong thing of an exterior kind be allowed by us, we all the while are not swallowing a mass of evil! This was the sin of the system the Lord denounced when He said, they strained out the gnat and swallowed the camel.

Read St. Luke xi. 39-41, where these two great principles of Pharisaic holiness, to which we have referred, are exposed by the Lord.

Our English Bible.

WHAT THE WEST-COUNTRY FOLK WANTED.

IT has been well said, with regard to the right to accredit and interpret God's word assumed by the church of Rome, that if a child receive a letter from his father, the authority lies in the letter itself, not in the one who may chance to be the bearer of it. The messenger might try to keep back part of the letter, and to explain away the rest, but the child is bound to receive and obey the whole of the letter, as coming to him with all the authority of his father. He is to believe the message which comes to him because it is his father's word, not because someone else tells him it is true. So faith in God's word must be confidence in it because it is His word—because He has really spoken—otherwise it is not faith in God at all.

This seems clear and simple enough, and yet it is only by God's grace to us that any of us have known what it is to rest the soul for eternity upon the bare word of God, just because it is His word. What is natural to us all, is to seek some other resting place, and if we know anything of the deceitfulness of our own hearts, we can understand how it came to pass that this authority over the consciences of men, claimed by those who professed to be the sole guardians and interpreters of

God's word, was so readily accepted by the people. Thus we find that one of the special rights for which the country folk cried out so loudly in the time of our last King Edward was, the right to have the English Bibles banished from their churches, and prayers (or as they called it, "mass") said once more in Latin after the good old fashion.

Truly, like children who cry for some hurtful thing and will not be pacified, they knew not what they did. Bred up in the ignorance and superstition which had been the growth of those dark ages, what wonder if they mistook the empty forms of religion for the true worship of God, and thought of the Latin sentences, with their sounding cadences, as words whereby, in some way which they did not understand, but which the priest who repeated them did, God would be rendered merciful to their manifold sins and transgressions. They were taught to believe, too, that the blessed Virgin Mary, whose pictured image was so familiar to them, and of whom they had so often heard that she was kind and pitiful, would intercede with her holy Child for them, that they might be saved. Thus we can understand how grievous a thing it was to them when ruthless hands roughly tore from the churches the images upon which they had been accustomed to look with reverent and loving eyes. It was terrible to see so much which they had been taught to hold sacred being swept away, and to have, in many cases, but little given them in its place; for, by people ignorant of reading, the blessing of an open Bible was hardly understood. Their knowledge of Scripture was chiefly obtained from the mysteries or miracle-plays, which had lately been forbidden as profane. These were exhibitions in which sometimes the whole of the sacred history, from the creation to the last day, sometimes a portion, was acted. These plays were at first performed in the churches, with some show of reverence, the actors being priests, but they gradually became more and more irreverent, until the most sacred "mystery" was little better than a Punch and Judy show. Still, we may well believe, especially if any words of scripture

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were put into the mouths of the players, that even such exhibitions as those may have been used by God to the blessing of the poor, to whom so little means of help or comfort was afforded, for He who makes the wrath of man to praise Him, can also turn the folly of man to account, through His grace.

We have seen that those poor people who clamoured against English Bibles, also demanded that the sacrament, or, as they would have said, the host, should be elevated and worshipped, and that the mass should be said in Latin. Most of us, brought up in a Protestant country, have but a vague idea of what this means; but in Roman Catholic countries, the people speak of going to mass just as in England they would speak of going to church. It is difficult to explain what the mass really is—what it meant to thousands in the times of which we are reading, without using language which would shock a child who has learnt from God's word in any degree to understand the saving value of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, once offered for the remission of sins. Yet without some knowledge of it we shall not understand for what the martyrs of the time of Queen Mary, of whose faith and patience we have so often heard, suffered and died; we shall not understand how precious in God's sight was the death of His faithful witnesses, nor how much we owe to them—for it was for no light matter that they laid down their lives.

The name itself is of no importance: "mass" is only the fragment of a form of words in Latin used to signify that the meeting was over, and the congregation dismissed. The word "host" carries with it the error which underlies the whole doctrine of the Romish Church: it comes from the Latin *hostia*, and means the one struck down—the victim. It was the name given to the piece of bread—which was called the "wafer," from an old word, meaning a cake—which had been consecrated by the priest, and was held on high that the people should adore it, as the very body of Christ.

In the times of the early Christians it was a simple and blessed thing for them to remember the Lord's death, in the way in which He

had Himself appointed. By degrees, however, this act of "showing the Lord's death," so solemn and touching in its simplicity, had been surrounded by various ceremonies. From being spoken of as service commemorative of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, it began to be spoken of as itself a sacrifice: "the sacrament of the altar." All the prayer connected with it was made in an unknown tongue—much of it was even secretly whispered, especially those mystic words of consecration which were believed to have the power of changing the wafer of bread into the body of Christ. The priest was seen by the people to draw near the altar with much reverent observance, bowing, crossing himself, kissing the altar: until at last they believed that he, by consecrating the host, was offering for them a sacrifice which had power to take away their sins, and to set them right with God.

The priest, then, in the sacrifice of the mass, pretended to offer Christ still, as a propitiatory sacrifice, for the sins of the living—those men and women who knelt around him; and the dead—those whom they had known and loved on earth, and of whom they longed to be assured that their spirits were in safety and at rest.

And what was the sacrifice which the priest thus offered, continually, in the presence of the people? Here, again, we shrink from uttering the profane falsehood by which the souls of men were deluded; it is nevertheless true that when, after the words of consecration, the priest, on his knees, raised the wafer on high, while, by ringing a bell, he gave warning to the people to worship it, it was presented to them as the very body of Christ, and worshipped by them as if, as a writer of the time said, "Christ had appeared in the clouds." After thus "elevating the host," the priest was accustomed to break some of the bread, and put it into the cup; saying in Latin, "May this mixture and consecration of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be to us who receive it effectual to eternal life" . . . adding the prayer, "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us: grant us Thy peace!"

The priest alone drank the wine, but the people were allowed to take the bread.

Thus had the taking of the Lord's Supper in memory of Him by those who had been saved by His atoning death, been changed into a continual offering up of what was said to be the body and blood of Christ. Thus, in Christian times, had those who professed to teach the true worship of God led the people back to the times before Christ had come and had died, when the priest stood, "offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins." We are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews that if the sacrifice of Christ were to be repeated He must often have *suffered*; but in this pretence to have a sacrifice still offered up on earth, there was no thought of suffering, no "shedding of blood," without which "is no remission." And this mockery of a continual offering was carried on, while the blessed Lord, having once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, had for ever sat down at the right hand of God, no more to suffer, no more to die—for "by one offering He has perfected for ever those that are sanctified." It has been well said that a continual offering for sins was a continual memorial of them; proving that they were *not* put away.

The doctrine which teaches that after the words of consecration the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of Christ, is called the doctrine of transubstantiation, or a change of substance. It was for refusing to accept this as an article of faith that many had suffered, from the days when the New Testament first began to go abroad among the people, even to the times of Queen Mary, when the question, which had always been a very serious one, as it was the central doctrine of the Church of Rome, became the grand test by which she tried those who were suspected of being unfaithful to her teachings.

The belief in transubstantiation was especially enjoined by the Act of Six Articles, that Act concerning which the rioters in the late reign had prayed that it might again be in force. Alas, they knew not what they

did: it was under this Act, so soon to be again made law, that the penalty of death overtook so many who could not yield to the teaching of the Church on this point during the short but eventful reign of Queen Mary.

An incident which took place at the battle of Cowton Moor, in the time of Stephen, lets us see very clearly in what light the "sacrament of the altar" was then regarded. It was where the Scottish king, taking up the cause of his niece, came across the border, leaving destruction and misery in his track, that the aged Archbishop of York mustered the country-folk, as well as the men-at-arms and knights, to resist the invaders. The battle, in which the Scots were defeated, was called "The Battle of the Standard," because the English rallied round no banner, stained with the blood of many a hard-fought field, but had for their standard, carried in a waggon, a mast, which bore on high a silver box containing a consecrated wafer. Thus we see that the host was carried into the battle with the idea that its presence there would secure victory, even as the ark, the sign of the presence of God among His people, had been carried into the battle by the Israelites of old.

In those days, besides the ordinary sacrifice of the mass, there were masses said for various objects: some for commemorating departed saints; some for rain, in seasons of drought; a special mass for avoiding sudden death; and the people were plainly told, concerning the benefits conferred by hearing mass—the words are taken from a service book of the time of Henry the Eighth—"That day thou hearest thy mass, God granteth thee needful and lawful things. That day idle oaths and forgotten sins been forgiven. That day thou shalt not leese thine eye-sight, ne dy no sudden death; ne in the time of the mass thou shalt not wax aged. Every step thitherward and homeward an angel shall reckon."

At the same time it was enjoined, "Lewd" (that is, unlearned) "men and women to dispute of this sacrifice are utterly forboden: for it is enough for them to believe as holy Church teacheth them."

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For Old and Young.



THE AGED PEDLAR.

THE AGED PEDLAR.

SUNDAY after Sunday at one time an aged couple, whose dress and appearance bespoke their being of the poorest of the poor, were in their accustomed place in a little mission room, with eyes riveted upon the preacher. They were pedlars, and dwelt in a common lodging-house in the town.

Like Lydia of old, poor Mercy B. attended to the words spoken by the preacher; the Lord opened her heart, and thus, after seventy-eight weary years of sorrow and sin, during which she had lived according to the course of this world, God gave her peace—she believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the salvation of her soul.

“That was a blessed night,” said she, speaking of it afterwards, “when I heard that grand story of Jesus’ love to a poor old sinner like me. Bless the Lord for His mercy to Mercy B.”

A new life now opened to Mercy B., a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved her and had given Himself for her. New trials came, too: trials that shook the poor earthen vessel, but made manifest the precious life enshrined therein. She knew that God loved her, and had given her everlasting life; now she was to learn to know Him in His character of her heavenly Father.

Mercy B. was conscious of God’s eye being upon her, and that He guided her as she went her daily round. She often said, “When I go to a house with my basket, I look up and tell my Father in heaven that He knows I want to pay my way, and then He tells the people of the house to buy of me; and I’ve always enough.” Yes, it is written, “Your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” (Matt. vi. 32.)

Our aged friend went regularly every day to a christian’s house to have a portion of God’s word read to her. She found it as necessary as her daily food. It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matt. iv. 4.) The one who read to her will long remember her eager attention and intelligent questioning. She would repeat a text until it was fixed in her memory,

then literally feed upon it. Luke xv. was her favourite chapter, and those who visited her were invariably requested to read that portion to her.

The first time I went to see her keeps still fresh in my memory. It was a severe winter’s day. The husband was on the bed fast asleep. “Poor mon,” said Mercy, “he be tired out. I be bad with my chest to-day, so he’d to go out alone with his basket. A lady gave he some coal, and it was heavy to carry. You see, ma’am, we be old, but God is very good to us. Didn’t He care for me, and spare me for seventy-eight years, and then take me to that preaching where I got rest? It is rest He gives. ‘I will give you rest,’ He says, and He means it. I ne’er heard such love before,” and she repeated with emphasis, “‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’”

“I had heard about God, but I didn’t know Him, and I can’t read, so of course I never read the Bible. I was born in Wales among the mountains, far away from anybody to teach me, but I know all things work together for good to them that love God, and Jesus loves me and teaches me better than any one else could. Yes, He do love me and talk to me, and I do talk to Him. I’m sure I ne’er wash my hands, but what I think of the cruel nails in His hands. Oh, what pain for the likes o’ me! But sometimes I wish my body were in the grave.”

“Why, how is that?”

“I feel such a poor thing, so unable to care for myself.”

“But you were just telling me how God had cared for you; will He not love for evermore?”

“Yes, He will; but I be old, and can’t work like I used to, and what if I can’t pay my rent?”

“Were you able to pay it yesterday?”

“Yes.”

“And have you enough to pay it to-day?”

“Yes, my husband brought home tenpence, and our rent is only sevenpence a day.”

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"And you have coals, bread, tea, sugar, more than you want for to-day. You're not trusting Him, dear woman. He hasn't changed since yesterday, for He is ever the same."

The big tears rolled down her cheeks as she exclaimed, "How He do love we!"

"Yes, and He goes on loving those who believe in Him, and Christ says He will come quickly and take them to be with Him for ever! Won't that be good?"

A bright smile lit up her withered cheeks as she nodded assent.

"Before I go, shall I read to you?"

"Oh, please, yes," and she rose quickly and brought me a large print Testament, which she told me a gentleman had given them; her husband spelt the words in it, but "she couldn't understand his spelling."

"What shall I read you?"

"The fifteenth chapter of Luke, please."

As I read, many times she exclaimed, "He were all in rags," or "His father kissed him." We talked together of the joy of the Father's house, and how it is written, "they began to be merry," and how that we had not to wait till we reached heaven to enjoy it, but that it began even now. Then Mercy sat in rapt silence, her heart too full for speech.

A few days after this, Mercy fell down and sprained her wrist. This was a severe trial for her, as it was with difficulty she could carry her basket of goods, but she proved the goodness of God, and His sufficiency to meet her every need. She little knew that her days were numbered, and that her God and Father was preparing her for home, but so it was. As her bodily weakness increased, she expressed her desire to go into the workhouse for a fortnight's rest. Her christian friends felt that they could not let her go there, and help was given, supplying her need. Within that fortnight the rest she had so craved came, and she quietly passed away to be for ever with the Lord. E. E. S.

TREMBLING OVER THE FIRE.

A FRIEND of ours was relating to us his walk over Vesuvius. Sulphur and smoke

rose up out of the crater as he looked down, though the volcano was quiet. Even on a still day, to glance but for a moment into the smoke of the fire rising up out of the bowels of the earth, is a fearful sight. As our friend turned away, a man with a great stone in his uplifted hands called to him, but the ground burning to his feet, and the sulphur and smoke rising up around him, urged him along, and he did not stop at the man's call.

Then the man pitched the great stone to the earth with all his force, and immediately the ground shook and trembled all around, and it seemed as if the whole surface might give way and all be swallowed up in a moment in the flames below. Trembling over the very fire beneath him, our friend hurried away.

What a voice to the unsaved sinner! Man, you are just over eternal burnings! Sometimes you have felt the terrors of hell and have trembled. You have looked, as it were, into the fiery future, and then you have hurried away. Perhaps at this moment you have a fresh sense of eternal woe, but, say you, "No more, no more; I must away from this."

Like the man with the stone we cry to you, "Stop!" but no, you turn away. Then hearken: "After death the judgment." These are awful words. The very ground on which you tread trembles. This life is but the thin crust, that may give way at any moment, and you may be plunged into eternity.

HE NEVER GOES AWAY.

I CALLED upon an aged Welsh woman, not long since, in her cottage on the mountain side. On taking leave of her she replied by saying very earnestly, partly in English and partly in Welsh—to the latter language she would always return when feeling very ill—"People come in to see me; they come in and go out, but *Jesu Grist*—Jesus Christ—comes, and *He never goes away*."

Ah! dear old christian, she believed His faithful word, realized His presence who has promised He will never leave nor forsake us. How is it with you? What visits do you get?

E.C.K.

I WANT TO GO TO JESUS.

"**N**O! I want nothing to eat, nothing to drink, nothing that this world could give; I want to go to Jesus. Don't speak to me, except of Him; He is all I desire."

These are the words of one who recently went to be for ever with the Lord.

Manytimes had He spoken to this precious soul through His servants, and as many times had His loving invitations been treated with scorn, until at last she became not only a despiser of God's word but a bitter persecutor of His people.

It was when Mrs. T. was brought face to face with death, and with the realities of eternity, that the grace of God broke her heart, and she was brought to see herself a hell-deserving sinner. And then it was that she was led by the Holy Ghost to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to the saving of her soul.

She had been terrified at the thought of death, but now how changed! She loved to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 55-57.)

Those whose privilege it was to visit her during her last fortnight on earth will never forget her confidence in God, and her longing desire to be with the Lord.

"He is precious to me," she would say; "He is all I desire. Don't speak to me of anything but Jesus. Oh, my loving Saviour! He loves me so much, and I shall soon be with Him." Then after a pause, "Why do people ever doubt Jesus? He is so loving and so precious. I shall soon be with Him for ever. But I am with Him now."

"Yes, and He is with you, too, and He will never leave you."

"Ah, I know that. Bless and praise His holy name! But tell me, how is it that He loved me so much?"

"He was not willing that you should perish, but desired that you should have eternal life," was the reply.

The disease from which Mrs. T. was suffering brought on periods of the most intense pain, which forced her to cry out, "Oh, what I am suffering!" "Won't you pray for me, that the Lord will take me?" Then she would correct herself, and add, "But I must be patient. I will wait His time. I don't want to grieve my blessed Lord. When I think how soon I shall be with Him I can bear it all patiently, for the sake of my Lord Jesus. I shall soon be with Him, and then I know all my suffering will be over.

"Oh, what will it be to be there? Oh, my blessed Jesus, I shall soon see Thee and be with Thee for ever!"

Another who went to see her thought that perhaps she might have some mistaken thoughts as to what made her so acceptable in God's sight, so he said, "It is through the blood that you enter heaven."

"Oh yes," was her immediate reply, "I know that; I know that Jesus has finished the work. He has completely done everything for me, and so glorified God. What am I but a poor worm? Oh! we have something to praise God for."

"God will never speak to you about one sin now, Mrs. T."

"No. Blessed be His name! I know I have no sins on me now, for they have all been borne by Jesus. And I shall soon be with Him, my blessed Lord."

So sweet was it to witness her joy and confidence in the Lord, and to hear the oft-repeated desire to be "with Him," that as we stood by her bedside we could not refrain from tears of joy.

Another striking proof of the reality of her conversion to God was her love for all His children. Frequently she would say, "I do love you, because you belong to the Lord."

The one who was with her during the hours of what proved to be her last night on earth, gives the following account of her happy state at that time.

"He is precious," she said. "He has been precious for some time now. He is here by my side."—"What am I stopping

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down here for? It is the Father's will that I should be down here a little longer, but I shall soon go to be with the Lord."

Once, after being in great pain, she said, "Art thou coming? But oh! I will wait; I will be patient."

About three o'clock in the morning she sang in a clear voice the words of a hymn; but soon afterwards her breathing became very difficult, and it was thought she would have passed away. With a face beaming with joy, she gazed up toward heaven, and pointing with her finger, exclaimed—

"I can see them! They are coming nearer!"

On the morning after her death, when talking with her daughter and another young woman, as we looked on the worn-out body of dear Mrs. T., one remarked—

"She has gone to that Jesus of whom she spoke so much. What a blessed thing to know oneself eternally saved! She knew this, and had no more fear of death than you have of sleep. But what a solemn thing for any one to die in his sins and be lost for ever, to be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Turning to the young woman, I asked, "Have you ever thought of these things?" The answer was "No."

Oh, reader, what is your position? If you are not in Christ you are still lost. What will be your end if you die as you are? Take warning from the following awful scene, which was witnessed by the dear servant of Christ who was the means in God's hands of my own conversion.

"One night," said he, "after I had retired to rest, I was awakened by someone knocking at the door of my house. On opening the door there stood an old man, who asked me to go and pray for his child. On arriving at the house an appalling scene presented itself. There was the mother on her knees crying, 'O God, save my child! Lord, have mercy upon her!' The husband then asked me to pray for the young wife, who lay upon the bed with the death-sweat on her brow and horror in her face, crying, 'Oh, I am damned! I am sinking into hell!

Oh, William, my dear husband, train up our child for heaven. I am dying, and hell is my doom. Take him to my grave, and tell him his mother is damned. Oh, my babe! your mother is being damned.' While her poor husband groaned, 'Oh that my wife had never been born,' she tore her hair and screamed to them, 'Oh, can't you save me? Oh, husband, save me!' And thus she died."

My reader, reflect that one of these two ends must be yours. Either victory through the blood of the Lamb, or eternal ruin.

J. S—N.

I'M NOT ONE THAT NEEDS SAVING.

"**E**IGHTY-THREE, sir!" said a Hampshire villager, in answer to the question of a visitor as to his age, and his bent back and tottering frame witnessed to the truth of his reply.

But many as had been his years, spent too in a village where the glorious light of full free salvation through Christ alone had long shone, yet this aged one knew not Christ, nor the value of His precious blood, nor the saving power of His blessed name. More than this, he knew not his need of the atoning work of the Son of God, but, resting in his own supposed goodness, he was awaiting with no apparent anxiety the time when he should "give account of himself to God."

When asked, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour?" his confident reply was, "I've always paid my way, and been respectable, and done my duty; I'm not one that needs saving."

So self-satisfied was this poor soul, satisfied with himself while rejecting the only Name in which there is salvation. (Acts iv. 12.) For self he had lived those eighty-three long years, and self was his only object and glory, now that his gray hairs were going down to the grave. Thus this aged sinner refused salvation by the blood of Christ; bold in his own righteousness he dared to think without uneasiness of standing before the great white throne. Poor blinded soul, how awful his delusion, as, led captive by the devil at his will, he was hastening down to the pit.

His end I know not. He has gone to his long home, and the mourners went about the streets ; but how awful his surprise, if, still refusing the grace of God, he passed away ; if, still turning a deaf ear to the urgent entreaty of that loving Saviour, he was ushered into the prison house, there to await the dread judgment of those without Christ, and then to stand before the very One whose love he had refused. What a thought, to see Him then, no longer as a Saviour, but as a Judge ; to hear no longer a voice of entreaty, but the dread sentence of eternal punishment in the lake of fire, where the "smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night." (Rev. xiv. 11.)

My reader, are you thinking that *you* do not need salvation by Christ Jesus ? You would not perhaps dare, like the poor Christ-rejector of whom you have read, to *say* so. But is it your thought ? Are you satisfied with yourself ? Oh, that you might see yourself as God sees you. Your righteousnesses, the very best things you have done, are all as filthy rags, and you yourself are as an unclean thing. (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) God in His own matchless grace is waiting now in long suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance ; but remember that the day of judgment fast approaches. Oh, take now the salvation which God is offering—the best robe—the wedding garment, and then you will have the blessed portion of all those of whom scripture speaks as "in Christ Jesus ;" you need fear no judgment, no condemnation, and no separation from His love. I. F.

THE FIRST GREAT QUESTION.

WHAT must I do to be saved ? Question of all questions ! Its importance—who can measure ? It will not be asked in eternity—no, dear reader, never, never, save this side of the grave and the judgment. Have you ever earnestly asked—What must I do—I, an immortal being, whose life-journey will so soon be over—what must I do to be saved ? Often indeed you have

said of friends you know, "Poor——! he was cut off in a moment, never a chance to think about his soul." But you are still spared your strength of mind and body ; to-day, dear friend, is your opportunity. "Now is the day of salvation," says the Scripture. Thank God for this, and as you do so—oh, get upon your knees and cry to God, What must I do to be saved ?

Think of all the sins of your life ! you must give an account to God for every one of them. As men live, so men die. Think, as you look around on poverty, sickness, death, what sin has done on earth, and enquire what then must eternity be for unsaved sinners ! You cannot retrace one step, or recall one evil word ! From the depth of your soul cry to God, What must I do to be saved ?

Thus says the Scripture, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.) The Lord Jesus is the Saviour ; He died to put away sin, He bore the judgment of God against sin. Sinner, believe on Him, and you shall be saved. Repentant sinner, if you have been a persecutor of God's people, a blasphemer, or have lived like a heathen, whoever, whatever you are, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, suffices for all your sins. Believe on Him who shed His blood, and you shall be saved.

Nor shall this blessed salvation be for you alone ; your house will become a changed place. Your relations, your neighbours will soon find out that you are no longer a slave of sin ; they will see in you a sinner saved, and through you they shall get a blessing. God grant you to cry for salvation, and to find the Saviour now, to-day, and to be a blessing to others.

INSEPARABLES.

HAPPINESS and holiness walk hand in hand. True we see not always the beauty of their association, and shall hardly do so until this world of sin be left ; but this we know, the really happy man on earth is the really holy one.



Conflict.

EVERY true believer, if in an active state of soul, is engaged in some sort of conflict. If he be asleep, he dreams on in a dangerous condition of contentment, is open to Satan's temptations, and is practically useless on the earth for God. The conflicts in which christians are engaged, though they all may be necessary, are not all of the proper christian character. Unless in the sleepy state, christians are engaged in one of the three following kinds of conflict.

First; *The conflict with self.*

As we read: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Rom. vii. 15, 19.)

The burden of this struggle is "I." Ten times over in the two short verses quoted we have "I." Self is the subject here. The trial and pain of this conflict lies in the absolute powerlessness of the believer, either to do good or to abstain from evil. The object of the strife on the part of the believer is to do good, and not to do wrong; but the war is for him hopeless. The battlefield is the soul of the believer; the opposing forces are good desires and evil powers. The end of this struggle is captivity and misery, such as verses 23 and 24 describe.

Numbers of God's people are thus engaged at this moment, and are so fully engaged, that they are unfit for anything else. Indeed they could not engage in any other conflict while occupied with this, for this conflict fully occupies them. God save our reader out of this struggling, if it be now his.

If there be any comfort in the remark, however, we observe that none but a believer can be engaged in this strife, because the desires for good are divinely given; they are holy desires, and none but a true believer has truly holy desires. Had the gracious

lesson been learned by the believer engaged in this struggle—that Christ alone is our power to enable us to do good, and that Christ is risen, and that all that we are by nature, good or bad, has found its end in the sight of God at the cross of Christ—the christian would not wage this warfare another hour. He would seek and find deliverance from it. He could not so much as dream of victory in it.

In Christ—who died for us and rose again; in Christ, with whom we died unto sin, and in whom we are alive unto God—is our power; and when we simply believe and rely on this blessed fact, we have deliverance from this most painful conflict. So long as the christian looks into himself for power over himself, so long as he tries to master his wishes in his own strength, he will struggle on; but when he lets go all his weapons, and surrenders to his own utter inability in himself to do one single good thing, and trusts alone to Christ, he will be delivered from this character of conflict.

Then, instead of fighting himself, he will trust Christ. Then, instead of waging the hopeless battle, with groans and perhaps despondency, he will thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Fellow christian, instead of trying through your own efforts to carry out the desires God has put in your heart, rely on Christ's strength, and thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord for all that He is for you.

Second; *The conflict between the Spirit of God in us and our flesh.*

As we read: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would." (Gal. v. 17. R.V.)

Our own flesh is here ranged on the one side, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in us on the other. In the conflict with self, it was the struggle between good desires and a nature powerless to do good. In this case the struggle is between our natural evil desires and the Spirit in us restraining us from doing evil.

The Spirit of God dwells in the believer.

He is the Holy Spirit. Not only does no good thing dwell in our flesh, not only is our fallen nature a corrupt thing, but in us there are active lustings after evil, as we very well know. In ourselves and of ourselves, and if left to ourselves, we should think evil and do evil continually, Christians though we be. Our old nature is never improved; it is discovered and restrained by the Spirit's presence. Holiness never grows out of fallen human nature, any more than figs develop out of thistles. When people speak of being or becoming in themselves holy and sinless, we may believe their testimony if they show us a thistle bearing figs for its fruit. Let us never forget that our own natural evil selves do not become changed or improved by the presence of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

A truly holy-living Christian is he who is filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit restrains the believer from doing that which, if left to himself, he would do. The Spirit in him desires according to God, the flesh in him desires according to the flesh, hence the Spirit desires or lusts against the flesh. The Spirit creates holy desires and produces holy actions in the believer, and of this grace is each believer daily the subject, at least where there is honesty of soul before God.

If the believer yield himself to the Spirit, his life will be one of peace and joy; if otherwise, his heart will be a battlefield, and the Spirit in him will render him unhappy and downcast. In the latter case, the Spirit in him will be checking and restraining, preventing him from doing the things he would—not giving him joy. Thus the believer will find, instead of joy in the Holy Ghost, conflict, because of the presence of a grieved Spirit.

In order to attain to Christian happiness we need to yield ourselves to the Spirit who dwells within us. Even as to be freed from the first character of conflict, we need to give up all hopes of self mastery in self power and to trust Christ alone for strength; so in the second, we need to surrender our wills to God, and yield ourselves to the Spirit Who dwells within us.

We will conclude this paper next month.

SATAN'S LIES.

THESE are usually prepared with exceeding cunning and consummate art. But, saith the Scripture, "We are not ignorant of his devices." A bold, black lie would frighten most people—certainly it would alarm Christians—so Diabolos usually whitens his lies to the appearance of simple innocence. A lie, in itself, is a bitter thing, and, sooner or later, every lie will be found to be bitter, like death. Diabolos acts not so foolishly as to offer the sons of men, who like sweets, plain gall—he covers a little honey over his gall, and people taste and say, "How sweet this thing is." Perhaps the gall won't be tasted for a long season, but if Diabolos can get a child of man, sinner or saint, to swallow his gall, however honeyed, he has succeeded to the satisfaction of his heart. But as gall is gall, so are lies, lies. Whiten them, sweeten them, they are lies still. Whitewashed pitch is pitch, and the day will prove the truth about a lie, that a lie is a lie.

WALKING WITH CHRIST.

CULTIVATE communion with Christ. He will not refuse you His company, if your heart be free from folly.

ACQUIREMENTS.

WE become partakers in spirit with Christ of the joy of resurrection, by going through sorrow and distress with Him.

Sympathy is gained by suffering.

Our English Bible.

THE GOSPELLERS AND THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR.

"THE disciples of Wycliffe," said a writer of his time, "explain the Scripture in a different way from the holy doctors of the Church of Rome." This charge, made so early, was the charge constantly brought against the "gospellers," and not twenty years after the death of Wycliffe there were some who suffered death because they thus explained the Scriptures. If we look back a little, over the years—nearly two hundred—which passed from that time to the period

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PRINCE HARRY AND JOHN BADBY, THE MARTYR.

only with holding, but with teaching heresy. "He saith," so his accusation ran, "that he will not worship the cross whereon Christ suffered, but only Christ who suffered thereon." Then, as his trial went on, a more terrible accusation was laid against him; for he had said that after the pronouncing of the words of consecration the sacramental bread did *not* then become the very body and blood of Christ, "but it remaineth of the same nature that it was before; neither doth it cease to be bread."

Again, ten years later, we find the record of a tailor who was brought before the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop

at which we have now arrived, we shall find that the grand point of difference was ever the same; from those early times, even to the reign of Queen Mary, the question was whether the Scripture or the Church was to be believed touching the "real presence" of Christ in the "Sacrament of the altar." Not to believe what the Church taught upon this point—that was the unpardonable heresy.

Thus, in the time of Henry the Fourth, we read of a priest who was brought before the Archbishop of Canterbury, charged not

of London, and a grand array of dignitaries of the Church, to answer to a like charge; for he, too, had denied that the sacramental words whispered over it by the priest could make any change in the bread. It was said of some of old, who for Christ's sake were not mindful of what they had left behind, that they "might have had opportunity to have returned," and these words occur to us as we think of the touching story of the end of this martyr, and remember that he was but one out of many of whose faith and courage no

earthly record has been preserved. When he was led out, we are told, to suffer at Smithfield, the Prince of Wales, afterwards the brave young King Henry the Fifth, came to him, and tried by promises and threats in turn, to win him from what he considered his pestilent opinions back to the true faith. Then, as the crowd gave way on all sides, and the people everywhere dropped upon their knees, a grand procession approached.

The prior of St. Bartholomew was coming, walking in state under a rich canopy, and carrying the Host, while twelve men bearing torches marched before him. The poor tailor, who had resisted the entreaties of his prince, and refused to save his life by denying what he had learnt from God to be true, was to be put to yet another trial before the end came.

The people saw the procession stop in front of John Badby as he stood alone, ready for his death. The prior, showing him the consecrated bread in its silver casket, asked him in solemn tones what he believed that to be. We may imagine the breathless pause with which the crowd awaited the reply. By God's grace to him, the answer came in no doubtful tone: "I know it well," he said; "it is bread—hallowed bread; but nothing more."

Even at the last moment, when the fire had already been lighted around him, one more opportunity was offered to him. At a cry from the sufferer, which those who were nearest believed to be an appeal for mercy, Prince Harry bade them quench the flames, and once more tried to induce him to save his life, at the same time offering a pension and reward if only he would give up his heresy and return to the true faith. But it was in vain; John Badby refused to love his life too well.

Concerning another, a priest, whom we cannot trace further than the prison to which he was sent back, after having been brought before the same Archbishop Arundel, we read that when the archbishop threatened him with the sure end of those who held heresies contrary to the teaching of the church—that he should be burned at Smith-

field—he received the stern words as though they brought him some welcome message. "At this saying," he wrote, "I stood still and spake not, but I thought in my heart that God did me great grace, if He would of His great mercy, bring me to such an end. . . . and in my heart I prayed the Lord God to comfort me, and strengthen me against them; and I prayed God for His goodness to me then and always, for that grace to speak with a meek and easy spirit, and whatsoever thing that I should speak, I might thereto have the authority of Scripture, or open reason."

The many who were, as the saying of the time was, "troubled" on account of the sacrament of the altar are said generally to have answered from two books; the "Wicket" by Wycliffe, and "The Shepherds' Calendar," in both of which the teaching of the gospels and the epistles concerning the Lord's Supper was clearly set forth—that it was given by our Lord Himself as a remembrance of His death. They were wont to quote the words, "Eat ye: this is My body," and to explain that when Christ sat at supper with His disciples, He had not His body in His hand to distribute to them, but spoke figuratively then, as He had often done at other times, as when He said, "I am the Bread which came down from heaven; "I am the true Vine;" "I am the Door." The words of one, a simple unlettered man, on this subject, have come down to us.

"Men speak much," he said, "of the sacrament of the altar, but this will I abide by, that Christ brake bread to His disciples, and bade them eat it, saying it was His flesh; and then He went from them and suffered; and then rose from death to life, and ascended into heaven, and there sitteth on the right hand of the Father . . . and therefore how He should be here in the form of bread, I cannot see."

Another, who suffered in the same great conflict, when visited in prison by one who sought to shake his constancy by reminding him that fire was hot, replied, "Ah, Mr. Wingfield, be at my burning, and you shall

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say, 'There standeth a christian soldier in the fire!' for I know that fire and water, swords and all things, are in the hand of God, and He will suffer no more to be laid upon us than He will give strength to bear." And we read that when this poor man was brought out to die in the market-place of his own native town of Ipswich, the towns-folk praised God for his constancy, he being but a simple peasant of no learning.

These instances, taken one here and another there, will suffice to show how dangerous it was for any "to explain the Scripture in a different way from the holy doctors of the Church of Rome"—and the danger only grew as time went on. When Wycliffe first spoke boldly against the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the law "about the burning of a heretic" had not been made, and he escaped with his life; now, in Queen Mary's reign, the ranks of the martyrs were to be swelled by many who suffered because they would not say what they knew to be false and contrary to God's word in connection with this same doctrine.

In thinking of the history of this unhappy queen, we should remember that her childhood had been embittered by the ill-treatment suffered by her mother; she had known little love or tenderness, and had, during the reign of her young brother, suffered for her constancy to the Romish doctrines in which she had been early trained, great efforts having been made by the king and his council to prevent her hearing mass. The Reforming party, too, had been active in trying to deprive her of her throne, and the remembrance of this made her inclined to deal harshly with them. Her first act was to set free from imprisonment, or recall from banishment, the bishops Bonner, Gardiner, and Tunstall. At the beginning of her reign, however, she told the Lord Mayor that she "meant not to compel or strain men's consciences," and many who had been filled with dismay took heart as the words of the queen passed from mouth to mouth. The Londoners, however, had taken alarm at the

return of the bishops, and when a preacher at Paul's Cross spoke in praise of Bonner, the audience interrupted him with loud cries of dissent. On account of the tumult which was made, the queen sent to the Lord Mayor, bidding him make it known that restrictions should at once be placed upon reading the Scriptures, and that no man should henceforth preach unless licensed by her majesty to do so. It is true that this proclamation could not have an immediate effect, for the people as yet had the law on their side, but it served to show them how little they could trust the fair words so lately spoken by their queen. Bishop Gardiner had encouraged Mary to believe that it was yet possible to bring the English people back, like wandering sheep, to the fold of the Church; it was with this idea firmly fixed in her mind that she began her reign, and even before Parliament met she had dismissed many of those bishops who would be most likely to oppose her in carrying it out, had restored mass, and undone, as far as possible, all which had been done in her brother's reign, bringing the form of Church service back to what it had been in the last year of her father's reign.

Thus the blind wish of the poor rioters of Edward's time was granted; and once more in the churches, where the people had listened to the word of God in their own tongue, Latin prayers were heard.

Mary's first Parliament refused to acknowledge the Pope as head of the English church, but agreed that mass should be restored, and pronounced the marriages of the clergy illegal. This last decree fell like a thunderbolt upon many a happy home; for those of the clergy who had married were now obliged to leave the country, or to separate from their wives. Many took refuge in Geneva, and we shall hear more of them by and by.

We may remember about this first Parliament of Mary's reign, that it stedfastly refused to pass any acts which would make persecution on account of religion lawful: thus the storm, which was so soon to break, was delayed for a time.



SITTING UNDER THE SHADOW.

THE luxuriance of the flowers, and the abundance of the fruits of an Eastern garden, are so very different from the beauty and crops of those of England that we sometimes miss the force of the Bible illustrations on the subject. The favourite orange is termed the apple-tree in our Bibles. The apple is essentially an English fruit, but in the gardens of the land of Palestine we should find the lovely orange. There is a great charm about this tree, for it is ever green, and

it bears flowers and fruit at the same time : pleasant shade, reviving perfume, and refreshing and sustaining food, are its gifts to its owner.

The orange when gathered fresh from the tree has a very different taste from the fruit as brought to us in this country. Its real charm, however agreeable we may consider the taste of what we obtain, is lost by its being gathered unripe, and by lengthy transit from its native soil.

There is a very beautiful text in the Song of

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Songs about the orange: "As the orange tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." (Ch. ii. 3.) The favoured speaker, in answer to the words of Solomon, had spoken of herself as a humble wildflower of Sharon, a little common wayside blossom, expressing her nothingness, as it were. And what are we but poor, common things? Yet the Lord in glory loves us, and has set His love upon us. He, speaking through Solomon, the king in glory, says of His people, "As the lily among thorns, so is My love among the daughters." He does not reckon the feeblest of His as common and insignificant—no, but fair and beautiful as a flower painted by the hand of God amongst the thorns of this sorrow-stricken, sinful world. Such gracious words call forth the language of the text we have quoted about the orange! And, indeed, it is the Lord's own love toward us, believed and rejoiced in, that calls forth our admiring love of Himself.

The trees of the wood, not the trees of the garden even, for the contrast is drawn between forest trees, are in the lips of the speaker as nothing compared with the fruitful orange. Under this tree is a favourite place for seats in Eastern gardens. Our artist has portrayed the owner of one of these seated by his well-filled cistern, reading a roll of the law of God, and pleasantly shaded from the fiery sun by the thick and leafy orange boughs. Now, what a happy lesson lies herein for us! Our place of rest and of refreshing shade is nearness to Christ Himself. When the sun of affliction beats down fiercely, if we have come to Him, we can say, "I sat under His shadow with great delight," for He gives real joy and pleasure of soul. And at such a time how sweet to the parched spirit is the taste of His fruit! His fruit—my taste—are exquisitely brought together in this lovely figure; and may they be so in the experiences of all of us who know His Name.

How delightful it is to see a christian bearing fruit and flowers at one time! There are too many who bear flowers, but bring

little fruit to perfection. Young life is full of the perfume of promise. We should seek to be not only always promising, but also always ripening. On the other hand, too many christians settle down into a very autumnal state as years advance. Their early love is like the memory of the perfume of spring in autumn. Ripening and producing, producing and ripening, should characterize us all, and surely would do so if we were like Christ, and the only way to be like Christ is to be in spirit near Christ.

Evergreen is another happy characteristic of a christian walking with God. He does not wear out and become sere and dry. There is no more charming sight than that of a believer who is continually full of his or her youthful freshness of love to Christ, and what He loves, and who in old age is flourishing, living over again the early joys of christian life in the spring-time joys of others. People always like to sit down under the shadow of an evergreen christian, while the poor dry tree is little comfort to anyone!

Here we must not omit to mention that the orange likes—as the gardeners say—plenty of water at its roots. Now it is the unseen water that really keeps us fresh—the Holy Spirit's gracious work of bringing Christ continually before us. Herein lies the secret of an evergreen life.

The grand old age of the orange is another of its noble characteristics. We like to think of our old oak trees, but the orange attains to an age of centuries, all the while evergreen, blooming, and fruitbearing! What a tree of life it is! It portrays our gracious Lord to us, and expresses graces in His people who resemble Him. It should ever be our grand aim to be Christ-like in our walk and ways. We are in Christ, and accepted in Him by grace, but resemblance to Him in our life on earth should be our earnest longing. Let us close these remarks with the beautiful verse of the first Psalm about the godly man: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

Bible Subjects.

REDEMPTION.

WE will complete our consideration of the great subject of Redemption by looking at a few of the Old Testament teachings as to it. We turn first to the Book of Exodus, for redemption is not directly taught us in Genesis. The Book of Genesis is, as it were, the germ or bud wherein the whole range of Bible truths lies hidden. As God unfolds His great truths, we see, at the beginning of Exodus, at the very first, Israel redeemed out of Egypt through the blood of the paschal lamb. The slaves of Pharaoh felt their slavery bitterly, and they worshipped at the tidings of deliverance, but not one step out of Egypt could they take, until the redeeming blood had been shed for them. Never let us forget that redemption through blood is the first step to liberty. It was the blood as seen by Jehovah, not the blood as seen by Israel, upon which the Lord based His passover. We may feel the slavery of sin, we may sigh for or sing of heaven, we may have anxious fears, or strong faith, but the blood of Christ the Lamb, in all its value, not our thoughts about the blood, is our redemption.

In direct connection with Israel's redemption through the blood of the paschal lamb (Ex. xiv.), and the sparing of their firstborn sons from the destroyed, Israel was told that all their first-born sons were Jehovah's. These sons all had to be redeemed (v. 13). In like manner all the firstborn of cattle were the Lord's, but if a man had the firstling of an ass he could redeem it with a lamb, and if he did not wish to redeem it, "then," said the scripture, "thou shalt break his neck." Either death or redemption was the solemn lesson of the figure, and given, let us remember, by the Lord upon the moment of Israel's departure from their land of bondage; and death or redemption is the solemn fact for every soul of man, and must be announced as we speak of the redeeming blood of Jesus.

When the tabernacle was set up in the midst of Israel, every one of the one hundred silver sockets wherein the boards of that

building fitted, and all the silver hooks for the pillars whereon the curtains hung, spoke of redemption (Ex. xxxviii. 25-28), for these sockets were the result of the ransom prices of the souls of all the people who were numbered as the people of God. Half a shekel a head was the ransom price for all alike. "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord to make an atonement for their souls." (Ch. xxx. 12-16.) Hence as Israel turned their eyes towards the dwelling place of God in their midst, "a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord," ever witnessed to them that God dwelt amongst a redeemed people.

Happy lesson for ourselves of that precious ransom price, which is equally for the little child as for the aged man! God dwells among us, and we draw near to Him on the ground of the redeeming blood of Christ.

The whole system of buying land in Israel was based upon redemption, as the Lord would have every such transaction in His land wrought out in memory of the first great principle of His dealings with His people. The land was the Lord's; His people were His tenants upon it, not the absolute possessors thereof, but strangers and sojourners merely. Ah! how little do such as build and plant upon this earth regard the truth, "The earth is the Lord's," and realize their brief tenancy here! And not only was this so of the land, but also of the persons of Israel, who through poverty had sold themselves to pay their debts, for they, however poor, were not to be in servitude beyond a given day. Redemption-lessons were thus mingled with the daily-life transactions of God's people.

The poor Israelite selling himself to the rich stranger in Israel (Lev. xxv. 47-55) with the powers of redemption granted to the poor man's rich kinsman is such an exquisite picture to us of the Lord's grace to us that we must not pass it by hurriedly. We have, as man would say, a most unfortunate person depicted, with whom everything goes wrong, he loses all, and at length sells himself to pay his debts; for let us note, God demands

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that debts shall be paid; He is the righteous One as well as our redeeming God. "Owe no man anything," He says, save, indeed, love; and well it would be, if we were all hopelessly indebted one to the other as to love! The poor man who had sold himself to the stranger was open to the kindly office of any of his kinsmen who, for love's sake, would pay his debts at the price at which he had sold himself, and so redeem him. "Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself," was the word.

As to poor sinners redeeming themselves—that is an impossibility. In some countries even now there is a law by which slaves are allowed to work after labour hours, in order that they may save money sufficient to buy their freedom, but no slave of Satan and sin can perform over-work and buy himself out of captivity. The sinner's only hope lies in his being ransomed by a Redeemer out of pure love. Now, in order to become our Redeemer, the blessed Son of God became the Son of Man. He became our kinsman; He took human nature upon Himself, and, as a man, poured out the ransom price for our sakes, even His own precious blood. To Him be glory for ever and ever. He has bidden us go out free, and let us see to it that the liberty He has wrought for us is used by us in loving service to Himself.



I'm for Heaven.

SOME three years ago a dear lad interested me very much. I had many conversations with him, being deeply concerned as to his welfare, and rejoiced to find that he was amongst the number of those who believe to the salvation of their souls. He had heard the word of truth from the lips of his teacher in the Sunday-school, and his bright testimony proved that he had received it into his heart.

On one occasion a group of men stood talking together of some coming event of worldly interest, and my little friend was looking on eagerly, as if much interested in their conversation. Observing his apparent interest in the discussion, one of the men asked him, "Well, Alf, and which are *you* for?" To the surprise of his companions, the boy quietly replied, "Neither; I'm for heaven."

No more was said at the time, but the words were not without their effect—for the following day one of these men expressed his surprise to Alfred's father thus: "I shall never forget those words, coming from the lips of a lad ten years of age."

Two years passed away, during which time Alfred's serious attention to the Scriptures was often noticed in the Sunday-school and at home. Often, after retiring for rest, he would listen with the deepest interest as his elder brother, who was a christian, spoke to him of the love of Jesus. More than once, after the conversation had ceased, Alfred would ask, "Are you asleep?" and when the answer came, "Almost, Alfred—why?" he would say, "Tell me some more about Jesus."

One day Alfred met with a serious accident. Upon his brother—to whom we have referred—entering the room, Alfred, though in much pain, begged to have his favourite hymn—

"There is a happy land."

For a few days after the accident, Alfred seemed to be getting over the injury nicely, but early one morning he called his mother to the bedside. She raised him tenderly, asking him what was the matter. "I am dying, mother," he replied; "I am going to be with Jesus in that happy land." And, in a most joyful tone, he sang two lines of the hymn; and then his voice failed.

Intense suffering set in, during which the doctor told us that our Alfred could not live beyond a certain hour on the morrow. When some time had elapsed, Alfred asked what o'clock it was, and being told five, exclaimed, "Only two more hours, and then with Jesus." By this we learned that he had heard the remark made on the previous

day, and had evidently concluded that he was to depart when the twenty-four hours mentioned had expired.

Soon afterwards, with a happy smile on his face, and on trying to lift his hand to point upward, he exclaimed, "I am going up there to be with Jesus!" Several friends stood around dear Alfred's bed. Tears fell down their cheeks, and one was heard to say, "Oh, that I might die like that boy!"

What would be your thoughts, if you knew that in a few hours you had to depart? Would you be afraid to stand before God, or would the thought fill your heart with joy as it did my dear Alfred? J. H. B.

BECAUSE HE LIKES ME.

THE other day, when I was in a cottage, I spoke to a dear little maiden named Alice, just four years of age.

"Do you know what Jesus has done for us?" I asked.

"He was put on the cross," was her reply.

"Why was He put there?"

"To make a way for us to go to heaven," said the child.

"And do you love Him, dear?" I asked.

"Yes," was her reply.

"Why do you love Him?"

"Because He likes me," said little Alice.

What a happy little answer! For we, indeed, "love Him because He first loved us." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins"; and "Hereby perceive we the love, because He laid down His life for us."

It is the simple ones who get the blessing. Dear little Alice's answer, "Because He likes me," expressed her knowledge of the love of God in simple, childish language; but it shows that she was more taught of the Spirit than many who are far older in years, and of her it may truly be said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou has perfected praise." M. W.

A LITTLE BOY'S ENQUIRY.

A MOTHER was startled one day by her little boy abruptly asking—

"Mother, what is the meaning of eternity?"

"Well, my boy, what do you want to know about eternity?"

"Mother, I want to know how many years are there in eternity?"

"My dear boy, I cannot measure the vastness of eternity; I cannot count out its endless ages; man cannot describe its space. Man can tell with tolerable certainty the distance from the earth to the sun, but with all his power of intellect man cannot comprehend eternity—it is from everlasting to everlasting."

Ask yourself, my reader, "Where must I spend eternity?" Were you to live to be a hundred years old, you must after that enter eternity. J. C.

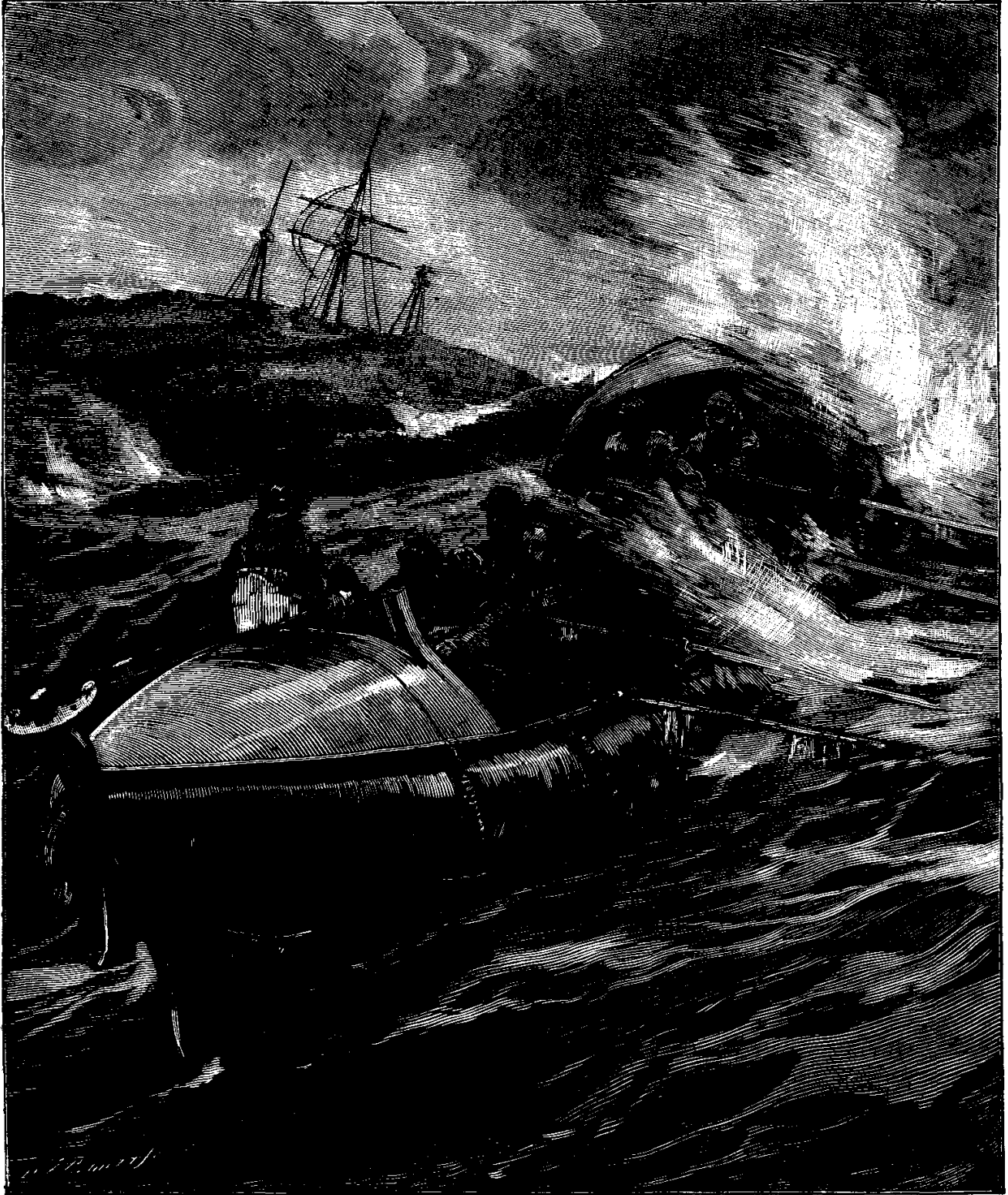
A WORD ABOUT FAITH.

FAITH is just believing what God says, because God speaks. If your father tells you that he will do this or that, you believe him, because you know he speaks the truth. When anyone does not believe God's word, it is clear he does not believe God, who speaks the word. We know who God is by His word. It is written, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." You could not please your parents, whatever you did, if you did not believe them. Faith in God is of the first importance for us all.

Without faith, prayer is but a string of words. Suppose you wanted something very much which your father could give you, and you waited to ask for it until he was a mile off, and could not hear you speak. That would not be faith in your father, and your request would be worth nothing. Now God is ever near us, and always knows what our hearts think or say; but, if we pray to God as if we did not believe He heard us, faith in our God is afar off. Remember God is very near you—He knows all your heart says—and, therefore, speak to God simply and believingly, even as you would to a tender parent, into whose face you rejoice to look up. Dear christian children, tell God everything; for though you cannot see Him, yet He speaks to your hearts, as you speak to Him.

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For Old and Young.



MAN THE LIFEBOAT.

MAN THE LIFEBOAT.

"AND Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren . . . casting a net into the sea ; for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, 'Follow Me.' And they left their nets and followed Him." (Matt. iv. 18, 20.) Eighteen hundred years have passed since the blessed Lord called those two poor fishermen, and ever since, down through these long centuries, has He again and again spoken to the toilers by the sea. Many a fisherman here, and many a sailor there, has heard that loving call, and gladly, joyfully left all that would hinder, and has followed Him through this world till called up to His rest above !

Ah, dear sailor friends, as you read this, just think of the long muster of names, all sailors, who, since the time when those two brothers were called from their nets to follow Christ, have shipped under the Great Captain, and who have now cast anchor in their desired haven. Not a gale did they weather alone ; the Captain was with them, and His care was over them. His cheering words to them heartened them as nothing else could. Well, they are resting now, their voyage finished ; but some there are who are just starting : some have just changed Captains, and I want to tell you of one who has lately done so.

He was no coward—this fisherman—yet often when out in a stiff gale, John would have been glad to be on land. Not that he was afraid of going to the bottom, there was something after.

Ah ! that "after death ;" thank God, He will make you think of it sometimes. Why, friends, don't you know that is one way in which the Lord is calling you now ? The next time you are in danger—and I know very well that in a few months' time you will face the wild storms in your fishing boats, with only a plank between you and eternity,—just think of "after death." Yes, the next stormy night your boat is tossing on the waves think of eternity, and see if it makes you happy. You know it won't if you are not saved—if you are not sailing under the Captain of whom I tell you.

Remember, whether you are or not, He has called you ; so if you are not, you are disobeying orders. John found that out one day when he was on shore. A gale had been blowing—the coastguards were all on the alert, and the lifeboat and crew were in readiness, for vessels were expected, and none could make the harbour in such a sea, and if they were driven on the rocks, what then ? Why, the lifeboat must be ready to do what could be done ; and so the crew lounged about, and could not rest as they looked across the wild white waves. As John waited amongst the others, an unusual dread came over him—What if the boat were wanted ? Perhaps he would never come back, and then ? Whilst he was thinking of this, someone passed amongst the men giving away gospel books. John had one put into his hand, and as he listlessly looked over it, he saw there was something in it about a man getting peace with God. He began to read it, and found it was the story of a fellow sinner's conversion.

"That is what I want," he thought ; "I would not mind going out if only I knew it was all right with me." Then he saw that the person of whom the book spoke did nothing to save himself, but just trusted to the Lord, confessing what a sinner he was. As John read this, it showed him just what he wanted, and that was the first time he really heard the Captain's voice. As far as he could, he then and there trusted in the Saviour of sinners. He hardly knew how great a change had been wrought as he read that little story book ; he was only conscious that he was not so troubled as he thought of "after death."

Just as these things were filling John's mind the shout came—"Man the lifeboat." In a few minutes John was amongst the crew, pulling with all his might through the pitiless waves, which made as if they would swallow up the brave boat and her crew.

"If ever I get safe back, I'll be a Christian," was the uppermost thought in the mind of John, as the lifeboat toiled on its way to the vessel over which the seas were breaking. John had found Christ, or rather the Saviour had found John. "When I get back, if ever

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I do," thought our friend, "I will show my colours plainly, and find out all the rest about this salvation."

He did get ashore again, and his first act was to fall on his knees and thank God for sparing him to learn more of what he had a glimpse only. As he read in the Bible, the blessed truths of God's yearning love over him, a hell-deserving sinner, the precious grace of Christ filled his soul, and filled him with gratitude and praise.

Soon after, one of his comrades also was saved, and they rejoiced together.

And now, dear sailors and fishermen, remember Christ came into this world in love for sinners—in love for you and for me, He died on the cruel cross—in love for you, God sends you His message, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That is His message to you. Remember all His love, and then remember, if you *will not* have Christ, and are lost for ever, these very words will rise in judgment against you.

L. T.

THE PUMP AND THE SPRING.

As I passed along a road I came to a place where stood a pump; it was a hot day, and, labouring at its handle, stood one with a pitcher. A little way on I observed a spring by the wayside, which continually welled up its refreshing water. The toil and the effort necessary to procure the water in the one case, and the ease of its flow in the other, had the voice of a parable. Out of some of God's people flows, without effort, the refreshing stream of living waters spontaneously, like the spring; from others come, with all their effort, but a few drops now and then. Christian reader, you must apply the parable to your own case.

THAT'S ME.

ON a cold November night, a young girl stood at the door of a brightly-lighted Hall, and half-timidly looked in. A kind-looking man at once invited her to enter,

and she soon took her seat among the numbers assembled to hear the preaching. Some special services were being held at a considerable distance from her village, but Mary G. had thought little of the long walk, or of the biting cold, in her anxiety to hear "words whereby she might be saved."

Only one week ago, she had entered that same hall without one thought about the value of her immortal soul, but it had pleased God, by means of that simple gospel service, to arouse Mary G. to a sense of her guilt; the work of conviction had begun in her soul, and, as the solemn words of the preacher had fallen on her ears, the girl had realized for the first time that she was, indeed, as the speaker said, "far from God by wicked works, lost, guilty, and undone."

It had not been with Mary G. as is the case with too many who sit under the solemn ministry of some earnest-hearted evangelist, who hear and tremble at the word, but put off thinking more of the important question concerning the welfare of the soul till some convenient season. Mary G. had learnt that she was a sinner, and she knew that she stood in danger of suffering all the awful consequences of that condition. This was the thought which had been uppermost in her mind, as, through the long hours of the past week, she had fulfilled her humble duties, and worked at her daily occupation. It was the knowledge of this that had brought her again to the same spot, with this eager, unsatisfied longing for something which she did not possess.

But was there no loving, pitying Saviour looking down on her, as she sat listening again to the words of earnest entreaty falling from the lips of His messenger? Ah! well we know that there is never a need in the heart of any poor lost sinner, bowed down by the conscious sense of guilt, which the blessed Saviour does not delight to answer; and so it was on this night, so memorable in the history of Mary G.

As, with eyes fixed on the speaker, she listened eagerly to his stirring words, it seemed as if he spoke to her, and to her alone.

"Sinners," said the preacher, solemnly, "it is to you I speak to-night. It is the sense of the awful condition in which I know you to be that makes me address you thus. Have you thought of your terrible state in the sight of a holy God? Sin is upon you. You go about your daily work, but sin is upon you—sin is in you. You lie down in your bed at night, sin is upon you—sin is in you. You wake up in the morning, and the same sin is ever about you—in all you do—all you say. You cannot alter this terrible fact, strive as you may. No, God looks at you just as you are—black, defiled, undone."

Rising involuntarily from her seat at this moment, Mary G., unable longer to conceal her deep emotion, stretched out her hands in an imploring attitude, and, in a voice which was distinctly audible to the congregation, said, "That's me."

A thrill ran through many present, as the preacher turned to the spot where Mary G. was now standing.

"Thank God," he said, as his eye rested on the girl's tearful face—"thank God that He has thus led you to see yourself as you really are—a sinner fit for nothing but judgment. But sit down, and listen while I speak of Him who came to seek and save the lost. Jesus, the spotless Son of God, came to put away sin. His blood was shed that, by believing in Him, you might be justified from all things. He died—the Just for the unjust—to bring us to God. He offers you pardon, and peace, and justification to-night. To-night He calls you. Listen to His own blessed word to every sinner who needs Him: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' And, again, He says, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

Eagerly did Mary G. listen to the story of the love of a Saviour who had died for her. Light came to her soul, and she saw that the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ had put away the terrible burden of her guilt for ever. She was filled with joy, as she simply believed the message of a Saviour's love to perishing sinners, and, with

a heart full of love, praise, and gratitude, she returned to her humble dwelling a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

I would ask you, dear reader, have you ever seen yourself to be such a sinner in God's sight that, like Mary G., you are constrained to cry out, "That's me"? For all such a Saviour is waiting. Lovingly, gently He would plead with you. Resist no longer His words of tender entreaty. His arms are open to receive you. Let it not be said of you, at least, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." M. V. B.

TO OUR READERS.

ANOTHER of our beloved friends and fellow-workers, E. W. T., who so often wrote for our Magazine, has been called home! She who loved him best on earth thus writes to us:—

"Much mercy was shown in the weary months of pain and weakness, enabling the dear sufferer to bear all with patience that astonished the doctor, and also to testify to the sustaining grace and faithfulness of our God.

"He hardly thought he should *die* until a week before the end; the thought of the Lord's immediate coming was always present to his mind, and, although he knew that he could never be well again, he imagined until that time he might continue to live as an invalid; but when he *knew* what was likely to happen he exclaimed, 'The prospect before me is so bright, so brilliant, that it almost overpowers me'! And his extreme joy in the Lord was, indeed, striking, and most touching to witness.

"He spoke of meeting many dear ones who had gone before, of his mother and sister, and other relatives and friends; and then, although he was extremely weak, he exclaimed with a loud voice, "And millions more, whom *we* have not known! And all together in one flow of praise! Oh! it is splendid! splendid!"

We merely add this text: "Remember them . . . who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (Heb. xiii. 7.)

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SOLEMN CONTRASTS.

"DO ask God to make you feel your sinfulness," said we the other day to a dying woman. "I am too weak to think," was her reply.

Only the day before we had asked her if she were ready to die, and this was her reply: "I hope so." "And why?" "Because my life has been a tolerably good one." "But," we said, "have you never committed one sin? Were you never angry with your child? Did you never forget God? If you have committed but one sin, that one sin will keep you out of heaven."

Alas! the death-sleep of the soul had set in—she was past arousing—and on her last day on earth she was "too weak to think!"

* * * *

"ON my giving J. W. some text-cards," says a friend, "he called his wife, and they both looked over them, and he arranged with her which should be for his boys, John and Richard. 'I'll leave them these to remember me by,' he said. 'Some of the boys will only care for these texts for my sake now, perhaps; but I have prayed for them all, and I believe they will all come.'"

"He doesn't rest, even there on his dying bed," said his wife; "he sends for the old boon companions"—"who used to drink and swear and fight with me," broke in the poor fellow. "Everyone has come to see him," the wife added, "and at least five have been to the mercy-seat."

"While I was present, at the dinner hour, three of his old companions—black foundry-men—came in. They fell on their knees in the little kitchen, into which his room opens, and prayed, in words straight from their hearts, and when they arose there were great white channels down their blackened cheeks. Poor J.'s weak voice, frequent cough, and short breath were pitiful, but his face was radiant. I never saw anything like it.

"He has a prayer meeting at six, when the men have done their work. Fifteen came last night—rough fellows, who never enter church or chapel—and poor dying J. told them of the Saviour of sinners."

"HE was cut down in a moment, in the very bloom of life; he had not even time to say 'Good-bye' to me, or to tell me where he was going," sobbed a widow recently. "Oh! it does seem so dreadful to die thus," she added.

* * * *

"HE wanted to say 'Good-bye!'" a lover of souls writes. "I gave him my hand, and promised to meet him in the better land. Then he prayed for me: 'O Jesus, be with her every step of the way. O Jesus, be with her in the hour of death, as Thou art with me, in the great waters and waves. Oh, bless her, Lord Jesus.'"

"I never heard a prayer so unmistakeably a heart-cry."

* * * *

"ARE you ready for eternity?" we enquired of a young woman as she lay upon her dying bed. She had but a few more hours to live. This was her answer: "I am almost forgiven." Almost! almost!

* * * *

"I THOUGHT I was going home this morning, but am disappointed again," said a young girl of sixteen.

"Afraid to die?" she continued. "Oh, no. How can I be? What can hurt me? I'm not going alone; God has so many angels, ministering spirits, He can spare more than one when even a beggar dies to carry him home."

THE WRANG DOOR.

"OH, wife, I have been at the wrang door!" Such was the exclamation of an old man who lived about thirty years ago in a village a few miles from Edinburgh. He had heard of the work of God in saving souls which was going on all over the country at that time, and especially in a mission in a chapel close by, and he had become intensely anxious to know that his own soul was saved. After a few days of wretchedness, he resolved to go into the city, in the hope of there finding the blessing which he so much needed, and which he thought could only be found in some such place as a mission chapel. Having arrived at the meeting-place, he took care to get a seat between two persons, think-

ing that if the blessing came down on either side of him it could hardly miss him.

This poor old man, while expecting some mysterious thing to happen to him, so that blessing for his soul might come to him, had never dreamed it was to come simply through the word preached, and so he paid no attention to what was said, but kept looking about him for this mysterious something which he fancied would be the means of his conversion.

At length the first meeting was over, but nothing of the kind he expected had happened. He was quite disappointed. But when he heard of a second meeting he comforted himself with the thought, "I may be blessed yet!" Alas! he was doomed to disappointment as before, for while the praying and singing went on he kept looking all around for the "Spirit," and so again "nothing happened."

After the second meeting a young man went up to him, and asked him if he had got any blessing from what he had heard. "No, no," said he, quite angry at the question. The preacher then came up with the same inquiry, at the same time opening his Bible with the intention of setting the truth before him, but he only exclaimed, "Oh, I ken a' that already; if you've nothing to say to me but that I may gae awa' hame, an' I needna hae comed here ava."

Soon after the preacher left him, an old man, who had been a great sinner, came up to him, and tried to comfort him thus: "Ye needna despair—onybody after me. Ye'll maybe meet with the Lord on your way hame the nicht."

This last observation rather frightened our friend, for he understood the old man literally, and left the place immediately, thinking he had been there long enough. He got home at a late hour, disappointed, and with the feeling that once more "nothing had happened."

Now more wretched than before, the thought struck him, "I'll tell my minister," but along with it came this other thought, "I should have had this settled afore when I joined the kirk"—for he had been a member of his church for many years. He saw

that to tell his minister was to give up all his past profession; but better that than go on at this rate.

At length, one night, he found himself within a few yards of the manse door. He said to himself, "I'll lift the knocker as far up as I can get it, and if it fa's I'll gang in; and if no, I'll just gang awa' hame again."

He lifted the knocker and ran back a bit. It fell, and so he had to stay. In a minute or two the door opened, and he had to go in.

In a very short time he told his story—all that "had happened" and that "had not happened." The minister did his best to set the way of salvation before him, but to no purpose. The man had his own thoughts as to how the thing should be, and so could not listen to the simple gospel. He left the house sadder than ever.

The thought that he was not one of the elect, or that he might be a reprobate, now took hold of him. All this time his wife had been trying to comfort him on the ground that he was "weel enough already," that "it was only bad folk that needed conversion." But this did not help him. Rising from his work one morning, he left the house, muttering to himself, "There is no use of a damned man working." This frightened his wife, and sent her to her knees and to her Bible.

After wandering by the banks of a river for several hours in a very desponding, dangerous frame of mind, he returned home. The Bible which his wife had been reading was lying on the table, open at John x. The very sight of the book aroused in him bitter and angry feelings, and he would have dashed it to the floor, but 'ere he did so his eye lighted on the words, "I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

He jumped up and turned round, and took his wife in his arms, crying, "Oh, wife, I've been at the wrang door." He saw that instead of doing or feeling, or finding something happen in him or to him, Christ had done everything for the sinner, and all the sinner had to do was by faith to enter in by Christ and be saved. Joy filled his soul,

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and by grace our friend even this day can testify to God's salvation.

Dear reader, do you find in this story a history of your own condition? Are you looking to your doings as a means of salvation? Are you resting on what you know? Or are you expecting a mysterious something to happen to you if you are to be saved, forgetting that Jesus says, "I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

Salvation is offered to you now, just as you are, if you reject Christ you go on to eternity a lost sinner!

Oh! have you discovered that you are lost? "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"; "the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." There is nothing to do.

"There is nothing to do; for the sinner that's dead
Must needs have another to work in his stead,
And Jesus, in Calvary's terrible hour,
Accomplished redemption in wondrous power.
Are you wretched and ruined? God offers to you
A free, full salvation, and nothing to do."

J. S., of B—h.

CONFLICT.

WE were speaking of Christian conflict on p. 55, addressing ourselves to *The conflict with self*, and *The conflict between the Spirit of God in us, and our flesh*. We now proceed to consider—

The conflict between the believer and Satan.

As we read: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. vi. 12.)

This conflict is the legitimate, nay, the normal character of Christian warfare. In order to be engaged herein we must be freed from the conflict with self first spoken of. We could not expect a soldier, tossing about on his bed with fever, to be bearing his sword in the battle front, and so long as we are struggling with ourselves we cannot possibly be engaged in offensive warfare for the Lord. Neither *at the time* of being engaged in true Christian warfare, should we be in the second character of conflict we have mentioned. We could not expect a soldier who was tampering

with the enemy to be at that time fighting against him. A Christian trifling with the world, and grieving the Spirit of God, has not Him for his energy in the wars of the Lord. Thus a grave, practical question at once opens before us; for if we are not engaged in this third character of conflict, we need inquire the reason.

This Christian conflict is spoken of at the close of the Epistle to the Ephesians. At the beginning of that epistle the marvellous privileges of the Christian are unfolded. The last of its exhortations is that we should take to us the whole armour of God, in order that we may withstand and stand. The spiritual foes of the Christian are mighty, but Christ, his leader, is mightier than them all, and He has given us the Spirit to be our energy and force, for spiritual warfare against these foes.

Look we at the powers of darkness around us, at the growth of superstition, at the spread of infidelity, at the masses of men under the sway of Satan, and, lo, the battlefield spreads out before our spiritual gaze with appalling vastness.

Souls have to be won for Christ. Sinners have to be saved. And God uses His people for this work, and in this work the true soldier of Christ battles on for his Lord.

Again, not only have unsaved souls to be won for Christ, but believers have to be helped. May be, they are led captives by the foe, or they are under evil influences. A false doctrine may possess them; or they may be under the power of some imagination; alas, how many are! By using the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, in the power of the Spirit, their deliverance will be effected. So few deliverances of God's people from spiritual darkness are effected, because the Holy Spirit is so seldom the only power of the soldier in wielding the word of God. It is His power alone that can deliver; the Christian soldier is nothing in himself. He has no latent power of his own to convince souls; the Scripture, applied by the present unction of the Spirit, is what he needs. Too often Christians pray for power when they should pray to be filled with the Spirit; probably the lack of power rises from

their not being so filled. Our subjective state is in question.

If the Christian is an effective soldier, he is a praying man, a truly dependent man, as well as a man of faith : one who trusts in the Lord, and who is strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. In Christ's strength is the Christian's success.

What we may term the Christian soldier's healthiness of spiritual constitution consists of two things. First, a good conscience—no sin indulged in ; no sense of sins burdening him. This is called his breastplate. How could he speak of sin to others if he were practising sinning himself? How could he speak of the pardon of sins if he doubted his own pardon? Second, a heart braced up in the truth of God—that is, the word made experimentally part of himself. This is his girdle. How could he speak of the truth to others, if he were not really and truly upheld by the very truth of which he speaks?

The girdle braces up the loins—the seat of strength. The Christian's seat of strength is his affections. Some Christians seem to make a wreath out of what should be the girdle, they bind their knowledge about their heads. There is no strength in this!

The way of the true Christian soldier's steps is that of peace. He is the Lord's soldier to bring His peace to souls, and to walk through this world in a heavenly spirit as Christ walked. What a blessed warfare is this in this world of strife! How truly is this heavenly conflict! Each blow dealt by the hand that wields the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, is struck in order eventually to produce peace—divine peace.

The wrestling of the Christian soldier is no easy work. We must be right in our souls before God to begin with, and we must be in the Spirit in order to achieve success.

Over all the armour of God wherewith we are clad, we need to have on the left arm the great covering shield of faith. We must not let it drop, or fail for a moment. If we hide under human power, we have dropped the shield of faith in God, and exposed ourselves to a fiery dart of the wicked one. If we rely on our own wisdom, we have exposed

ourselves to our wary foe. Let us never forget that his wiles would lead us to carelessness as to the heart-arm, and thus to make us let drop the shield ; this done, he can and will plunge in a dart at our hearts.

Satan will cast his fiery darts at the Christian soldier, and all of us get sore wounded at times. He will fling at him lies about God, burning with the fresh flames of hell, but if the Christian has on his arm the shield of faith "over all," that shield will quench them every one. Faith in God is our defence in this warfare. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, is our only offensive weapon, though, indeed, we use it both for defence and offence.

Let us ask a practical question? How are we versed in spiritual sword exercise? Some Christians can hardly find the chapter they wish for, some hardly know where the verse or passage is! Never go to an occasion of religious instruction without your Bible. Never argue about a text or passage till you have read it. Frequently by reading over the text the question in dispute is settled. Again, some sorely confuse one truth with another, and so Satan gets a point of attack. We do not study the word as we ought. The sword of the Spirit is not our own wisdom, but God's word. "It is written" is the absolute necessity for meeting Satan at all times, and in no time is this more needful than in our own.

Let none suppose that he can fight for the Lord against the powers of darkness without wounds and without hardships. What should we say of an army in the presence of the enemy, the soldiers of which were either on feather beds or banqueting? No Christian soldier has ever fought on a bed of spiritual rose leaves; nor in selfishly obtaining spiritual enjoyment for himself; so be up and doing every one, and hold the head well up, yes, let the helmet of salvation—God's salvation—be held well up! Too many Christians hang down their heads; this, indeed, we all do if we think of ourselves, but it is God's salvation that makes us to lift up our heads. So to the front, fellow believer, and spend and be spent for the Lord!



CHILDREN'S COLUMNS.

THE SUNDAY SCHOLAR.

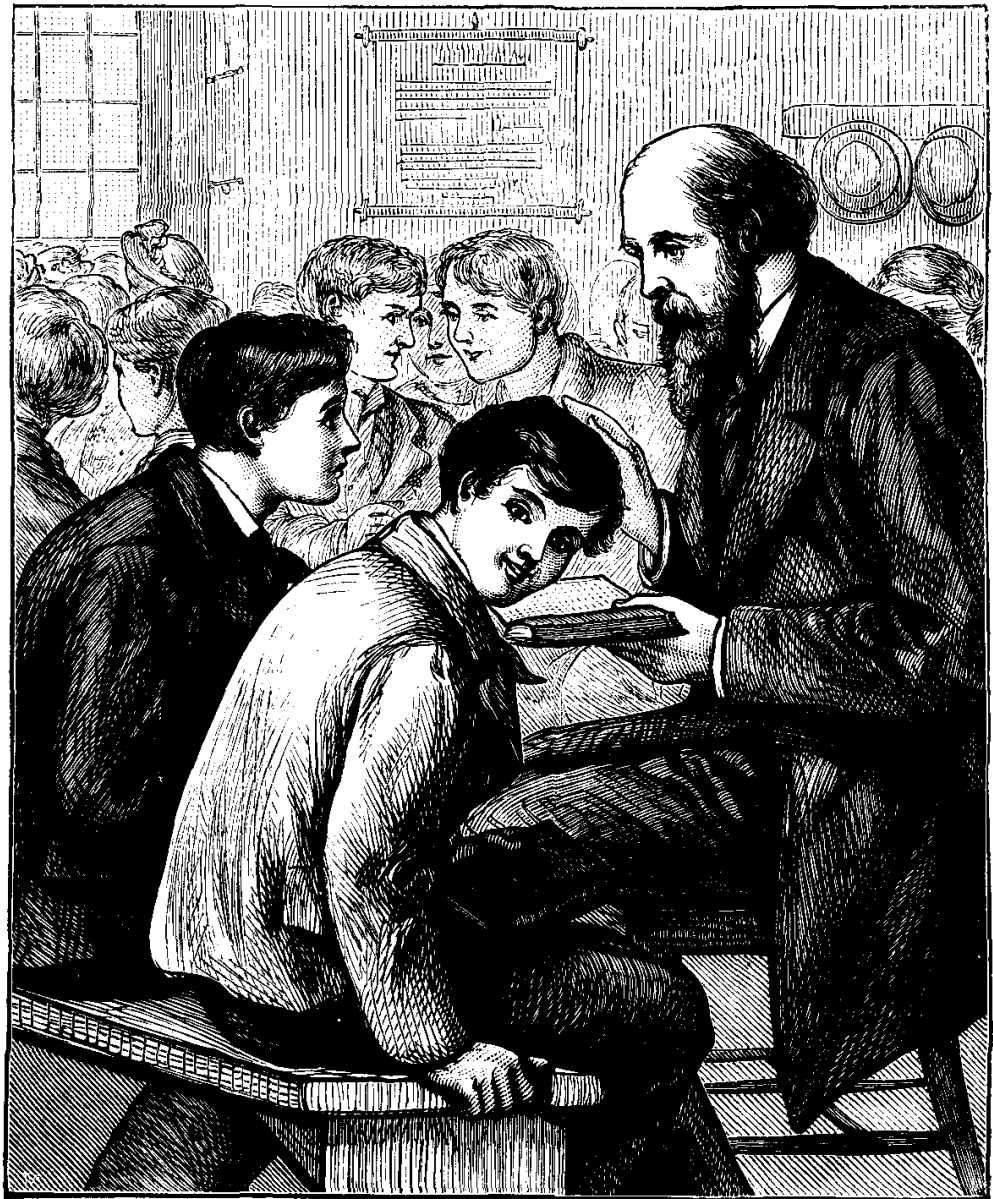
ONE lovely summer evening the teacher of the first boys' class in a village Sunday-school found himself in the midst of his scholars.

The boys were in a bad mood—listless, idle, and tiresome—in fact, their behaviour was most unseemly.

One only of them displayed any disposition to listen to the teacher. This boy *did* attend, but none of the others cared to answer any of their teacher's questions.

It was trying work, yet the teacher bore it patiently. At length he reproved his boys for their misconduct, and at the same time held up the good behaviour of the attentive scholar as an example. His manner of reproof only caused the boys to change their tactics. They at once proceeded to vent their spleen upon the attentive scholar, whispering, "Favourite! Favourite!"

It was hard for the poor boy to have to endure this; yet, being at heart truly desirous to hear the word of God, he tried to listen ;



THE BOYS' CLASS.

but at last the tears started to his eyes, nor could he cease crying until the school was over.

It may be that I am addressing some boy who has known by experience what it is to weep because of reproaches. Be of good courage, youthful believer! Be not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord! The *brave* boy is he who does what he knows to be right even though he has to suffer in consequence, and every child that bears the cross

on earth for Christ's sake shall wear a crown in heaven.

I hope I am not now speaking to one who delights to "sit in the seat of the scornful" (Ps. i. 1), for a day will come when the scorers who delight in scorning shall be overtaken with fear and destruction, when those who hate knowledge, and choose not the fear of the Lord, shall "eat of the fruit of their own way," and God will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. "My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path"; "fear the Lord, and depart from evil."

I have said that the attentive scholar was truly desirous to hear the word, but it is not enough to *behold* the "strait gate," we must enter in at it, or we shall not be saved—we must be converted! The boy whose conduct had been commended did not at once enter in. Was it because he had to endure persecution?

Oh, how many have turned aside from following the Lord because they feared the reproach of men! Be warned, turn not aside to vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver. "Hearken unto Me!" thus the Lord speaks, "fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings."

We had better endure reproach *now* than have presently to endure "everlasting burnings." Those that receive the seed in "stony places" endure not tribulation or persecution.

Behold that youth kneeling alone at his bedside! It is the same boy who once wept before his fellow-scholars. Now the tears roll down his cheeks as he pours out his soul to God. His tears flow on account of his own transgressions; he has come to himself; confesses himself a guilty sinner. He has heard of the "strait gate"; he longs to enter in at it. While upon his knees he *enters*; he believes to the saving of his soul; and his heart overflows with joy, because of God's great salvation! May all the dear boys who read this likewise find mercy.

A. J.

ARE YOU READY?

ONE Sunday evening a devoted Christian mother sat by the bedside of her two sons, aged eight and nine years, for their usual "good-night chat." The younger, who during infancy had been very delicate and irritable, said—

"Ma, dear" (his usual way of addressing her), "don't you think I have been a better boy lately?"

"Yes, dear," said the fond mother, "and I hope you will continue to strive against naughty temper."

"You told me, ma, dear, if I asked God to help me for Christ's sake He would. I have asked Him, and I feel He has helped me—is it not kind of Him?"

After a few more words and a loving kiss, the mother left her boys to sleep.

The two brothers of the boys were away from home with their nurse, who was not a Christian woman; the servant attending to the children was a Christian.

Ere the morning dawned, the cry of fire awakened the household. All the efforts of the distracted parents to rescue their beloved boys were unavailing; the dear children and the Christian servant were burnt to death—called to be with that dear Saviour who loved them. There were also two men sleeping in the house that terrible night, one a Christian, the other not; the Christian was burnt to death, the other was saved. God gave the unconverted members of that household a fresh opportunity of seeking His face.

To you, dear children, who are not yet truly the Lord's we would earnestly say, seek to be ready for death at any moment; and to you who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, seek to overcome in yourselves all the little ways that cannot be pleasing in His sight.

U.

Bible Subjects.

PEACE.

THE subject of peace shall occupy us on a few occasions. It is a difficult one, and partly so because we are apt to view it simply

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in the light of our experience of it, instead of in the light of the truth of the word of God. Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a peaceful frame of mind, must be distinguished from each other as we study this subject. Both will come before us; and the way to obtain each is presented to us in the Scriptures.

Peace with God demands in the very first instance a firm foundation—a foundation approved of God—for we are speaking of peace *with* God; a peaceful frame of mind built upon a sandy bottom will end in ruin and despair. We must get down to the rock before we dare begin to build, else when the floods come, our superstructure will surely be swept away.

Before we begin to consider our peace with God, let us look at Col. i. 19, which gives the great truth of God having made peace. "For it was the good pleasure," or "for it pleased, that all fulness should dwell in Him; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, through Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

The pleasure of the Godhead that all the fulness should dwell in Jesus Christ our Lord, is the first great truth we should consider. By Him all things were made, and by Him all things subsist, and through Him God, who hates sin, will reconcile all things in the heavens and upon earth to Himself. But upon what basis?—for this is the immediate subject before us—since as God hates sin, there must be a foundation according to His own righteous requirements upon which all this blessing is to be built. God does not reconcile all things to Himself on any other ground than that of putting entirely away from His sight the evil He abhors. *The blood of His cross* is this foundation.

Note now the words "having made." A past and perfect work, a foundation laid 1800 years ago, and fixed immovable for all eternity, is before us. "Having made peace" does not allow the idea of making peace now, or in the future. God will bring about this

blessing of all things in the heavens and on earth on the ground of the blood Jesus shed on Calvary.

Mark, again, how explicit the Scriptures are, for this peace was made by one precise means: not through the life, nor through the resurrection, nor through the ascension, but through the blood of Jesus. Add not to, nor diminish from, this sacred truth. And further, through the blood shed on one particular occasion—even on His cross. Most closely are we shut up by God to the blood of the cross of Christ for this peace God has made. In the sentences just considered "we" are not mentioned. God and Christ are the wondrous actors or parties. Let us seek to disengage ourselves from our thoughts about ourselves as we consider this question. God's nature is contrary to sin; He hates sin in itself; He is wroth against it. The verse before us shows us God in the holiness of His being, having made peace through the blood of the cross of His Son as to the sin He hates. The majesty, the glory of God, in reference to sin are magnified by the blood shed by Christ upon the cross.

The glory of God having been shown to us, magnified in relation to sin, we, sinners by nature, are spoken of: "And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled." *Hath* He reconciled. This is present blessing. Blessing for to-day. Now, at this moment, we who believe are reconciled to God. The things in the heavens and on earth will be reconciled by and by; we who believe are reconciled now.

Yet see how precise the Holy Spirit of God is on this great matter; we are reconciled "*in the body of His flesh, through death.*" Not in the body of His flesh through incarnation, but in the body of His flesh through death. By the death of our Lord Jesus, God made the end in His sight to all that we are in ourselves by nature. He put away all that which is contrary to Himself, and has brought us into His friendship. It is God's doing, not our own. And God has wrought the work according to His own thoughts and requirements.

We need to cling fast to the preciousness of the death of Christ. Satan would try all kinds of ways to loosen our hold of the blessing which is ours through Christ's death. Cling to its preciousness, young friends, and to Him who lives to bless you.

"Our peace with God, because He has justified us," will be our subject next time.

The Pharisees and the Publicans.

WE shall not say much more about the Pharisees, as there are other subjects of interest, relating to the time when our Lord was on earth, which may well occupy us, but we will merely add two or three more things about those wonderful men.

What was it in the Pharisees' thoughts of the Sabbath which made the Lord angry? Surely it was that peculiar hard-heartedness that made the observance of tradition as to the Sabbath, of far greater importance to them than acts of mercy done on that day. Over and over again they sought to kill the Lord because He showed mercy on the day of rest. Little did they acknowledge the presence of sin as witnessed in the cases of misery Jesus graciously healed on that day; no, to them their thoughts of holiness were paramount, and God's thoughts they despised.

As to this spirit, we can but observe a similar one around us, for after all, Phariseism is but fallen human nature working out its own intellectual and traditional ideas, from and upon, the letter of God's word. In religious life, if a deed be done in accordance with the current traditions respecting religious propriety, it is accepted: if not, it is rejected. The grooves in which the work is done are esteemed beyond the work itself. Many a good act is called bad because it is not wrought according to "the tradition of the elders," and many a formal lifeless deed is reckoned to be a good work, because it is done after human rules. Right well did the man whose eyes Jesus had opened answer the Pharisees as to this. He reasoned from what God is on the character of the work Jesus had performed. "Why herein is a marvellous thing," said he, "that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened

mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth." (John ix. 30-31.) Alas! how many refuse to accept as the work of God that which is not accomplished after their traditions.

What is the meaning of "corban"? It is simply a devoting to God by gift. Promises of giving and abstaining from things were made by Israel, and this was according to God's word. But the Pharisees had enlarged upon this principle, and argued that things might be devoted or given by the bare use of the word *corban*. Thus, supposing a parent in need or distress, and the son, a Pharisee, not wishing to help his father or mother, he had only to utter the mystic word "corban," and at once he was free from the call of common piety at home. This word so used was accepted as the expression of a religious principle by which his selfish soul could escape from the ordinary kindness which would be shown in a heathen home.

Whatever religion a man's may be, if it sets aside the relations of life, and the care and love for parents and children, it is a bad religion: it is more or less like that of the Pharisees. Another and somewhat similar question among them was this—"Who is my neighbour?" but it was asked in order to prove who is not our neighbour, and with the object of avoiding helping a poor creature in distress. It was all very well for these people to know so clearly the letter of the divine word, but their hearts were far from the love of God, as their use of the word "corban" and their question, "Who is my neighbour?" painfully prove.

Another well-known feature of the Pharisees' religion was that of despising others, and considering themselves to be righteous. They looked upon themselves as superior people, and all the rest, all who did not belong to their fraternity, were "without," and were to be abstained from. But this was not enough! This select few in Israel had inner circles among themselves. They had their special holy people who were within the sacred number! A Pharisee of the higher grade would not eat with a Pharisee of the



AT THE RECEIPT OF CUSTOM.

lower order, lest perchance he should defile himself; unless, indeed, the inferior put on the garment of one of the upper order! What a poor holiness that is which comes off with our clothes, or which is put on our shoulders with the clothes of other people! Yet these principles of the Pharisees are like a looking-glass held up to ourselves in order that we may see very much of ourselves in them.

Our last remarks have arisen from the Lord's words about the Publicans and sinners in contrast with the Pharisees, and we should like you now to place side by side, our picture overleaf of the Publican at the receipt of custom and the picture of the Pharisee at prayer, which occupied page 9 of our January number, and you will observe the contrast. We almost require a picture of the scene to enable us to realize what the Publican was in the days of our Lord. He was a collector of customs, and when he was the chief of a district, having various collectors under him, he became rich.

In foreign towns and on our own coasts the custom-house officers overhaul the traveller's baggage to see if any article is in it upon which a tax is due. Such a scene our picture presents. Some merchants or traders have come with their camels and baggage to the city, but before they may enter the gates and begin their business they must pay the custom dues. All their baggage will be overhauled. A noisy, quarrelsome scene ensues, and one thing which makes the traders so very vexed is, that these dues go to support the Roman power which has conquered their nation. Everything they have to sell is taxed, and the taxes are for the heathen foreigners, who are their conquerors; and another vexation is, that at the receipt of custom sits a Jew—yes, one of their own nation's religion has farmed these taxes for the city they are about to enter, and he, by serving the Romans, is getting rich out of the misfortunes of his own nation.

Farming the taxes means, that a man gives the government a sum of money for taxes that will be taken through the year at the city gates. He naturally pays to the government a less sum than the taxes will

bring in, and the overplus becomes his gain or profit. It was in this sort of way the chief of the Publicans became so rich. Perhaps they employed several men to inspect the baggage, and to do the hated work. In our picture is a chief of the Publicans at the receipt of custom ordering the merchants about, collecting the money in bags, while the Roman gentleman drives his chariot along just as he pleases!

Now certainly this was no peaceful or pleasant occupation, and it was one which gave an opening to all kinds of cheating and robbing. Hence as a Jew, and as a religious man, we can well understand how bitterly a Pharisee hated a Publican.

But the Publican had a soul to be saved as much as the Pharisee, and he had a conscience about his sins, which in most cases the Pharisee had not; hence, notorious as he was for ill-doings, he was nearer the kingdom than his religious brother!

Our English Bible.

THE WORD AND THE SWORD.

BY those who defended the doctrine of transubstantiation it was spoken of as a matter to be deplored that men's understandings should be so weak that they could not comprehend divine mysteries. Thus a preacher of the time complains that, whereas Christ had promised to be with His own, even to the end of the world, those who were so daring as to deny that He was actually present in the sacrament of the altar made His word of none effect by their unbelief. Men who professed to find difficulty in believing as the church taught upon this matter were only those, he said, who, "though they have nought but 'faith,' 'faith' ever in their mouths, reject the doctrine which holy church teacheth because they cannot comprehend it by their reason, without which they will believe nothing."

Meanwhile many questions were publicly discussed. "Let us understand," said some, "what the mass really means. Is it true, as the Church teaches, that the receiving the consecrated bread from the priest by one

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man can benefit another who is not even present? Is it, indeed, true that by the saying of thirty masses a year a soul can be delivered from purgatory, and brought, past the iron bars of that prison-house, within the paradise of God?"

These and kindred subjects were handled at a public disputation, or, as we should now say, conference, held at Oxford in 1554, when the reformers boldly maintained that the doctrine of transubstantiation could not be proved "by the plain and manifest words of Scripture," and that in the Lord's Supper "there is none other oblation and sacrifice than a remembrance of Christ's death, and thanksgiving." Cranmer and Ridley both spoke at the conference, the latter specially arguing that the Christ, concerning whom they were asked to believe that He was present in the sacrament of the altar, was even then sitting at God's right hand, alive for evermore.

Then Latimer was brought forward—that old man, now past eighty, whom the people had so long been used to see as he went from village to village, dressed in his threadbare coat of rough frieze, his spectacles and his New Testament hanging from his girdle; preaching wherever he went—often, we are told, using a hollow tree as his pulpit.

He found himself now in a very different scene. Looking round upon the assembly of learned men, he said that he had not used Latin much these twenty years, and could not dispute with them, yet would he declare his faith. Then he spoke with his old fiery eloquence against the doctrine of the "real presence" as the root of all errors; he blamed, in no measured terms, those who had changed the Lord's Supper into a mass, had taken the cup from the people, saying that the priests alone might partake of it, and, "instead of service in a known tongue, were bringing the nation to a worship which they did not understand."

He could not argue with them, he said, for his memory was gone, but this he could say: his faith was founded upon the word of God.

As the conference of the preceding year

had been abruptly ended by the learned doctor who presided exclaiming—when one of the reformers had appealed to the authority of scripture,—“You have the word, but we have the sword,” so now this disputation closed by Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer being declared to be heretics, and no longer members of the church. We are told that Cranmer, naturally of a timid spirit, ready to shrink back at the approach of danger, spoke then in no faltering tone, though he must have seen the dark shadow already falling across his path.

“From this your judgment and sentence, he said, “I appeal to the just judgment of Almighty God, trusting to be present with Him in heaven, for whose presence on the altar I am thus condemned.”

Ridley spoke next:

“Although I be not of your company, yet I doubt not but my name is written in another place, whither this sentence will send us sooner than we should by the course of nature have come,”—for he was not an old man, and could not say as Latimer did:

“I thank God most heartily that He hath prolonged my life to this end, that I may in this case glorify God with this kind of death.”

And so, with words of triumph on their lips, these men, “out of weakness made strong,” were led from the council, leaving their accusers to fall back upon that “power of the sword,” of which they had boasted that it belonged to them.

It was not till the autumn of the next year that the end came for Ridley and Latimer at Oxford. For Cranmer it would have been easier if he might have passed straight from that council chamber to his fiery trial; the waiting time was for him a long agony of suffering and terror; many a time his feet had well-nigh slipped, and he gave much occasion to the enemies of the truth to triumph, before he, too, was strengthened to give up his life for the faith which he had all but denied through weakness and fear.

It was during this interval that changes had taken place in the laws of England by which the terrible three years of persecution which

followed were to be rendered possible. Another Parliament had been called and dissolved, yet the two laws of which we have read, the Act of "Six Articles," and that "About the burning of a heretic," had not been revived; while this was the case, there was still respite, but Mary's third Parliament consented to her will in two very important matters. These persecuting Acts became once more law, and Cardinal Pole, the queen's cousin, was recalled from his long exile. He was a favourite with the people, and we may remember that they had petitioned for his return during the former reign. He now came back as the Pope's legate, with full power to absolve the Parliament, in his name, from the sin of heresy, and to reconcile the erring nation, setting it right with the Church of Rome, which represented itself as then, as ever, ready to receive the wanderers back to the fold. The Pope could not have found a more trusty messenger. Full of zeal and earnestness, he came to England like the leader of a forlorn hope. The country, he well knew, was fast drifting away from her anchorage in the sure haven provided by the true church for every faithful soul. It was his mission to hold her back from destruction. The moment had come; if it were allowed to pass all would be lost. He inspired the queen with the same hope, and was, until the end of his life—he lived only one day after her—Mary's most trusted councillor and friend; and it is believed by some historians that if any one man could be counted directly responsible for the terrible scenes which made her reign, during the last three years of it, a reign of terror, and which have left so red a stain upon her name, that man was Reginald Pole. At the time, the people were inclined to lay the blame of all the dark doings of that terrible hour at the door of the queen's Spanish husband, and they believed that Gardiner and the hated Bonner were but his tools. Now, however, we can have no doubt that it was Pole who urged upon the bishops their duty to God, and to the souls of those who were being led captive by the devil under their very eyes, and espe-

cially enjoined upon them the necessity of looking well to see that none among the clergy might be leading the people astray, urging them to search diligently, and separate the false shepherds from the true.

A special court, over which Gardiner presided, was summoned to try those who were suspected of heresy, and one of the first of the offending clergy who was brought before it was John Rogers, the same who had had so much to do with translating that version of the Scriptures called "Matthew's Bible."

He had been obliged to leave England when the Act of Six Articles was first passed, for one of the articles forbade the marriage of priests, and Rogers had married some time before. He went to Germany, where he lived until the death of Henry, and the great changes it brought with it, made it safe for him to return. Ridley, then Bishop of London, had appointed him to preach at St. Paul's, and in a sermon preached there soon after Mary's accession he had spoken some strong words, exhorting his hearers to continue steadfastly to hold to the faith of Christ's gospel, come what might. This sermon brought him into notice; he was ordered to remain in his own house, and soon afterwards sent to prison. In the autumn of the next year, after the "reconciling" of England to the Pope by Cardinal Pole, measures were taken for punishing those already in prison; and Rogers, with Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, Sandars, a clergyman of Coventry, arrested for preaching contrary to Gardiner's prohibition, and Rowland Taylor, rector of Hadleigh, an old man, who had vainly endeavoured to prevent mass being said in his church, were brought before bishops Gardiner, Bonner, and Tunstall to be examined concerning their belief on the matter of the sacrament. It is true that one of the charges made against Rogers was that he, being a priest, had married contrary to law eighteen years before, but the chief accusation brought against all the prisoners was that they had denied the doctrine of the "real presence"—they did not believe in transubstantiation, and it was upon this count that they were all condemned to suffer as heretics.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



A WORD IN SEASON.

A WORD IN SEASON.

IN a large house in a fashionable part of London there lived, nearly half a century ago, a family, consisting of a father and mother, eight daughters, and several sons. The eight girls were left almost entirely to the care of a French governess, for their mother was an invalid, and seldom came downstairs. The governess, therefore, who was clever, fascinating, and accomplished, had not merely the studies of her pupils to attend to, but also it was part of her duty to accompany them when going to the houses of their acquaintances, and to receive and entertain the visitors of the family. The girls, who were devoted to their bright, talented governess, were always glad that she should be with them. She was professedly a Roman Catholic, but all religion appeared to her to be a needless appendage to a life that was well filled up with studies and amusements.

No Bible was to be seen in that large house except one huge French Bible, which lay on the top shelf of the schoolroom bookcase. "We should as soon have thought of reading the dictionary as reading that Bible," said one of the girls, when afterwards relating her schoolroom experiences. The governess had some Irish cousins, of whom she occasionally spoke with a little sneer; "for," said she, "they are Piétistes" — a nickname answering to the English "Methodist." "Only think, they are coming to London," she announced one day, "and they want me to go to lunch. For the sake of good manners I shall go, and wish it well over."

"They were not so bad after all," she said, when she came back. "I thought they would not have two ideas in their heads; but they were pleasant and well-informed, and kind, and they have asked me to go and spend a month with them in Ireland. They say it is a lovely place for sketching, and I shall go." Accordingly when the holidays came the governess set off on the long journey to the little village of P——, where her cousins had a cottage on the borders of a large and beautifully-wooded

park. The sketching was all she could desire, and it also furnished an excuse for escaping from the conversation of her cousins when the subject was not congenial.

One beautiful summer's day she sat alone in the park, engrossed with a sketch which she had nearly finished. "Your painting must be a great pleasure to you, madam," said a voice behind her. The lady turned round, and saw a venerable old gentleman who stood there, his long white hair flowing down upon his shoulders. "It is a great pleasure to me," she replied.

"No wonder," continued the old gentleman, now speaking in French; "to paint so well must needs be a pleasure. Tell me," he continued, looking earnestly in her face, "do you care as much for the Lord Jesus Christ as you do for your painting?"

The only answer that the governess made to this question was to pack up her painting materials as quickly as possible, and to hurry away across the park.

"I am sorry for you," said the old gentleman, who had followed her some paces.

"I don't know why you should be sorry for me," said the governess, in her most dignified manner, "you know nothing about me."

"I *do* know," replied the old gentleman. "I am sorry for you, because you are not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I know that you can never be happy till you believe in Him and love Him."

"You know absolutely *nothing* about me," repeated the governess, "and you have no right whatever to say I am not a believer in Christ. It is, besides, no concern of yours whether I am or not."

"It *is* my concern," replied the old gentleman, "for I am His servant, sent on His errands. And I do know that you are not a believer in Him; for if you believed in Him you would love Him, and if you loved Him you would have been glad when I mentioned His name, instead of walking away as soon as it had passed my lips. Farewell. I am very sorry for you, and I shall pray for you."

"I don't want your prayers," said the

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governess; but the old gentleman did not, perhaps, hear the last remark, for he was walking away in the opposite direction.

"I shall take care not to let my cousins know of this," said the governess to herself; "it would be a fine triumph for them to know someone had told me I was not a believer." Accordingly the governess said not a word of this strange meeting. But the words of the old gentleman sounded all day in her ears. At night she was suddenly taken ill, a doctor was sent for, who looked seriously alarmed. "She has not twenty-four hours to live," he said to the anxious cousins.

"She is already delirious," remarked one of the cousins; "she goes on entreating me to send for the old gentleman. I ask her what old gentleman, and she only replies, 'He has long white hair.'"

"You must expect her to be delirious," said the doctor.

So the next day passed. The poor sick lady was suffering fearfully. But she said little of her pain, she only repeated again and again, "I am dying, I am not a believer; the old gentleman said so, and he said the truth. Oh, do,—do find the old gentleman!"

"Can it be," said one of the cousins at last, "that there is really an old gentleman somewhere who has spoken to her? Had we not better enquire in the village if such a person has been seen? Let me go and try to find him."

Very soon the suspicion was confirmed, for one person after another replied, in answer to enquiries, that just such an old gentleman had been seen about for two days past, "and," said one, "I believe he is staying at the parsonage."

To the parsonage the cousin betook herself, and enquired of the clergyman, the good Dr. Daly, afterwards Bishop of Cashel. "Yes," he replied, "the old gentleman is here. He is Dr. Cæsar Malan, of Geneva."

In a few minutes he was on his way to the sick bed of her whom he had seen in the park but the day before.

"Yes," said the governess as he came in, "that is the old gentleman, and thank God

he is come. Oh, sir, I am dying and I am lost. You told me the truth. I am not a believer in the Lord Jesus. I know it now, and it is too late."

"It is not too late," replied Dr. Malan. "It was that you might be saved that the Lord sent me with His message to you yesterday. He sends me again now to tell you that there is complete and eternal forgiveness for you, for He Himself bore our sins in His own Body on the cross. He has received the punishment, the whole punishment of all the sins of all who believe on Him. And I ask you in His Name, will you believe Him now? If you but believe Him, you are saved now and for ever, all your sin put away, however great, however terrible. And instead of the punishment, God offers you the blessedness in heaven which the blood of His Son has brought."

Thus did the old gentleman speak, reading at the same time the passages from the word of God which proved his words. And he then knelt and prayed that this poor, trembling sinner might there and then receive forgiveness of sins, and eternal life. The governess took the Lord at His word, and the old gentleman left her that night rejoicing in God's great salvation.

The joy and peace that filled her heart took effect upon her body. From that moment she began to recover, and at the end of the month she returned to her pupils in London. They had been very anxious about her, and longing for her return. The dining room window was crowded with eager faces as she drove up to the door, and the eight girls welcomed her warmly before she had crossed the threshold. "But," said one of them afterwards, "the strange thing was, that even before she got inside the door, she began to preach to us. She took us to the schoolroom, and took down the old French Bible from the top shelf, and said, 'Dear girls, you must be still while I read you some of the blessed words out of this book.' Some of the girls laughed, some implored her not to read the musty book. But she said, 'Whether you like it or not, I *must* read it to you. God has saved my soul, and

I have prayed to Him to save you all too. Every day, before we begin lessons, I shall read to you out of this book, and tell you as best I can how Jesus saves sinners.' ”

The governess fulfilled her intention. She spoke, besides, at all times to her pupils, to their brothers, to the visitors, and to all who came within her reach. Just a year after her visit to Ireland, her illness suddenly returned, and she died praising the Lord. She had abundant cause to praise Him, for during that one year her eight pupils and some of their brothers were truly converted to God. They lived to serve Him in no ordinary manner, and to be the means in their turn of the salvation of many souls. The little seed sown in the park in Ireland, is still bringing forth fruit to the praise and glory of the Saviour of sinners. F. B.

LOST! LOST! LOST!

“ I WILL repent on my death-bed ! ” Ah, what a delusion is this. Few really repent in their last hours—few truly turn to God when the hand of death is upon them.

A visitor called the other day at a house where a woman was dying. The person who opened the door would not at first allow an entrance, but after a little persuasion the visitor was permitted to go into the house.

“ She is dying, and I do not think you can see her,” was the word given at the foot of the stairs.

“ But,” said the visitor, “ that is just why I do wish to see her. Can you tell me if she is saved ? ”

The answer was a very solemn one. “ Why, as to that, she has been all her life saying she would come to the Lord some day, and now she is sixty-seven years of age.”

On entering the sick room, the visitor asked the poor dying woman about her soul.

“ Lost, lost, lost,” was the awful answer.

“ Oh ! don't say so. Remember the thief who was saved at the eleventh hour of his life, and Christ's blood is sufficient for you; come to Him now,” pleaded the visitor.

But again the solemn, yea awful, words were repeated, “ I am lost, lost.” And thus did this poor sinner pass into eternity.

UNDERNEATH ARE THE EVER- LASTING ARMS.

A SHORT time ago I was asked to see a dying man—a friend suddenly cut down. There he lay upon his bed, almost unconscious, and within a few days of his end. His brother was holding his hand, and said to him, “ Mr.— has come to see you,” but the dying man made no answer. I then said, “ The Lord Jesus is with you.”

He opened his eyes and said, “ Yes, He is,” and immediately relapsed into his dying dozing. As I stood on one side of his bed and his brother on the other, the brother said, “ This is a solemn warning as to death-bed repentances. If — had not found Christ for his Saviour when in health, he could not have sought Him now.”

On my relating this to a Christian friend, he said, “ My brother is a Christian, who has practised as a physician for more than thirty years, and he says that he has never all that long time, so far as he knows, seen a true repentance on a death-bed. Persons are too faint, too feeble, too suffering to turn to God.”

What a terrible testimony is this !

Reader, how is it with you ? “ Now is the day of salvation.”

EXTRACTS FROM S. RUTHERFORD.

HE hath a Father's heart and a Father's hand who is training you up for heaven.

WELCOME, welcome, Lord Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee ; and sure I am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside, and draw aside the curtains, and say, “ Courage, I am thy salvation,” than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God.

OH, would to the Lord I had not a myself but Christ ; not a my lust, but Christ ; not a my ease, but Christ ; not a my honour, but Christ ! O sweet word, “ Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ! ”

I THOUGHT it had been an easy thing to be a Christian, and that to seek God had been at the next door ; but oh, the windings, the turnings, the ups and the downs, that He hath led me through.

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IT IS ALL FOR ME!

"IT is all for me! I hadn't a thought that I could ever possess anything half so good."

So said a person who had been for many months anxious about her soul, at the close of an address to believers.

She had known what it was to have some rays of hope, but her doubts and fears continually returning, she had become more miserable than before. Oh, she thought, if she could only know that her sins were forgiven! if she could only feel happy! if she were only sure of just getting inside the door of heaven, what a relief it would be!

So she thought, but God's purposes of grace are above all human conception. He gives as only God can give. Many a person sings, "I'd like to be an angel," as if that were the brightest and best thing; but God says, of those who believe in His Son, they shall be like Christ.

A few hours before the words which head this paper were uttered, our anxious friend had called upon a happy believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, to tell her of her great unhappiness, and of her fear lest she should be eternally lost.

"When I saw you two days ago, Mrs. —," said her friend, "you said you were happy."

"Yes, and I felt so."

"Who has changed since then, you or God?"

"Of course it must be I, for God could not change."

"And do you think God's word is like Himself?"

"I do."

"Then do you think God means what He says as to your having eternal life,—that is if you believe on His Son?"

"I'm sure He means to give it, but I don't feel I've got it."

"My dear friend, you are trusting to your feelings, and they make you miserable. You are too bad to be improved, so do not look within, but look above, and think of Him who once suffered, the Just for us the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Death

can have no more dominion over Him, and Christ who sits at the right hand of God, is a living Saviour for you. But I want you to come to an address to believers."

"No;" she added sadly, "I'm not a believer, therefore I can't go."

"Are you an unbeliever?" asked her friend.

"No; I cannot say that I am, for I do most truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Then don't let Satan, self, or anyone else, cheat you any longer from having peace. Go sit down and receive; that which is for the believer is for you."

At the close of the address, Mrs. —'s radiant face almost spoke without the words that followed, "It is all for me. I hadn't a thought that I could possess anything half so good."

"And are you happy?"

"Perfectly happy; I rest upon God's unchanging word, and now I know that what is written there for the believer is all for me!"

Nine months have passed away since the above words were spoken, but our friend's peace is undimmed. Christ is her peace. She now joyfully 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.)

Perhaps an anxious reader may wish to know some of those things of which Mrs. — heard, so I write down a few of the blessings that belong to every believer.

The believer may know that he is saved. (Rom. x. 9.)

That he is saved from wrath. (Rom. v. 9.)

That he is delivered from the power of darkness, and that he is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. (Col. i. 13.)

That he has redemption through Christ's blood. (Eph. i. 7.)

That he has forgiveness of sins. (Col. i. 13, 14.)

That he is justified by faith. (Rom. v. 1.)

That he has eternal life. (Rom. vi. 23.)

That he has been made the righteousness of God in Christ. (2 Cor. v. 21.)

That he has been made meet by the Father to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. (Col. i. 12.)

That he is sealed with the Holy Spirit who was promised. (Eph. i. 13.)

That he is a member of Christ. (1 Cor. vi. 15.)

That he will live together with Christ. (1 Thess. v. 10.)

The above are some only of the blessings that belong to, and are true of, the believer, of whom it is said, "For all things are yours.

. . . . And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. iii. 21, 23.) E. E. S.

LARGENESS OF HEART.

THERE had been a copious shower, and before the vessel appointed to receive the water, stood a witness to the bounty of the shower—a large pool. By the pool stood an old man, complaining of the vessel, "It won't take it, it is not large enough!" What a suggestive picture. There stand we, like the old man, in our narrow-heartedness, failing to contain the showers of divine blessing poured upon us. We complain of our straitened experiences, of so much of God's goodness never entering our hearts. The truth is, we only take in so much as our hearts are capable of receiving, though the blessing is showering all around us.

"Lord, when wilt Thou enlarge my heart?"

THE RACE.

RUN awhile and rest awhile is the motto (unspoken and unwritten, it is true) of many a traveller to heaven! We are prone to be zealous by spurts; few run the race with even patience. Running with patience involves much endurance, and great purpose. Staying power is what we all want; power to keep going on, on, on. Keeping the goal in view, gives the Christian this staying power.

BE humbled, walk softly. Down, down, for God's sake, my dear and worthy brother, with your topsail. Stoop, stoop! it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gate.—*Extracted.*

WHY SUCH SUFFERING?

LOOK at Paul, that useful, faithful and honoured servant of the Lord! Why is he shut up in prison? Why that bleeding back through cruel scourging? Why that chain upon his leg, chafing the skin at almost every turn? Why is this great apostle of the Gentiles hungry, and so shivering with the cold as to long again for the cloak which he had left at Troas? Ah! how wonderful are the ways of God! There is no mistake. It is indeed well. Not only does all work for good, but his Master, who has all power, and loves His devoted servant perfectly and unchangeably, is leading by the right way. The vessel must be broken for the light to shine out. The apostle is the Lord's servant. Divine truth can only be really learnt in a divine way, and the faithful messenger now tastes what he, by grace, had so ardently desired, "the fellowship of His sufferings," and proves the sufficiency of the Master's grace for every step in the path of His rejection.

Divinely-inspired communications had also to be given to the whole church of God, and vessels can only be fitted for such elevated work who are outside the camp with Christ, and find no home here where He was rejected; or, like another, be fitted for the Master's use in the banishment and privacy of barren Patmos. And must not the path of sorrow and of rejection with Christ be known still, if any would be in the current of His thoughts, and in the circle of His affections? Besides, did not such an honoured and extensive service as Paul's, who, among other things, had "the care of all the churches," necessitate his being much alone with the Lord?

According to man's way of calculating, Paul's becoming a prisoner would stop all his usefulness, but it was far from that. Even at Philippi, we know how wondrously God used the prisoner's testimony to the jailor's conversion. At Rome, while detained as "the prisoner of the Lord," he was used by the Lord to write the letters to the Philippian saints, to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and also to Timothy,

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by which sacred writings he has been the honoured instrument of ministering to believers from that day until now, and surely this will continue till the Lord come. Thus his usefulness did not suffer, but was vastly increased by his suffering and banishment, and the Lord put much honour upon him. He so saw all his affairs in the hand of the Lord, that he could speak of Himself as "the prisoner of the Lord," and of his personal sufferings, as filling up the afflictions of Christ for His body's sake, which is the church.

Another marvellous blessing which he tells us resulted from his afflictions was, that he learnt "consolation by Christ" in a way he could not otherwise have done. He says, "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. (2 Cor. i. 5.) This is of untold value to the soul, and eminently fits us for service to others; for having learnt in our own experience the blessed way in which the Lord has met us, sustained, delivered, and blessed us in our sorrow and trial, we are able to minister consolation to others when we meet with those who are called to walk in a path similar to that which we ourselves have trodden. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. i. 3, 4.)

It has been said that "an untried saint is always an unsavoury saint," for when exercised before the Lord in the troubles we have, we learn the more thoroughly to distrust ourselves, to have no confidence in the flesh, and we prove that all our springs and blessings are in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way, we become more and more weaned from the world, attracted to things above where Christ sitteth, and we prove the "need be" there is for "heaviness"; the word of God becomes fulfilled in our experience, faith grows, and the affections of our hearts turn more readily and more constantly to

the Object given to us. Of saints, in great and manifold trials, it was said, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Pet. i. 8.)

All believers must have trouble sooner or later, for our Lord said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but, even then, He would have us have peace in Himself, and "be of good cheer," in the consciousness that He has gone before us, and "overcome the world." (John xvi. 33.) Besides,

"It needs our hearts be weaned from earth,
It needs that we be driven,
By loss of every earthly stay,
To find our rest in heaven."

But there is another reason why Paul was so troubled. Though "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles," yet he was a man of like passions with ourselves. Though he was "a man in Christ" and "not in the flesh," the flesh in which is nothing good was in him.

He had been caught up to the third heaven, had seen and heard such wonderful things as could not be described by human language; he had also received from the Lord an "abundance of revelations," so that he was in danger of being "puffed up." A messenger of Satan was therefore given to him, "a thorn in the flesh" to buffet him, which produced intense mental anguish and deep soul-exercise, and kept him down at the Lord's feet. He prayed again and again to the Lord that it might depart from him, but his request was not granted. The buffeting must be endured, the path of humiliation and anguish must be trodden, the cross must be taken up daily, but the Lord who loved him, and gave Himself for him would be with him, and would not fail him in it. He said, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Through this path of suffering, Paul learnt deeply precious lessons, and, among others, not to grumble about his painful and trying circumstances; but to take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses

for Christ's sake, for, said he, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. xii. 2-10.)

Many dear saints are at this moment suffering in various ways, and surely the inquiry of each should be, "What is the Lord saying to *me* in this?" He would certainly not have us careful, nor fearful, but would have us exercise faith in Himself about the trial. He says, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me"; and again, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." We are to roll all that troubles us upon Him who careth for us, so as to be without having the "care" or "fear" of it in our hearts. The trial is none the less real. But we are to be "exercised" about it; and blessing is promised as the result. "No chastening (or discipline) for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. xii. 11.)

As to persecution, reproach, and suffering for Christ's sake we are told: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified." This kind of suffering all the faithful are called to expect, for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." This must be so, for we are in a world where every thing is contrary to the obedience of faith, and "is not of the Father, but is of the world" (2 Tim. iii. 12., Phil. i. 29., 1 John ii. 16.)

Nor should it be forgotten that we have also sufferings in common with other believers. "The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (1 Peter v. 9.) Redemption is not yet applied to our bodies, so that if a man is converted with a diseased body, we should not be surprised if the disease runs its regular course; or, if he lives in a country where there is war, famine, or pestilence, there will most likely be suffering, if not directly, yet in consequence of these things. But it is our sweet privilege in every trial to make

our requests known unto God, to rest in the precious truth that God is for us, and to count upon His power and goodness to usward on all such occasions; and in some way or other we shall prove that "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." It is always true of us that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

The hairs of our heads are all numbered. We are of more value than many sparrows. We never cease to be objects of the Father's perfect love. He withdraws not His eyes from the righteous; and all things work together for our good. The great Shepherd of the sheep never slumbers nor sleeps. His care of us never slackens, and He will never leave us, nor forsake us. Our Lord had suffering here; He was a "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. The apostles had suffering too, and have exhorted us to be patient, and to look for consolation in all our tribulation. It is well for us, when feeling the bitterness and suffering of our path, to be able so to fix our hearts upon the glorified Saviour, as to be able to say, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

May we be so guided and taught by the Holy Ghost, as to go through all the paths marked out for us *with the Lord*; and when we have to say, "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known," still to go on leaning upon His grace and strength, and learning His mind by His word, with confidence in our Father's faithfulness and love! Then we shall be able to add, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a god as our God?" H. H. S.

PEACE OF MIND.

SEEK to view the concerns of life in the light of eternity. When the light of God's countenance shines upon a believer he is truly in holy indifference to those matters which, when he is not thus shone upon, render him into a worry, or cause his soul to be in a ferment.



LEADING A FLOCK THROUGH A DARK VALLEY.

THE SHEPHERD'S ROD AND STAFF.

WHEN travelling over mountains we sometimes come to ravines or glens so narrow and so deep that, save at noonday, the sun does not shine right down into them—desolate places where only a few shrubs grow, and along which the path is but a ledge of rock. A lonely spot such as one of these might well be called a valley

of the shadow of death. In Palestine, where the wild beasts prowl about the mountains and the robbers lie in wait, these valleys seem to be worthy of the dark name—"shadow of death."

These desolate ravines are frequently the only way by which the shepherd can lead his flock from one pasture to another. We must not think only of the green fields of peaceful old England when we speak of pastures; we must remember the fruitful patches of green upon the sides of the huge mountains of other lands; and when the Bible is before us we must consider Palestine as it was when that part of the Bible we may be reading was written.

Now, a pretty sight it is to witness the shepherd going before his flock, and with careful steps

showing the sheep the way along a rocky path. No doubt David, when a shepherd, often did this for his father's "few sheep in the wilderness," and we know that he protected them both from the lion and the bear, as he told King Saul. Robbers and wild beasts beset the sheep in David's day, and the shepherd needed to lead them—to go before them with his life in his hand for their sakes.

The psalms of David are full of inspired sweetness, and they express what David himself had experienced. And thus, when he says, "The Lord is my Shepherd," "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me" (xxiii. 4), we feel David wrote what he had experienced in his soul. No one can truly say, "The Lord is *my* Shepherd," unless he be one of the Lord's sheep.

Can we all thus speak of Him, even the Good Shepherd who gave up His life for the sheep, and who calls those who are His "*My* sheep"?

On the preceding page we have a little picture of a familiar incident of a shepherd of Palestine leading his sheep through some valley of the shadow of death, and going before them as their guide and protector. In one hand he holds his rod (or club), in the other his staff. He is ready to meet bear, wolf, or man who would scatter or rob the sheep.

Now, we all who love God are like poor feeble sheep, and our safety lies in the strength and the love of our Shepherd, Jesus Christ the Lord. He brings us into the green pastures, or leads us through the dark valley, as to Him seems best. His club (or rod) comforts us, for all the mighty power and the strength of His right arm stands between us and the foe. He will beat down every one who shall seek to harm His sheep and lambs.

Our Lord also comforts us with His staff, which is specially for our guidance and upholding, even as we see the shepherds in our own land use their crooks.

A shepherd in Palestine requires to be both brave and kind. He must fear no foe, and must ever heed the needs of his flock. And in this double character we feel sure the Lord Jesus in heaven, the chief Shepherd of the sheep, expects the under shepherds to behave themselves on behalf of the flock of God. On the one hand to go before them—for the devil, as a roaring lion, is not afar off, and perverse men also

are about for no good ends; and on the other hand, to be of a ready mind, and full of love, and in gentleness and patience to care for the weak and the timid amongst God's dear people.

Bible Subjects.

PEACE WITH GOD.

WHAT a word is this—"peace with God!" It is well to think over it—a man, sinful and by nature at enmity to God, having peace with God. Is it not indeed wonderful that a guilty worm of earth should be thus blessed? Sin separates from God—*our sins have separated us from God*. God is angry with sin; He never, never will be at peace with sin, for sin is opposed to His holy nature; yet many who were once the vilest of sinners now have peace with God.

These wonderful words, "*peace with God*," occur but once in the Bible; we have them in Rom. v. 1. Before examining them we will refer to the texts in the Epistle to the Romans where the word "*peace*" previously occurs. "*Peace from God*" meets us in the opening verses of the epistle. Such is the word of greeting God sends His people—"Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." What a happy thing it is for us to read this epistle, having continually in our hearts the gracious greeting wherewith our God commences this letter to us!

God shows us in this epistle that He is no respecter of persons, but that He is a righteous God, rendering to every man according to his deeds—"Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil"; "glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good" (ch. ii. 6-11). But what further says the epistle? It teaches what man's ways toward God are, and thus it speaks: "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way" . . . "the way of peace have they not known" . . . (ch. iii. 10-19). Poor wandering sinners! getting further and further from God every step and every hour of life;

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guilty, and adding to the guilt, and in self no possibility, no hope of return.

Now it is after the dark picture of our guilt has been given, that God teaches us His way of righteousness on behalf of the guilty sinner. And that is by no other means than the death of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. His precious blood shed on the cross declares God's righteousness (ch. iii. 26), and tells us that the righteousness of God is magnified in relation to our very sins that cried for judgment.

We can do nothing to obtain righteousness from God, for we are like criminals convicted of a capital offence—such is our position before God. Such as seek for peace with God by turning over new leaves can never so obtain it, for it is written, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (ch. iv. 5). But the sinner who believes God, obtains the blessedness of the divine pardon, and God reckons his sins to him no longer, but reckons righteousness to him. Thus, we read, it was with Abraham, the father of the faithful; and the child of faith, like the father of the faithful, says, "What God says can be."

If you will read the first four chapters of the Romans you will see that in our remarks we have been running through them, in order that we may come by God's pathway to these wondrous words, "Peace with God" (ch. v. 1).

When we say peace with God, we mean the peace of the individual soul, and peace with God about the question of our own sins. We cannot have peace with God for one another. It is solely our own portion. Our sins are our own. For his own sins the sinner must give an account to God, unless God shall justify him, and God justifies us individually. So also our faith is our own. We may put it in this way, he who believes, may thus speak: "I have peace with God about my sins because God has justified me, since Jesus died and rose again."

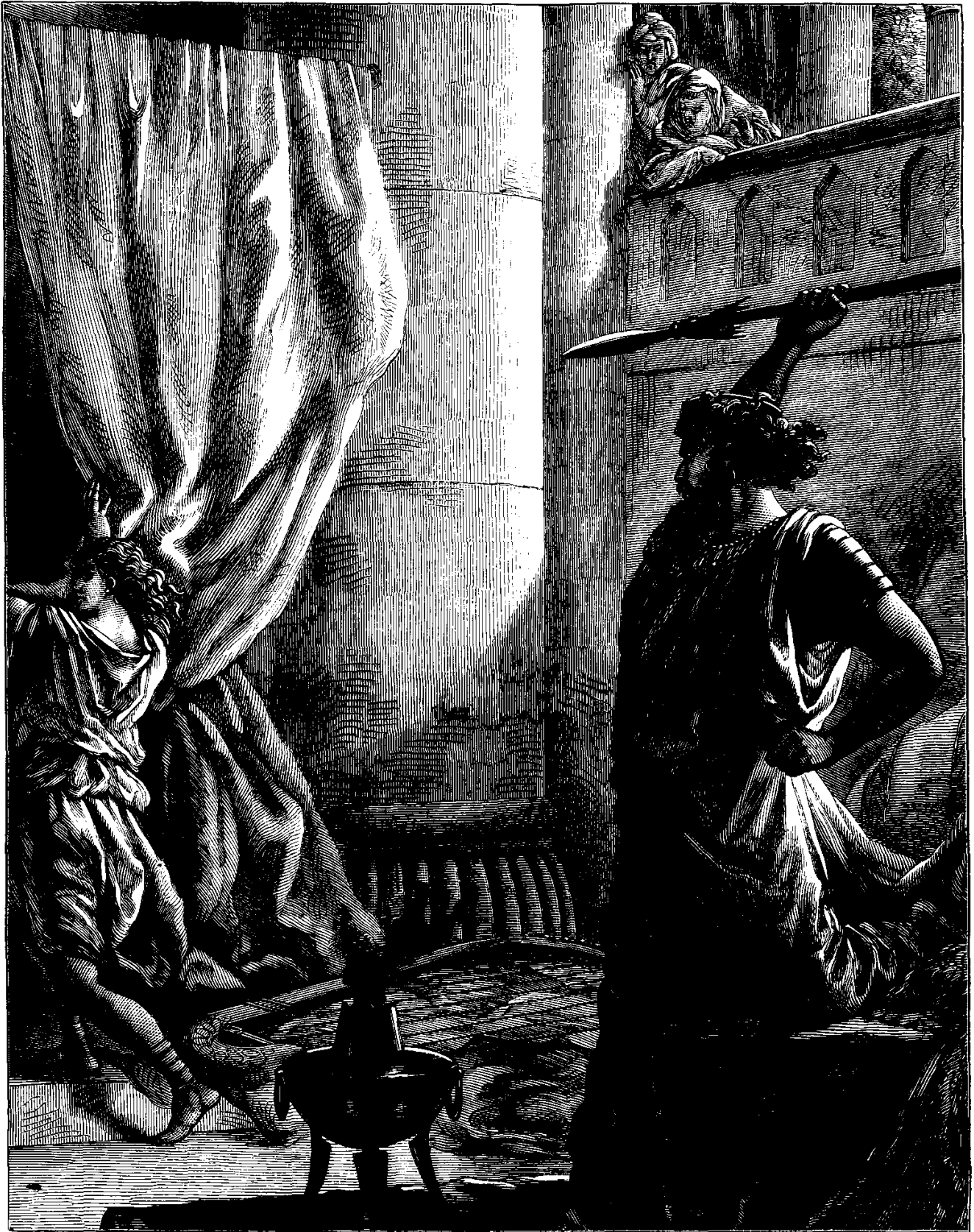
God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, was delivered for our offences. Faith lays hold

of this, and sees how actually "Christ died for *our* sins." Herein is close dealing with God as to His judgment due to our sins, and in the death of God's Son faith perceives righteousness indeed, for the Lord took upon Him the penalty due to the offences of the ungodly sinner, and then died for our offences. Righteousness asks no more than one payment for the debt. God Himself is glorified about our offences by the death of His Son for them.

But not only did the blessed One die for our sins, He was raised again for our justification. Having borne the judgment due to our offences, God in righteousness raised Him from the grave. Having died on the cross for our sins, now He is our risen Saviour. Since He died for our offences the penalty of them is gone; since He was raised from the dead for our justification, in Him risen our justification lies. In Christ dying for our offences we behold divine righteousness respecting those offences; in Christ raised from the dead we behold the absoluteness of our justification.

We have already said that believing God, and not working ourselves, is what God, who gave His Son to die for us, and who has raised Him from the dead, requires of us. He justifies us not because of our works, but because of our faith in Himself who gave His Son to do the work on our account. If any one were justified by works, he could not stand before God and glory; he could glory, but glory in himself. This would not be peace with God! Neither has any sinner who is trying to get the blessing through works, peace with God, perhaps he may feel he is at *peace with himself*! It is neither our doings nor our feelings which give us peace with God, but the assurance that God has justified us. (Rom. iv. 23-25.)

Search the Scriptures on this important theme, dear young friends. Seek to get the truth from God Himself, which we do when we come simply to His Scriptures, and pray Him to teach us by His Holy Spirit. The more we meditate on the subject, the more wonderful it grows up before our souls, that we should have *peace with God*.



SAUL'S JEALOUSY.

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SAUL'S JAVELIN.

JEALOUSY is a great but mean sin. No noble heart can be jealous of the honour of others. Self-love is the spring of jealousy, for if we thought less of ourselves, and sought the honour of others, we should not be envious of their reward. There will be no jealousy in heaven, for there all will rejoice in the honour and happiness of each other. We cannot be jealous of those whom we truly love, for the more we love our friends the more delighted we are to see them honoured.

A generous-minded child will make a noble man or noble woman; and may all of our young friends belong to this aristocracy! One of the ways in which the sin of jealousy falls upon the head of him who indulges in it, is the little love people have for the jealous person. A man full of self-love is not loved by others; and if any jealous-eyed person reads this let him not grumble at his reward.

As we read the story of good King David we can but think of Saul's jealousy of him. When David returned from slaying Goliath, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, and answering one another in song, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." "And Saul was very wroth," the Bible adds.

But why did not tall Saul go out himself and fight Goliath? If he had slain the giant, the women of Israel would have sung his praises as they did David's. Now, annoyance that others are better than we, instead of admiration of their excellence, is jealousy. After those songs and dances in Israel "Saul eyed David from that day and forward." Yes, with a wicked look he eyed him; some such look as that which we see at times on children's faces—yes, and upon those of grown up people also. A mean, selfish look that says, "I wish you were out of the way."

God was angry with Saul for his jealousy, and the next day He sent an evil spirit upon him, and by and by Saul went from bad to worse in his envy, till at last he tried to get rid of David altogether. He cast his javelin to smite David to the wall with it. David, who trusted in God, escaped. But Saul feared David because God was with him.

Unhappy man! he was getting further and further away from God.

Beware of this great sin, for God will surely judge it some day. He is grieved with His children when they are jealous of one another and vex one another. All good gifts come from Him. We none of us have save what He has given us. No one will grow an inch taller than his stature by envying one who is taller than he. The idle boy will not say his lessons well by envying the industrious lad who takes the pains to learn them. Go and fight the giant; do not envy the giant's victor.

*He is Mine.*

WHAT a nice, bright girl that is!" said a lady to me some time ago; "she is so cheerful, and looks so pleasant, that it is quite a pleasure to see her."

Her words were called forth by seeing a young girl, Katie Smith, pass by with some young friends. As I was greatly interested in Katie, I was pleased to hear the lady thus speak, and especially so because only a very few years before no one would have said Katie was a bright and happy-looking girl! What, think you, had worked the change? Just this: that whereas once Katie could not say the words at the head of this paper, now she can.

Is that all? Ah! dear girls, do you know who Katie meant when she said, "HE is mine"? She spoke of One who loves her more than even parents can; who watches over her all her life, and gives her every good thing she has. Yes, One who gives you, too—now while you are reading this paper—the very breath you draw. If for one moment He ceased to give it you, you would die. Now you know who I mean, do you not?

I will tell you how it was Katie was enabled to say of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He is mine." About three years before my story begins she was a very dull, sorrowful girl. She had not known a happy childhood, for she was under the care of one who was

no relative, and who did not love her as does a mother; indeed, poor Katie looked as though she had scarcely known what it was to have anyone to love her. After a time she was sent to a school, the teacher of which loved the Lord. This lady sought that all her pupils should belong to her own precious Saviour. She pitied poor Katie, and nearly every evening would read a few verses from the Bible with her, telling the sorrowful child of the love of the Lord Jesus.

It was quite new to Katie to hear that God loved her. No one had ever told her that before! As she heard and read for herself of Jesus when He was in this world, it was a story sweetly new and beautiful to her. She longed to be fit to go into the glorious home above where Jesus is, and to walk the golden street there in white with Him. Katie learned, too, that she was a sinner, and that no sin can enter the home above. What, then, was she to do?

Her teacher told her that God knew she was a sinner—He knew all about her being naughty, all about her sins—and He had given His own dear Son to bear the punishment she deserved, but if she received the Lord Jesus she would be a child of God herself. For “as many as received Him, to them gave He power (or privilege) to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His Name.” (John i. 12.) God would be her Father, and would take care of her all the time she was here, and at last the Lord would bring her home to glory.

Oh, how eager was little Katie, to hear these wonderful words, and how glad was she to find that the loving Saviour would willingly receive her, and would love her and keep her every day. At first, as the truth entered into her heart, it seemed too precious, too good to be true for her, but as she learnt more and more of the Lord’s love, her heart was filled with joy. Katie longed to do something for the Lord; she wished to live for Him, and very bright her face grew in the sunshine of His love. She lost the dull, heavy look she used to have, and people remarked the change in her.

One day she said to the lady who taught

her, “Oh, it is so precious to know that God loves me, and *always* loves me. I can really say from my very heart the Lord is mine.”

Can you say what Katie did? L. T.

LITTLE JOHNNIE’S LAST WORDS.

LITTLE Johnnie was suddenly taken ill. His age was six years and two months. The parents sent for their doctor. When he came, he found the dear child in a dying state, and told them that he could not live. The mother burst into tears, and said, “Oh! Johnnie my darling, where are you going?”

The little fellow looked earnestly at her, and said, “You are my earthly ma”; then turning to his father, said, “You are my earthly pa; but *I am going to my heavenly Father!*” And then, as he lay back on his pillow, he said, “Ma, do not cry! do not cry for me!”

The doctor exclaimed, “You are a happy woman!” And truly her heart was full of thankfulness to God, even although it seemed ready to break at parting with that sweet child, who in a few hours was taken to be “with the Lord.”

“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.” H. L. T.

Our English Bible.

COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER.

THE four clergymen who were, as we have seen, the first to be brought before the special court which had been set up for the purpose of trying those suspected of heresy, had, before their trial, set forth a declaration of their readiness to die rather than give up what they believed to be the truth of God concerning justification by faith, and had expressly said that they counted the word of God—not the traditions of the Church—the only sure guide, the only absolute authority to which all Christians must submit; for they judged that none could be of the true church who refused to listen to Scripture. In conclusion, they promised all due submission to the will of the queen, but added, like the apostles of old, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” It is interesting to see that this declaration, set forth in

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May, 1554, was signed by several who were prisoners at the time, and the last signature is that of Coverdale. "To these things aforesaid," he writes, "do I, Myles Coverdale, consent and agree, with these mine afflicted brethren, being prisoners—mine own hand."

We are told that Rogers, when he had listened to the sentence passed upon him as "an obstinate heretic," looked round upon his accusers and spoke in thrilling tones of the day when both he and they "should come before a Judge that is righteous."

"I nothing doubt," he said, "but that I shall be found there a true member of the Catholic Church of Christ, and everlastingly saved; and for your false church, ye need not excommunicate me forth of it; I have not been in it these twenty years, the Lord be thanked therefor." Then changing his lofty tone to one of entreaty, he added, "But now that ye have done what ye can, my lord, I pray you yet grant me one thing—that my wife, being a stranger, may come to speak with me so long as I live; for she hath ten children, which are hers and mine, and somewhat I would counsel her what were best for her to do."

This request was not granted; yet did Rogers look upon his wife once more; for on that February morning, when he was led forth to suffer at Smithfield, the brave woman went to meet her husband on his way to his death. As he walked, repeating aloud the fifty-first Psalm, along the street in which the church where he had so often preached stood, he lifted up his eyes and saw her, accompanied by all her children. The sight of her grief, and of the children whom he was to leave without a father, did not unman him; he refused the pardon which at the last was brought to tempt him, and made good, in God's strength, the words which he had spoken long before—"That which I have preached I will seal with my blood."

A letter written a few days after to Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, at Oxford, shows the spirit which animated many at that time. Speaking of the sentence passed upon the prisoners tried in London, the writer adds: "Our dear brother Rogers hath broken the

ice valiantly, as this day, I think, or tomorrow at the uttermost, hearty Hooper, sincere Sandars, and trusty Taylor take their course and receive their crown. The next am I, which hourly look for the Porter, to open me the gates after them, to enter into the desired rest. God forgive me mine unthankfulness for this exceeding great mercy, and choose me to be one in whom He will suffer."

Hooper was burned before his own cathedral at Gloucester. We read of him that in his extremity "some came to persuade him to accept of God's mercy, since life was sweet and death was bitter." He answered that "the death which was to come after was more bitter, and that the life which was to follow was more sweet,"—and so, refusing the Queen's pardon, which was pressed upon him at the last, and praying earnestly to God to strengthen him, he suffered.

Sandars and Taylor, too, were taken back to their own parishes, that those whom they had taught might take warning by their end. Sandars, like Taylor, when he was led out to die, had a pardon offered him, if he would give up his wrong opinions, but he said that he held no heresies, but the blessed gospel of Christ, and embraced the post to which they chained him, with the words, "Welcome the Cross of Christ; welcome everlasting life."

Taylor had been earnestly entreated by his friends, who saw the coming storm, to escape while there was yet time. But to all their prayers he had one answer. "Must not I follow Christ," he said, "the Good Shepherd who not only fed His flock, but died for it?" And so, when he found himself once more among his people, he told them that as he had taught them nothing but the truth contained in God's holy word, so now he was come to seal it with his blood.

The English people looked on at such scenes as these with horror and amazement. It was whispered—for men dared not speak openly—that many who thus suffered had done nothing contrary to the law; since the laws for breaking which they were condemned had been made binding while they

were in prison. As an instance of the truth of this, we may mention a poor fisherman burnt at Cardiff in this fatal year. He was an old man, and had been imprisoned a year before, because he had sent his son to school, that he might have the comfort in his old age of hearing the words of the Bible from the child's lips—for he could not read it for himself.

Taken from prison, and brought before the court, he was condemned as a heretic, because of the way in which he answered the questions put to him. In like manner, many were "taken" because they were not seen at church or at confession, and "having articles put to them"—that is, being questioned by the judges as to their belief in the doctrines laid down by the law as those which were to be believed by all—were found guilty of heresy, condemned by the very words in which they expressed their simple faith in what they had been taught from God's word, and their conviction that the doctrines which they were required to believe were not to be found there.

Among those who proved their faith and courage in their lives, though they were not called to show them by their death, was one Augustine Bernher, a Swiss, who had been long Latimer's servant, and of whom we read the simple record that he was "excellently serviceable to the poor prisoners and martyrs, travelling continually from place to place, and from one prison to another, and standing upon no pain or danger to do good offices for the poor professors."

When Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were prisoners at Oxford this faithful messenger went to them, taking with him letters for them, and whatever he could procure for their necessity. Nor did his service end when those for whom he had risked his own life were beyond the need of them: he looked after the desolate wives and fatherless children of such as died for their faith, and we find one on the eve of martyrdom, in his last letter to his wife, speaking of him thus:—"As Christ," he writes, "committed His mother to John, so I commit you in this world to the angel of God, Augustine Bernher."

The writer of this letter had told Bernher a few days before his end that he had no joy or comfort. The Lord for whose name's sake he was about to lay down his life seemed far from him: His face as the face of a stranger. Augustine cheered him, assuring him that both joy and comfort would be his in due time, and begging him to give some sign that it was even so. The sign was given, for when the martyr was on his way to death, at the moment of his sorest need, he suddenly clapped his hands, and exclaimed, with a radiant smile, "Austin, He is come! He is come!"

A letter written by Latimer to one who was in prison for the gospel's sake has been preserved. This man had been offered money that he might buy himself off, and escape from prison, but had refused it, thinking it "a thing unlawful to buy off the cross which Christ had laid upon" him. Latimer encourages him, saying, "It is 'given to us, not to believe only, but to suffer for His name'; if suffering be the gift of God, how can we sell the gift of God, and give money to be rid of it? It is written also, 'A man must abide in the vocation wherein he is called'; but to suffer for the truth is God's calling, and therefore we must abide in this calling."

Again, writing from his prison at Oxford, the old man reminds his brethren who were in like danger of their lives, that now was the time "when the Lord's ground would be known" (alluding to the "good ground" of the parable), "for such will not shrink from a little heat or burning weather." He earnestly exhorted them all to go forward, after their Master, Christ, "not sticking at the foul way or stormy weather, being certain that the end of the storm will be pleasant and joyful, and such a perpetual rest and blessedness as will swallow up" all their present trouble. He reminds them that they are not alone, for many of their brethren and sisters were pressing on the same way, the way to the heavenly Jerusalem, which was ever through persecution, and bids them follow the footsteps of Christ and His friends, wherever they may lead.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



HOW ONE DIED TO SAVE SIX.

HOW ONE DIED TO SAVE SIX.

I HAVE before me a small piece of canvas, scorched and blackened, which preaches me a sermon, and reminds me of the text, "Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) It was once part of a fire-escape, worked by a fireman named Joe Ford, of whom the papers said—"but for him the lives of six persons would have been sacrificed."

The six were in danger from fire; they were unable to help themselves, nor could any friends render them assistance.

But a saviour came! Tidings of the outbreak reached the fireman, and, buckling on his helmet, he ran swiftly to the spot. He came where they were—came with all that was needful for their salvation—came purposely to save them, whoever they were, wherever they were, and just as they were—came to do all, and to do all freely; and this makes me think of the Lord, the Saviour of sinners, of whom it was said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

"Down from the shining courts above
With joyful haste He sped."

As the fireman entered the street, clouds of dense black smoke were rolling up from the lower parts of the house that was burning; but with cool courage he fixed his machine, and threw up his ladders to where the poor terrified people were whom he had come to save. Then up to them he went, and they waited his approach. Did they wish to argue with their saviour as to the origin of the fire, think you? Did they propose to decline his services? Did they hesitate when he bade them escape, and say, "Go thy way for this time"? Ah! no; they were wiser in respect of a danger to the *body* than many are in respect of a far greater danger to the *soul*. One, two, three were brought in safety to the ground.

In the meantime the flames within the building were spreading rapidly; the smoke without was becoming blacker and hotter; and the saving arm—unlike His whose hand "is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isa. lix. 1)—was becoming weak and exhausted. Again the fireman mounted the ladder, and again he descended with another precious

burden. He had saved four. Again he trod that narrow way of escape, and once more brought forth a rescued one. Five persons saved from the flames!

Now the crowd stood breathless—a woman appeared at the open window. There was one still left in peril. Had the fireman strength to reach her? Why should he, exhausted as he now was, risk his life for a stranger? He had undertaken the office, it was true, but had he reckoned upon such a sacrifice? Was such a deed expected? If Joe Ford would save yon shrieking woman, he must risk his own life.

Rallying his strength, the brave fireman mounted a sixth time, amidst ringing cheers from the crowd. He reached her! Steadily, step by step, he bore her down the ladders to the opening into the canvas shoot. He placed her in it, and slid her to the ground. She was saved!

Now for the brave fireman. Where was he? The flames burst through the first floor window beneath him; they set the canvas of the escape on fire. At the same instant Joe's axe became entangled in the wire netting, and he hung suspended in the very fire from which he had rescued the woman. While she stood in safety, beyond the reach of harm, he was consumed in the very flames from which he had saved her. With dying energy the poor fellow managed to break away from his terrible position, but only to fall, with a heavy crash, some twenty-five feet to the pavement, crushing his helmet almost into the brain. I shudder as I think of that awful moment.

Oh, if a London crowd could weep as a fellow man suffered, what tears ought we to weep as we remember how the gracious Saviour expired for sinners on the cross! He took the sinners' place in perfect love; He bore the wrath of God due to us; He was, as it were, consumed as a sacrifice in the very flames of divine judgment on our account. This did Jesus endure for us who rejected Him. Have you ever wept tears of love for Him?

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe.
Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'Tis all that I can do."

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What should we have thought of those six persons whom the fireman saved if they had made no inquiries after their deliverer—if they had shed no tears when told of his death? I remember how even strangers honoured that hero, as his body, carried upon a draped engine, passed through the London streets. Bells were tolling from the churches, shopkeepers put up shutters along the route, and not a few rough men and women did I see drop a tear as the long procession passed. The battered helmet placed among the wreaths upon the Union Jack covering the coffin touched many a heart.

But, alas! how few hearts are truly melted and broken by the dying love of Christ!

One other fact about my friend, Joe Ford. I think I was the last person who spoke to him that night before he went to his last fire. I left him a little book, entitled "What would make you happy?" and as I shook hands with him I repeated the title, emphasizing the personal pronoun, "What would make *you* happy?" We parted, never to speak again to each other on earth. My little book went with him to the fire, and was found afterwards in his burnt pocket. I little thought, and he little thought, it was the last time we should meet.

Reader, this may be the last warning you will ever have? We tell you of our Saviour who died that you might live—who gave Himself to save sinners.

He who has come to save is nigh, and able to save. Do you want a way of escape? He is the Way. Do you need a strong arm? He is able to save to the uttermost.

Such is my story. Is it to be wondered at if I value the little piece of burnt canvas that can preach me such a sermon? So I will fold up my little relic—all that I have to remind me of my friend—and think once more of my Saviour who died for me, and who will bring me safe to glory. W. L.

O Lord, we adore Thee,
For Thou art the slain One
Who livest for ever,
Enthroned in heaven;
Our title to glory
We read in Thy blood.

HE IS MORE THAN A SAVIOUR TO ME.

"I CAN speak of Christ as a Saviour for others, but *He is more than a Saviour to me* . . . He is so bright, always so bright . . . I shut my eyes, and I see Him *so* bright, He is *always* so bright. When He gave me a glimpse the other day of what He had suffered for *me*, I cannot tell you what it was; it was only a glimpse, but I did not think there could be such a thing known on earth. It was worth all the suffering I have passed through to have such a glimpse, and I would gladly go through another such time of suffering to have a like glimpse again . . . But I am in the Lord's hands—I have no will but His will. I am ready to go, or to stay, whichever His will may be."

Such were some of the utterances of a poor widow whom we lately visited, where weakness and exhaustion were intense in connection with a painful and serious illness. And surely it is the believer's sweet privilege, while passing through this death-stricken scene, to be taken up with the surpassing excellency of Christ Himself! Was it not this which enabled the chief of sinners to count every thing valueless in comparison with the Lord Jesus Christ? And has He not promised to manifest Himself to those who love Him? "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will *manifest Myself* to him" (John xiv. 21)—to those who believe in the preciousness of Christ, not only because He has died for us, but because of the glory and excellency of Himself. We delight to think of His sufferings and death for us, we rejoice that all our blessings have been securely founded in righteousness by the blood of His cross; but it is Himself that gladdens our hearts. His perfect and unchanging love many waters could not quench, or floods of trouble drown. His love could not rest till it had accomplished its purpose of redeeming us from all iniquity. But though we recall to mind His sufferings, and remember that the death of the cross has secured for us eternal glory, we can truly say that—

"Greater far than all beside,
He, He Himself is thine."

With those who knew the sweetness of personal intercourse with Him, He has the first place in their hearts. No other object is comparable to Him. Not even service, however blessed, can be allowed to come between us and Himself. He is truly the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. In Him we have excellency which is unchanging and eternal, glory which nothing can tarnish; and the longing desire of His heart is not only that we should be with Him where He is, and behold His glory, but that we should share the glory which the Father has given Him. Even now He would have us have the enjoyment of the precious truth that we are one with Him, and loved by the Father even as the Father loved Him.

While our hearts adoringly remember that all our present and eternal blessings are founded on that one sacrifice for sin which He offered once for all, it is Himself that so attracts, engages, and satisfies the heart that knows Him. Where this is the case, the utterance of the soul must be—

"No object so glorious we see,
And none so attractive to us."

When our unseen Saviour in the glory thus engages the heart, He is more than a Saviour to us, for He is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and a never-failing fountain of joy, in whom are all our springs. We know Him in the highest place of honour and power. We see that, in heaven, angels, authorities, and powers are made subject to Him, and are assured that in a little while every knee in this vast universe shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father. We see it is the same Person, and the same heart now engaged for us in the glory of God as Advocate, Shepherd, and Priest, that poured out His soul unto death for us on the cross. Though not in the same place now as He was then, His love is no less than when He laid down His life for the sheep. When He is thus known in the place where He now is, such can truly say, "He is more than a

Saviour to me." Things here then lose their hold upon us, our hearts are set free for worship and service, and even the good things of earth have not the charm for us they once had; besides, we better know Him as "He that is holy," and "He that is true," and aim in every way to be more suited to His mind.

When we are occupied with His perfections and glory the best things of time and sense seem poor, and a thousand things which formerly might have troubled us are now not even noticed by us. His glory eclipses all else. The inheritance of the Lord of glory makes man's expectations look very small. His brightness makes all else appear to be dark. His fulness manifests our feebleness. His eternal and unchanging worth makes us dissatisfied with all else. Occupation with Christ Himself not only satisfies the heart, and brings the will in subjection to Himself, but brightens in us the hope of His coming.

H. H. S.

A STIMULUS TO SERVICE.

SERVANTS need stimulating to do their work, not for their work's sake, but for their Master's. It will be such a happy thing, when we stand before Him, to have done the little things on earth according to His pleasure. His love to us should be our motive of service to Him; for it will be a joy to Him to smile upon the servant who has been engaged for Himself. Servants of Christ must expect disappointments in their work. But husbandmen do not give up work because of bad weather; they hope to the end, and, even if wet or drought destroy the harvest, year by year they still plough and sow. Let it be the cloudy day or the bright one, be the season one of disappointment or one of rejoicing, blessed are those servants who shall be found at their work when the Master comes! The Lord's servants are rewarded not for the amount of work they do, but for doing the work appointed them. We have each to fulfil, as a hireling, his day. Whether we work eleven hours or one hour in His vineyard is not the question. We work for the Master, not for the penny.

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OH, HAPPY DAY.

IN the small town of W——, situated in one of the Eastern Counties, there resided about six years ago, a young man full of high hopes, and surrounded by many of this world's blessings, but he loved the things of this world and not the things of Christ. One night after he had been playing at cards (one of his chief amusements), he took up a tract, which lay in his way, and read of the love of the Lord Jesus. God used that tract to bring him to a sense of his guilt. He confessed his lost condition and his want of a Saviour, and the Lord, who is ever ready to hear the faintest cry, heard him and gave him peace. From that moment he became a changed man.

The change soon showed itself in love to the Lord and to His people, and a few months after his conversion he was found proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation.

A few weeks ago he fell sick, and it was my privilege to be at his bedside and to hear from his own lips these words—

"I am going home."

"Are you happy?" I asked.

"Perfectly happy," was his reply.

He wished the boys in his class at the Sunday-school to be told, that he realized that his life on earth was fast drawing to a close, and that he felt how little he had done for the Lord Jesus; he also earnestly desired that they should begin early to serve Christ, so that by-and-by they might hear the blessed words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It was a particular pleasure to him to listen to the hymn—

"Oh, happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God."

"Ah!" he would whisper, "it was a happy day." Some days before his death, he, at the last, nearly lost all power of speech. Suddenly his voice returned with power, and he bade farewell to his friends, commended his soul to Jesus, and so he fell asleep. E. B. F.

A MOTHER'S TRUST.

IN a previous number we related the sad death from burning of two dear little boys

in one night, and we would wish to add a few words as to the last days of their beloved christian mother. Of the above agonizing trial she spoke, some years afterwards, to a friend as having been made by God one of the greatest blessings to her soul. Her own words were, "I had loved God before, but I had never trusted Him as I did then and have done since."

Her last long illness was one of much suffering, but no murmur ever escaped her lips. "I have a suffering body," she said on one occasion, "but soon mortality will be swallowed up in life." A few days before her death, she asked for her baby to be brought to her, and while gazing at the helpless infant she said, "It is a pretty little thing;" adding—

" ' May'st thou live to know and fear Him,
Trust and love Him all thy days;
Then go dwell for ever near Him,
See His face, and sing His praise.' "

That daughter is now an earnest christian wife and mother, and thus has God fulfilled the desires and prayer of the dying parent. Later on she looked round at her two weeping boys, and told them that God was about to take her to Himself, where she would have no more pain. She then questioned each as to his hope of joining her there, bidding them, meantime, to be attentive and obedient in all their ways—dutiful to their father, and not giving needless trouble to those around them. The boys had been taught from infancy the words of life, and now the mother could leave the seed sown with the One who waters, and surely He is ever ready to answer the parent's heart.

Just before the last peaceful scene of the dying mother, she turned to the anxious husband with words of comfort, adding, "I have no anxiety about our dear children; I only desire that they may be the children of God, and, if it please Him, that they may become ministers of His word, or missionaries." Soon after this she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Rise, christian mothers, to work for eternity, and, whilst fulfilling the many duties of life, remember your children's never-dying souls.

THEY ARE ALL GONE.

AN elderly Christian was slowly recovering from a dangerous illness. A short time before she had believed herself to be on the borders of eternity, but had manifested neither fear nor anxiety, for she rested unhesitatingly on God's testimony concerning His Son. She knew that He who knew no sin had been made sin for her, and that she stood "complete in Him."

This child of God was talking to her attendant of her readiness to depart "to be with Christ," but the latter did not know what it was to be saved through the merits of the precious blood of Christ, so she enquired—

"But what about your sins?"

"They are all gone," replied the lady; "they are all washed away in the precious blood of Christ."

Blessed answer, showing that her heart took, in all their depth of meaning, the words of the psalmist, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

"What though th' accuser roar
Of ills that I have done!
I know them well, and thousands more;
Jehovah findeth none."

And what about your sins, dear reader? Are they put away? Can you, too, say, "They are washed away in the blood of Christ"?

One thing is quite certain, they must be got rid of before you can go to heaven, for God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

"I do believe that Jesus died for sinners, but I am not sure that my sins are forgiven," is the language of many. Is it yours, dear reader? Well, you may know this very day that your sins are forgiven and your iniquities covered, if you believe what God tells you about the finished work of His dear Son. You will never, never get peace by looking within; it is by looking away from yourself at that risen, glorified Man at God's right hand that you get peace. "He suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God." He bore the punish-

ment that we sinners deserve, and, having done so, God raised Him from the dead. He is now in glory, with the marks in His side, His hands and His feet for ever showing that He has paid the sinner's debt. Behold Him, for "He is our peace." The Holy Ghost says "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," and "by Him all that believe are justified from all things." And again, what a word is this for such as are bound down with a sense of their sins: "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." Can God say more?

Take God's word as it stands, and you shall say of your sins, "they are all gone."

"The trembling sinner feareth
That God can ne'er forget;
But one full payment cleareth
His memory of all debt." M. W.

GOD, OUR FATHER.

GOD has been pleased to reveal Himself to us by His Son in this gospel day under the name of Father. This Name conveys to our hearts the most gracious relationship; it is the title of the most tender love of God toward us. This Name opens up to us God's deepest grace, for once we were enemies to Him by wicked works, but now we are not merely pardoned sinners, we are His children, and since we are God's children He cares for us in every possible way, both regarding time and eternity.

The God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our God and our Father, has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. These blessings were counselled before time began; they are made ours in time, and will be fully enjoyed in eternity. They are secured to us *in Christ*; we have them not in our own keeping, nor are they vested in ourselves. These blessings are not dependent upon what we may be or do, nor upon our walk; they are our own personally, but solely as vested in Christ. Neither Satan, nor any power, can rob one single believer of one of these blessings, since they belong to us in Christ. Come,

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then, what may, what sorrow, what trial, these spiritual blessings shall never, never fail.

The extent of these blessings is beyond our calculation. The most advanced believer on earth can never know their range. The more he may learn of them, the more he will discover there is to be learned. "*All* spiritual blessings in the heavenly places" is the extent of them; there is not one of these blessings with which God, our Father, has omitted to bless us.

These blessings are spiritual, and we are blessed with them in the heavenly places. They must not be confounded with such as refer to our career on earth. By learning more of Christ where He now is seated, we shall gather acquaintance with their character. The Spirit of God teaches us of them, and, to the Spirit-taught, these blessings are far more real than the things of earth are to the natural man. Our being seated in the heavenly places in Christ, our acceptance in the Beloved, our coming glory with Christ, and such favours of God to us, are among these spiritual blessings.

Our God and Father has His special blessings for us, as His children on earth, in the trials of earth, as well as the spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. There are experiences of God to be derived on earth, such as even the bliss of heaven will not afford. In a peculiar way, this lifetime is the scene for the display of God's mercies to us; in heaven He will show in us the glory of His grace; here each day brings to us some mercy from Him. Bearing in mind the opening verse of the Epistle to the Ephesians just referred to, we read this opening verse of the second Epistle to the Corinthians: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." The relationship given is somewhat similar to that in the Epistle to the Ephesians, but the range of His goodness to us how different! Heavenly places are not in view, but our lot on earth—our things, our trials, our needs. And in connection with our wants our God designates Himself for us, the Father of mercies.

What a rest is this, His Name, to His tried and suffering child! And it is well, indeed, for us, the children, to go to Him in the fulness of this name, "Father of mercies"; yes, mercies, not mercy, for who shall count them? He calls Himself, moreover, "the God of all comfort." This tender title is very soothing to the tried believer. He designates Himself elsewhere "the God of glory," but a saint on a sick bed, or watching by a sick bedside, needs comfort, and our God is the God of *all* comfort. It is not now *all* spiritual blessings in the heavenly places, but *all* comfort for the earthly lot, that is connected with our Father's Name.

Now these mercies and this comfort of our Father and God work very blessed spiritual results in the children. He turns the seasons of trial into the golden hours of our lives; He comforts us in all (do not let us forget His word says "*all*") our tribulation. He makes the very wounds of our heart the means whereby we acquire ability from Himself to comfort others, for He speaks to us during our sorrows in such a way that we are enriched with His consolation as otherwise would be impossible. Hence His afflicted people say, "We could not have been without this grief, for we have learned our Father's love therein as we never knew it before."

Let our reader compare the first chapters of the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and well consider them in the light of the gracious Name of his God—Father.

In the twelfth chapter of the Gospel by St. Luke another insight into the love of our God toward us is given. We have our daily cares as well as our great trials. The blessed Lord treats of these daily cares, and He deals with those which are the commonest of all—food and raiment. He teaches us how God feeds the birds, and clothes the flowers of the field, and then calms our anxious thoughts by these tender words: "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."

It is as if the Lord Jesus, the perfect dependent Man, who trusted His God for the

bread He ate, would leave us like little children in the repose of our Father's love toward us. The child ceases its cares when in its father's arms. Who of us would let his child lack aught he could give him if he knew his child needed? Our Father knows; let this be sufficient. He has numbered the very hairs of our heads. We are of more value than many sparrows, and not one of them falls to the ground without Him.

Is it not so, that many a child of God who can discourse very clearly on "all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places" being his in Christ, is quite at a loss for the spirit of the dear child when the burden is the small matter of the day? Great trials, we know, are generally patiently borne by God's children, because their weight drives the sufferer to God. It is the little things we too generally fret about, and as to which we are not unfrequently of a doubtful mind. Let us assure our hearts in our Father's love—*He knows!* He withdraws not His eyes from His people. He watches us every day and night. He needs no acquainting with our concerns, though He is pleased to hear everything we have to say to Him about our cares. "Your Father knoweth"....

Fishermen of the Lake of Galilee.

ON a previous page (77) we gave a picture of the receipt of custom as managed in the olden days in Palestine; now we give one of a fisherman casting a net into the Sea of Galilee. How often did such scenes pass before the eye of the blessed Lord when He was a Man upon earth!

The fisherman was quite another character of man from the publican. He had learned by observation the ways of the fish and their habits, and how to catch them. He was a man, hardy and quick, ready for work by day or night. We portray him casting his net into the sea, flinging it out to compass the fish his tutored eye detects sunning themselves or asleep in the shallows of the lake. There are other fishermen in their boats, mending their drag nets.

On our own coasts the fishermen have various kinds of nets for the different sorts of fish they pursue at the changing seasons of the year. The meshes must be large or small, according to the size of the fish. On the Lake of Galilee, too, there were different kinds of nets in use, for those waters are wealthy in fish, and were once thronged with fishing boats. Now both the lake and its shores are almost forsaken.

As the Lord sat in the boat on the sea and taught the multitudes on the land, in order to illustrate His teaching to them He used the labour of the fishermen and the drag net, so familiar to their eyes—the "net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore." (Matt. xiii. 47-48.) This you have probably seen on our own coasts—you have seen the fishermen shoot their net from the stern of the rowing boat, leaving one end of the net in the hand of a man on the shore, and then you have watched them row round in half a circle till they come to shore again. All the while the net has been dragging along the bottom, gathering of every kind—some good, some bad. Such is the work effected by the preached word—all sorts of men are enclosed by it, but not all are really saved. The good will be reserved for glory; the bad will be cast out.

The world at large is manifestly before us in the "sea," and the Lord's call of fishermen to become fishers of men—evangelists, we might say—opens up the thought of various emblems of their spiritual calling from their secular occupation.

As it was with Matthew the publican, so it was with the fishermen, the brothers Simon and Andrew, and the brothers James and John; they all left their occupation immediately at the call of Jesus, and followed Him. A distinct call each one had from Himself, and so they became His special followers.

Four of the Lord's apostles were fishermen, and of these four Peter, James and John were the three who were the most prominent amongst the twelve. Matthew the publican wrote the first gospel, John the fisherman the last, also three epistles and the



CASTING A NET INTO THE SEA, AND MENDING NETS.

book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Peter and James, both fishermen, wrote, the one two epistles; the other, one. These eye-witnesses of the Lord's ways had Him with them in the circumstances of their daily life.

The fishermen were homely men. Zebedee, the father of James and John, had some hired servants, but they were all far from being rich; the fare they partook of, and the manner of life they led, was of the simplest and humblest kind.

Jesus, the Lord of all, shared with them, and He was frequently with them in their little ships. These great apostles were weather-beaten men who pulled the oars, and steered their boats over the lake, and toiled all the night for their fish. Once, we remember, on a stormy night, when the Lord was weary, He slept in the hinder part of the ship on a boat-cushion, and they awakened Him to save them from the waves, and He bade the sea be still. He chose for His apostles men who were neither great nor mighty, but plain and unlearned persons. Such was His way, such the purpose of God.

The apostle Peter returned to his fishing at the Lord's death, and with him for that night's work went Thomas and Nathaniel, James and John. Jesus, risen from the dead, stood on the shore and called them again from their nets to His service, and they became for His sake indeed fishers of men, and so fulfilled their apostolic mission.

How simple were the surroundings of an earthly kind that encompassed the Son of God! Little do we realize such things. His humbling Himself so as to become a man we in some measure apprehend, but His humbling Himself as a man is little in our thoughts. But what a voice to us may be heard in the few barley loaves His disciples had brought; in the Lord and Peter not having the small coin for the Temple tribute, which Peter, at His bidding, found in the fish's mouth! How such things teach us of His poverty! If by picturing to ourselves the fishermen of Galilee we are enabled to conceive ever so little of the ways of Jesus on earth, we shall not have written or read these pages in vain.

Bible Subjects.

PEACE.

LET us look at the other passages in the Epistle to the Romans where the word *peace* occurs.

"To be spiritually-minded is life and peace" (Rom. viii. 6); this is the happy contrast to the solemn statement, "To be carnally minded is death." In the previous verses the human family had been divided into two classes—"after the flesh," "after the Spirit"; and the characteristics of each had been stated—minding "the things of the flesh," and minding "the things of the Spirit." Now the end of the carnal, and of the spiritual courses is given; in the one case, death; in the other, life and peace. Life and peace are the sequence of being spiritually-minded. Fire ascends, since it is its nature so to do; so life and peace are attached to being spiritually-minded. The verse does not lead us to enquire how spiritual our minds are; it teaches us what belongs to spiritual mindedness—minding the things of the Holy Spirit.

In the verse, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (xiv. 17), we have again a broad and general statement. God's kingdom does not consist of external things, but of spiritual. If it consisted in what men eat and drink, any godless soul might be of it. But its foundation is laid in righteousness, and peace with God is our portion on the foundation of the righteousness He has established. After peace comes joy in the Holy Ghost. The character of God's kingdom is joy; even as in the domain of evil grief and misery are found.

As we consider the kingdom of God, we delight in the beauty of the desire expressed in these words, "The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing" (xv. 13). Our God has given us exceeding great and precious promises; He has bidden us look on to the glory. Not one prospect He has given us shall ever fail. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And our God of hope fills us with joy in the prospect of what so soon shall arise, and with present peace, despite the roughness of the journey and the weariness.

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ness of the circumstances. He fills us with these blessed things as, through grace, we believe His word.

We have our responsibilities as to peace as well as our privileges; we are to "follow after the things which make for peace" (xiv. 19). This is not faith in God as to the glorious future, but patient work among men during the present hour; and, unless we do really follow such things, we shall be in a disturbed state of soul, and not in a peaceful condition. It will avail us little for our walk to know the certainty of the future if we do not devote ourselves to following after, with steady earnestness, the things which make for peace this very hour amongst our fellow-men. Fault-finding and judging one another must be abhorred, and, instead, we must seek to be like our Master, who pleased not Himself. We shall all be like Christ in glory by-and-by; let us seek to have Him, as He was on earth, as our daily example.

In the tenth chapter (v. 15) we have this verse, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace." The swift messenger hastening to bring the glad tidings is presented to us. Beautiful, indeed, are such willing feet. The slow, heavy tread of him who works only because it is his duty has no beauty in it. When we rejoice in peace *with* God—are filled with the sense of what the life and the peace, which are ours by grace, really are—are living in the power of God's kingdom, and in the prospect of the glory—are in communion with our God, following after the things which make for peace; we shall be ready and glad messengers of God's peace to our fellow-men. May this be the way of the feet of each one of us!

As God's messengers bring into the enemy's land the word of peace from God to their fellow-men they rejoice in this triumphant word, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (xvi. 20). At the first God said that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; now He says He will bruise the adversary under our feet. He, the God of peace, who gave His Son to die for us,

whose blood has made peace, will do this great work. The God of peace shall display His power by giving weak man, whom He has delivered from Satan's power, to tread the might of the enemy down. Until that day of victory may our feet be beautiful in bringing the message of peace to the weary sons of men.



I'm Lost.

WERE you ever lost, my little child? One spring evening a friend and myself were walking along a beautiful country road. The sun was just setting, all gold and purple, and everything looked very lovely indeed. Just in front of us was a little girl, walking slowly along, whom we found to be crying bitterly. At first we could not tell what she said because of her sobs, but after a little time we found out she was saying over and over again, "I'm lost." Presently she told us that her parents had only just come to the village, and that her mother had sent her to the shop at the corner of the street where three ways met. She had taken the wrong road, and now was lost. Well, we comforted the poor child, and put her right for her home, to which she went still sobbing with fright.

Now I know a great many boys and girls like this child—they are lost. They do not know where they are going. How is it with you? You know you will not stay in this world for ever. Do you know where you will go when you leave it? The little girl was going further and further from her home every step she took, and so it is with all who are not the Lord's; every day they get further and further away from Him.

I know where I am going when I leave this world, and so do thousands of other persons, for the Lord Jesus is the Way. "I am the Way," He says. He will save you if you only ask Him. He will be your Saviour and your Friend. And then they know where they are going, for He tells them. Do you know?

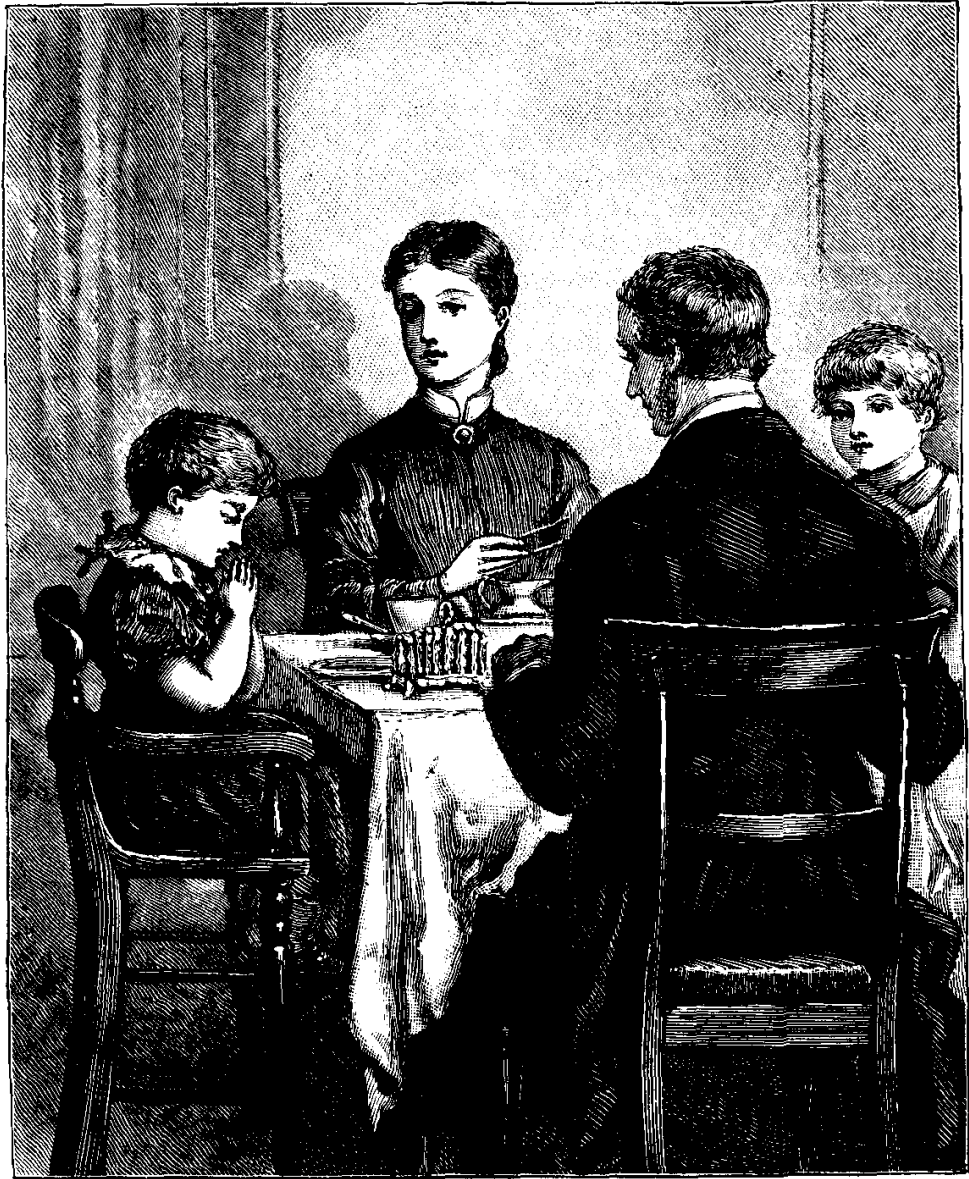
L. T.

GEORGIE'S EGG.

THE following anecdote has been related of a little boy who had hardly learnt to speak. After an illness he had been ordered a new-laid egg every morning for his breakfast. It happened that one day the supply failed; so at breakfast time the child was told that there was no egg for him that morning. He said nothing, but a few moments after, folding his tiny hands, the prayer went up "Lord — Georgie — negg," and he quietly began his meal.

Almost directly after, the servant entered with a fresh egg, which had just been sent in for the child by a kind neighbour. Thus was his faith answered. Was little Georgie surprised? No. He knew that the Lord in heaven, who loved him and cared for him, had heard his prayer, and sent him what he asked for. Then he would thank the Lord.

This story was lately told to a little boy, somewhat older than Georgie. He had heard something of the Lord Jesus, and liked to be told of His love. He knew, too, that everything he had came from Him; but he had not yet learnt to take all his little wants to Him in prayer. He did not know the joy of



LITTLE GEORGIE.

asking and receiving, nor the joy to the Lord, who stoops to even our smallest needs, in being asked, and in giving.

He was an honest, thoughtful child, and after a few moments' consideration, quietly remarked, "I shouldn't have done that."

"What would you have done?" was then asked.

"I would have *waited* for the egg," he answered.

Which of these little boys, do you think, best understood what God likes His children

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to do? Surely the one who *waited* and trusted did well. But the one who *asked* in faith, according to the Lord's own gracious words, "Ask and ye shall receive," did better.

It is also written, "Ye *have not*, because ye *ask not*." G. C.

BIBLE LESSON FOR THE LITTLE ONES.—I.

(Read Matthew ix. 1-13.)

MANY of you, dear children, have, if not a Bible, a New Testament of your very own.

Have you ever noticed that almost the first word in it is that word which we so often hear—the word "gospel"? If you have not seen this before, open your Testament now, and look for yourselves. Yes; God has given us in His New Testament—

- 1st. The Gospel according to St. Matthew.
- 2nd. The Gospel according to St. Mark.
- 3rd. The Gospel according to St. Luke.
- 4th. The Gospel according to St. John.

The word "gospel" is an old word; it means a good story. God's good story which He has told us in His New Testament is about His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We can understand now why it must be a good story. If it was a story about men and women and children it could not be a good story, because none of us have anything good which could be told about us.

How many men were there whom God chose to write the good story about His Son?

There were four, and each one has told the story in a different way, but each has told it just as God wished him to tell it.

The first writing in the New Testament is the gospel according to Matthew. The name of the man who wrote it was not always Matthew. How do we know this?

If you find the 14th verse of the 2nd chapter of St. Mark's gospel you will see the name which was given him by his father when he was born, for the "Levi" who is mentioned there, and also by St. Luke in the 5th chapter of his gospel, verse 27, is the same as the "man named Matthew" of whom we read in the 9th chapter, verse 9, of his own gospel.

If you have looked at these three places

in your Testaments, you will see that the same person is mentioned in each place, and the same things, or nearly the same, are told of him, only the apostles Mark and Luke call him "Levi," and when he tells the story himself he says "Matthew."

Perhaps you may know a boy called Theodore, or a girl called Theodora. Both these names mean the same as Matthew—"the gift of God."

Can you think of another apostle who had two names?

Simon Peter had first only his own name of Simon, but the Lord called him Peter. We are not told who gave Levi his new name, but we know that the Lord Himself spoke to him, and called him.

In that chapter of John, which so many of you know—that chapter which speaks of the Good Shepherd—it says, "He calleth His own sheep by name." Matthew was one of Christ's sheep whom He called.

He tells us himself how it happened. That we may know, we must find again the 9th chapter of his own gospel. The chapter begins by telling us that "He" (that is the Lord Jesus) "entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city." This means that Christ sailed across the beautiful blue waters of the Sea of Galilee, and came to a town which stood upon its shore, called Capernaum.

There is no town now on the spot where Capernaum used to be. No one can even be quite sure of the place, for all the beautiful houses and towers, and even the streets, have been taken away. When the Lord Jesus was there the place was full of people, rich and poor—fishermen, and buyers and sellers—just as any town by the seaside is now.

If you read the first nine verses of this chapter you will see what a wonderful Person He was who came to Capernaum that day.

What a sad sight we see first of all! A poor sick man, so helpless that, if he came to the Lord Jesus at all, he had to be carried out into the street on a bed. Then what wonderful words we hear. It is Jesus who speaks, and says to that poor sick man, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

And, as we read on, we find that the One who spoke those words knew the evil thoughts of some who were there, although they did not speak a word. You could not tell what I am thinking about, nor could I tell the thoughts of the heart of any one of you children; only God can do that, and the Lord Jesus could do it, because He is God. None but God could say to that sick man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." The Lord Jesus could say it, because He is God.

Now let us read on: "And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow Me. And he arose, and followed Him."

What was Matthew doing when the Lord called him? There is a name by which he calls himself once, which shows us what he was doing that day. He calls himself "Matthew, the publican." When Jesus called him he was making people pay their taxes.

What was it that Levi heard that day?

Only two words—"Follow Me."

But who spoke those words?

The Son of God. Levi heard that voice, and just as the helpless man had arisen from his bed when Jesus said "Arise," so, when the publican heard those two short words, "Follow Me," spoken to him by the Lord, "he arose and followed Him."

CHEERFUL OBEDIENCE.

WILLING obedience is worth a great deal. Work done with a sweet smile because the little worker loves him or her for whom the work is done, and work done because it must be done, are as different as real and artificial flowers. "Your labour of love," said the apostle to the Thessalonian Christians, and indeed no work we may do for God is worth much in His eyes unless it be a labour of love.

Our blessed Lord's life was one of willing obedience. He came to earth to do God's will. He laboured for us because He loved us. The Son of the Father, Jesus our Lord, was the servant of God and the servant

of man, and all His service was that of love.

See to it, that your hearts go with your hands in your obedience, "Not with eye service as men-pleasers," as the Bible warns us.

Work is pleasant to us, whatever it may be, if our hearts are cheerful over it. It makes little difference what our hands and feet are busy about, so long as our hearts are at rest. The easiest way to be happy is to make others so. And as we are speaking to children, we should add that in your cheerful obedience will be found the best proof of your love.

Our English Bible.

THE LONDON GOSPELLERS AND GENEVAN EXILES.

THAT all sorts and conditions of men suffered for their faith during these troublous times is plain from the fact that we have the record of six persons who were condemned as heretics on February 9th, 1554. They are described briefly as "a butcher, a barber, a weaver, a gentleman, a priest, and a weaver's apprentice."

Next day a Spanish friar, in a sermon preached before Philip, was bold enough to reproach the bishops with the dreadful crime of burning men for religion. "Ye have not learned it in the Holy Scripture," he said, "to put any to death for conscience, but rather to let them live and be converted." This sermon had some effect, and the fierceness of the persecution abated for a time.

The London of that time saw many a strange sight, for side by side with the terrible scenes which took place, when great crowds assembled to see a few poor gossellers meet their fiery death, there were to be seen nearly every day grand processions—sometimes it was the king and queen passing through the city, and showing themselves to their "loving subjects"; sometimes a procession of school children marching round St. Paul's. At their head walked a great company of priests, bearing crosses and chanting a Latin hymn, and next came a troop of bishops,

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with the Bishop of London in his mitre, carrying the sacrament, while a splendid canopy was held over him, and torches flared and flickered in the wind. At another time the Londoners came in crowds to one of the great shows, which were specially provided to please the people, where were "giants and hobby horses, drums and guns, morice dances, and other minstrels."

But amid all the gaiety many hearts were aching with a pain which no May dances or jugglers' tricks could charm away, for sad stories, only half told, were abroad concerning the sufferings of those who were in prison, and were perhaps nigh unto death—a cruel death, from which no love of dearest friend could avail to rescue them. It was whispered that on New Year's Eve, when the merry-making was at its height, more than thirty men and women had been taken by night in Bow Churchyard whilst holding a meeting for reading and prayer in English. None had escaped. The man who was counted their minister had been sent to the Tower, and the rest to different prisons. It was but too true. We must not forget that during the whole of Mary's reign little companies of these "gospellers" used to assemble to read and pray, and take the Lord's Supper together. It was noticed that, though several of them were taken and put to death, the number of those who attended these secret meetings, at peril of their lives, seemed only to increase, though sometimes they came together only to pray. At one of these meetings, when the little company was betrayed by one who pretended to be of their number, John Rough was taken. He had been a priest, but became a preacher of the gospel in the reign of Edward. When the time of trouble came he went abroad with his wife, and they supported themselves for some time by knitting. Coming to England for yarn, he went to the meetings of the gospellers, and was very helpful to them, until that winter night when he was taken from them, and they saw him no more till he was brought out to die at Smithfield.

Another who did much to help the scattered sheep of Christ at this time was George

Eagles, who went by the name of Trudge-over, so unwearied was he in travelling from place to place, seeking to strengthen and encourage his brethren. After gathering a little company and preaching to them, Trudge often had to hide himself in some hole, or in a thicket, for he was so well known, that diligent search was made for him. It was said that the little congregations to which he preached were traitorous meetings, for a law had been made, by which it was treason for more than six men to flock together for any purpose, and when Trudge was at last taken he suffered as a traitor.

At the burning of seven gospellers, who had been taken at a meeting in a field at Islington, at which about forty were present, a proclamation was made in the name of the king and queen that "no man, under pain of death, should approach them, touch them, speak to them, comfort them, pray for them, or once say, 'God help them!'"

In spite of this, one man who had been present at the meeting, but had escaped, turned to the assembled crowd, and said, with a loud voice, "We know that they are the people of God, and therefore we cannot choose but wish well to them, and say, 'God strengthen them!'" And as he cried, "Almighty God, for Christ's sake, strengthen them!" one deep "Amen" rose, like a cry for help, from the hushed multitude. The officers, who had orders to arrest any who should show signs of sympathy, looked one at another, not knowing where to begin, so universal was the expression of it.

Small and feeble as these little companies might seem, they baffled all the efforts of the bishops, and continued to assemble, constantly changing their places of meeting for greater security, until the time came when it was no longer treason for them to come together. We read of one meeting at the house of a nobleman, another in the loft of a clothworker in Cheapside. Again, they met on board a ship, in a cooper's house, in the fields. At one of their meetings by night, we are told of a man who came as a spy, and who was converted as he listened

to the reading and the prayers. Fervent prayer there was, especially for "the Lord's prisoners," and for those of their brethren who were in exile in foreign lands, for whom they often collected as much as ten pounds—a large sum at that time—at one night's meeting, and in spite of the vigilance of Gardiner, who had said that by hindering any money or provisions being sent to them, he could "make them so hungry that they should eat their fingers' ends," the money thus collected did reach those for whom it was intended.

These exiles were chiefly those who had been advised to fly at the beginning of Mary's reign. They had taken refuge in France, Flanders, Germany, and Switzerland, and were especially to be found at Frankfort and at Zurich. It was especially for the exiles that the translation of the Bible called the Genevan was made.

Coverdale was among those who left England for the Continent. In his behalf the King of Denmark wrote to Queen Mary, asking as a favour that he might be allowed to come and settle in Denmark, whither his wife and her sister seem to have already gone. He did not, however, remain there long; the king would gladly have kept him, but his ignorance of the language prevented him from preaching, and he soon went to join his countrymen in Germany.

The story of these refugees is not a cheering one. Escaped from persecution at home, but also cut off from their usual occupations, they busied themselves in earnest disputations about the right forms of prayer to be used, and the dress suitable to be worn by the clergy. The result of these contentions was a separation among them. Many left Frankfort for Geneva, where there was soon a large English congregation, and there we find Coverdale living among them, and helping William Wittingham and others about the new translation, which, unlike any which had gone before it, was the work, not of one scholar, patiently labouring on alone, but of many working together and helping each other.

The Genevan Bible bears marks of the

very great pains taken by the translators to make the sense clear, and the margin is rich in notes. The New Testament was printed first, and, for the first time, in verses, while italics were used to show where words, not actually in the Greek text, had been inserted to make the meaning plainer.

We may imagine that it was not easy for people who were exiles in a strange country to get the means to live, yet they willingly gave money for the printing of this New Testament, and a beautiful little volume it was, printed in clear silver type upon fine paper.

Even then, however, though news did not reach Geneva for more than a month after the death of the queen, the days of their exile were drawing to a close, for at the accession of Elizabeth the banished ones might return without fear. About two years later the whole Genevan Bible was published, and became very popular; so much, indeed, was it in favour with the people that it was very generally used long after the translation made in the reign of James the First, which we now use, had been in circulation.

It is interesting for us to notice that with the publication of this Bible, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the time of danger and difficulty in connection with translating the Scriptures into English, or reading and circulating them, came to an end. "Persecution for the word's sake" there has been, and will be as long as there are those who faithfully hold, and seek to carry out its teachings; but, from that time to this, it has never been counted unlawful for the poorest or most ignorant of the people to have God's word in their own tongue, and to read it openly, before all men.

We find Coverdale, now an old man, in London again in 1559, preaching at St. Paul's Cross, as he had done forty years before. He was spoken of affectionately as "Father Coverdale" by those who remembered that he had been the associate and friend of Tyndale, and who saw him, at seventy-eight, still preaching the gospel, spite of age and infirmities. He died at the age of eighty-one.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



"THE SUMMER IS ENDED."

THREE OLD MEN.

ON the north-east coast, within a mile of the seashore, we lately met with three old men. All are poor, and each is nearing the end of his days. One was toiling up the steps to his lowly cottage on the hillside, when a child said to her parent—

“Oh, father! look at that poor old man; do go and speak to him about Jesus. He looks so weak as he totters up the steps.”

Her father accosted the old man, and spoke of the love of God in sending His Son to die for guilty sinners. The old man turned sharply round, and said—

“I have read about these things for a good many years now, and I don’t believe a word of it.”

Remonstrance was in vain; he walked into his house and closed the door, muttering his unbelief in the word of God.

The second old man was sitting on his donkey-cart, eating his dinner, when we made our acquaintance with him. He told us in answer to the question, “Are you saved?” that he found it very difficult to express his feelings, but assured us of his sincere belief in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“I believe,” said he, “every word that is in the Bible; I do not understand it all, but I believe it; and to explain to you, sir, what I mean, it is just like this: we sometimes have a fish for dinner; the nice soft parts we eat and enjoy, but the bones, you know, we cannot manage. Now that fish is something like my Bible. I open it, I understand what the apostle John says, and such like; but all the hard parts that I cannot understand, I just leave as they are, like the bone of the fish; but they be all parts of God’s word, just as much as the bones are part of the fish.”

The third of the old men was leaning on his scythe by the roadside, having just left the hay-field. The newly-mown hay suggested the verse, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved,” so we quoted it, adding, “Is the last part true of you?”

A bright smile broke over his wrinkled but cheerful face as he answered, “No, thank God, for twenty years I have been able to say that I am saved.” When asked if he was quite sure, he replied, “Yes, quite; but I feel we do not praise Him enough; the language of my heart is ‘Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!’”

His face lit up as only an old man’s face can when lighted by the beauty of holiness and the joy of God’s salvation, and the tears of joy ran down his cheeks as he dwelt upon the grace of God in bringing salvation to his soul.

Is my reader an old man? Do the dim eye, the grey locks, wrinkled brow, bent back, and tottering steps give him warning that the sands of time have nearly run out—that life’s milestones are almost passed—the journey nearly ended? Let me ask you, dear friend, with all the respect due to your age, “What are your prospects for eternity, and what is your present condition?” Are you, like the first of the three old men, closing the door of your heart upon the gracious invitation of God’s word? If you have hitherto done so, let me beseech you to do so no longer, lest those solemn words, “Because I have called, and ye refused; . . . I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh,” should be true of you.

Do not say you are too old or too ignorant to understand these things; learn a lesson from our second old friend, and receive in all simplicity the gracious words of God. Here is a plain, simple verse, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever”—yes, “whosoever,” old as well as young: for, as a boy once said, “Whosoever means anybody; you, if you like”—“that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This is one of the “nice easy parts” that our old friend enjoyed. Instead of cavilling about things hard to be understood, which, Peter tells us, they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction, do

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be like him, and take God at His word—that plain word that all can understand—“Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.” Then, instead of looking forward to a dark future, you will be able to rejoice, as did our friend in the harvest-field, and praise and adore as you dwell upon the great love and rich mercy that God has bestowed upon one so long a neglecter of so great salvation.

It would seem to be true that few are saved in old age; but, thank God, there are exceptions, as our reader would have seen, had he visited a fishing station in Scotland a short time since, where the word of God had been preached with power. The venerable old grandfather, and his young granddaughter, both believed in the Lord Jesus to the saving of their souls. What joy in the presence of the angels over these two! and how it magnifies the grace of God, that He can and does save even those whose whole lives have been one long chapter of neglect and indifference. Listen to the closing words of the message of grace: “*Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely!*” H. N.

BE NOT OVERCOME OF EVIL.

WE are overcome of evil when we are under the mastery of its weight, when the mind cannot rise above the sense of the evil of which we feel the pressure. Then Satan, the evil one, has an advantage over us. Then the believer has, as it were, the conscious enjoyment of the peace of God crushed out of heart and mind. It is not that we fail to believe the love which God has toward us, but, by reason of being overcome of evil, our misery is meat to us, as dust is to the serpent.

Let the power of the Lord but fill the soul, then what God is for us and Christ is to us will lift us up to work out God's wishes respecting our circumstances in God's way. We shall not then be under the evil, but above it. We shall be walking with God, and when walking with Him we shall regard evil from the position of power—God's presence.

TWO COMPANIONS.

SEVERAL years ago, in one of our Scottish cities, two young companions who had just returned from finishing their education, were entering, with bright anticipations, upon a round of gaieties. Possessed of much that the world highly values, they found amusements and pleasures alluring. They knew not, and did not care to be told, that they were walking in the broad way which leadeth to destruction. “Let us enjoy ourselves; time enough for that by and by,” they would say to any who sought to arouse them from their dream of pleasure. Alas! to how many have those words been like an opiate lulling them to sleep, only that they may, when it is too late, awake to the great realities of life and death and eternity.

One evening, hearing that there was to be a gospel address given in a mission-hall in a suburb of the city where they lived, out of curiosity these young ladies resolved to go to the meeting. The subject was taken from the words, “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.”

That night it dawned for the first time upon those careless souls that they too must appear before God. Both went home under deep conviction of sin. On the following evening another address was to be given, but it happened that both had an invitation to a party on that evening.

What were they to do?

“Do come again to the meeting,” said one; “never mind the party.” “I cannot,” replied her friend; “I am unhappy enough as it is, and the meeting will only make me worse—the party will set me right, and drown all these thoughts.”

After earnestly pleading with her companion to accompany her, the one who had first spoken went alone, saying to herself as she made her way to the mission-hall, “Perhaps there I may find peace.” That night the Lord answered the deep need of her heart; she found peace through the precious blood of Christ, and from that time her life was “bright with His praise,” and she found a joy in following the Lord, and seeking to serve Him, far beyond any of which she

had ever dreamed while pursuing the phantom which the world calls pleasure.

After two years of happy married life, she was taken home, leaving her baby boy to the Lord's care, while to her sorrowing husband and friends she spoke loving words of cheer and comfort.

"Good-bye," she said. "This is my marriage day, and I am going where it is far better—to be with Jesus."

She asked them to sing—

"Saviour, more than life to me,
I am clinging, clinging close to Thee."

And just as they ceased singing, her spirit departed to be for ever with the Lord.

And what of her companion?

She went to the party, and, as she hoped, the intoxicating draught of excitement and gaiety helped to drown the thoughts which had begun to intrude upon her. She, too, married, and after several years spent in the amusements and frivolities of a fashionable circle, she, like her former companion, lay upon her death-bed. On being told that she had not many days, it might be not many hours, to live, her agony of soul was dreadful to behold. Her cries for mercy rent the silence of that death-chamber, as she repeated, "I cannot die! I cannot meet God! I rejected Him once, and now the door is shut."

A Christian friend told her of mercy to be found even at the eleventh hour; but she only replied, "It is too late, too late—I rejected Christ when He came to me;" and thus, with these words of despair upon her lips, she died.

As we think of that solemn death-bed scene, we cannot refrain from asking you, dear friend, into whose hands this little paper may come, Does it not breathe a word of warning to you?

We pray you, do not seek to stifle conviction of sin and your need of a Saviour; do not put off accepting Christ. It is a solemn thing to say, in answer to the invitation of Christ, who bids you "Come" to Him—"To-morrow." God says "To-day;" and, be assured of this, God's "To-day" and man's "To-morrow" never meet. K. R.

"WHEN I AM DEAD I AM DONE WITH."

THESE were the words of a man to whom I was speaking about his soul's salvation twelve months ago in the market-place of the town of B——.

"That is what *you* say," I replied, "but *God* has said, 'My thoughts are not your thoughts.' You say when you are dead you are done with; now listen to what God says in His word:—'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,' (Heb. ix. 27); and again, 'We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad' (2 Cor. v. 10.); and again, 'As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.'" (Rom. xiv. 11, 12.)

Reader, have you given in your account to God? God is holy, and you are unclean. God is righteous and you are guilty. Will you meet Him now in your sins and guilt, or are you waiting for the judgment-day? That day, when it comes, will be a day of terror and wrath. God and the sinner will then meet, but in judgment. In that day the lake of fire will be unveiled, and every one who has despised and neglected this great salvation will be cast into it. O Christless soul, beware! that awful doom may not be far distant.

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; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." (Acts xvii. 30, 31.)

How many there are who, like the man of whom I have spoken, think that when they are dead they are done with, who are speeding down the broad road that leadeth to destruction, blinded by their unbelief, deceived by the devil, as to a matter which concerns their eternal welfare! Oh, my reader, I solemnly warn you of these tremendous realities—sin, death, and judgment.

J. S.—N.

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"IN WHOM I HAVE REDEMPTION."

SOME years ago, my lot was cast for a time in a very gay, pleasure-loving family, the members of which were, with one exception, apparently strangers to the grace of God. The one exception was a little girl, who loved the Saviour.

A beautiful home hers was, as far as outward things were concerned, but my heart ached as I saw the hollowness and unhappiness which lay beneath the gaiety around me. The servants seemed to have followed the example of their master and mistress, and, though owning that they were not safe for eternity, generally avoided any conversation about their souls, excusing themselves on the plea of being "too busy" to listen. "Ah," they were warned, "you will not be 'too busy' to die."

Amongst the servants was a nice-looking young woman, whose face was so bright and pleasant that I used at first to think she must be one of the Lord's own. Her manner, too, was quite different from that of all the rest. As I very rarely saw her, I made enquiry of the servant who usually attended to my wants, and found that she was not living in the house, but only came in when extra help was required for needlework. So, much as I wished to speak to her, I felt there was little prospect of my doing so. But just when we are helpless God can act. One day I found that three or four of the servants, with A. to help, were to be at needlework for several afternoons in the room nearest mine. I felt that this was an opportunity I must not lose; so, when I knew that they were all at work, I took an interesting gospel book—a story of two poor little children—to read to them, feeling sure that their hearts would be touched, when hearing of childish misery and sorrow cheered and brightened by a Saviour's love.

So, with an earnest prayer that God would use the little book for His own glory, I began reading. They became much interested, and when I had laid the book down, and began to ask them if they would like to know what it was to have their sins forgiven, and to be

ready if death came suddenly, to go to a home so bright, so glorious that it was beyond all thought—even then they listened, and more than one looked at her work through tears. When I rose to go there was a general request that I would come again.

That was just what I wanted; so next day I went, and, after finishing the little book, appealed earnestly to them to accept the Saviour at once, telling them that they would be lost if they did not, and that the best of us were poor, helpless sinners, utterly unable to save ourselves, and unable to do anything to please God until saved by faith in Christ Jesus.

That was the last time I read to them all. The particular work required was finished, and I only saw them occasionally as before. But the Lord's gracious work had been begun, though I did not know it at the moment. Not many days after, a knock came at the door of my room, early in the morning, and A. entered, and asked if she might come in while I read my morning chapter, as one of the servants had told her I was accustomed to do this, and that I should be glad for any of them to come if they would. For a moment I was tempted to change the chapter which I had already begun for another, as I was reading the Epistle to the Colossians, for I thought a simpler portion might be better. However, I did not alter it, but in coming to the verses, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins," and the following, I laid particular stress upon them, and spoke to A. about them very earnestly. The next morning she came in still earlier, with her face all aglow, and said, "Oh, I felt I must come and tell you at once; I can say that verse now, 'In whom I have redemption through His blood'; yes, that's true of me, really true—I was obliged to come and tell you."

At first it seemed too good to be true; but, as I saw how her face glowed with an emotion that came from a heart stirred to its depths, I could only join her in tears of joy for the good news. Afterwards she told me how angry she had felt when I said she was a lost sinner; that she was sure she was not, for she

had lived a good life, getting up at five o'clock to get her work done to go to early communion at her church. No one before had told her she was a sinner. "But I could not get it out of my mind," she said, "and when I went to bed I could not sleep, and I lay and thought about it, and the next day too; and I felt so wretched, for I began to be afraid it was true. Then I read in the Bible," she added, "but that did not help me; and then I came in to see if you would let me hear you read the other morning, and that verse I could not forget—it kept in my mind, and after I went to bed I was thinking over it, and all at once I saw that that was the way I might be saved—and oh, the difference it made! I saw that it was His work, not mine, and I was so happy! I felt almost afraid for the morning to come, for fear the happiness should go; but it hasn't, for I am 'in the kingdom of His dear Son.'"

Well, dear reader, I have little more to add. I saw A. for some months after this, and rejoiced to witness the reality of her life in Christ. Her face was brighter than ever, and it was a deep joy to me to see how He had led her on; and now I am looking forward to meet her at Home. Dear reader, can you say, "In whom *I* have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins"? L. T.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

HOW little estimated is the value and force of fervent believing prayer. May we not, who know and love the Lord, each ask ourselves, Do I pray as if I really had set my heart upon obtaining my requests? We need to bear well in mind the sweet words, "And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." (1 John v. 15.) We know that we have! Faith sees the answer already given! Why? Simply because Faith is looking straight up to the One who has promised.

"Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." (Isaiah lxxv. 24.) Many have been the literal fulfillments of this word graciously granted to

God's people now on the earth, as the following simple instance may help to show.

Some years since a young Christian heard of the serious illness of a gentleman, whose sister had not long before died in the Lord. The tidings came that the brother's days also were numbered. It was said, too, that the poor dying man was under deep concern of soul, and was earnestly longing for assurance of his soul's salvation. The young lady in question felt nothing on hearing this account, beyond friendly regret and sympathy with him and his sorrowing relatives. A few weeks later, however, while busily engaged in her daily duties, suddenly, and without any apparent reason, a spirit of prayer and supplication filled her heart and mind for the salvation of this young man's soul. The love of Christ and of souls she felt to be irresistibly constraining her. Domestic duties were of necessity given up for a time, and in retirement she poured out fervent entreaties that then, at that very identical moment, the Lord would give the young man to see by faith Christ as his Saviour, yes, that he might there and then find Him,—the altogether lovely One,—and also that he might in quitting this world leave behind him a bright testimony to the glory of God.

Not a soul besides herself knew of this singular wrestling with God in prayer. A day or two afterwards the tidings came: "Young Mr. — has had a most glorious and triumphant end." "Suddenly," the narrator went on to say, "after deep gloom, at times almost bordering on despair, the Lord burst in upon his soul—he *knew* that his sins were all washed away in the blood of the Lamb. Peace flowed into his soul like a river, and, with praises to his Redeemer on his lips, he passed into His eternal presence."

On inquiry it proved that this had happened at the very time when the earnest supplications were ascending to God on his behalf. Even while the petitioner had been speaking to God, He had heard and answered. Oh, what an encouragement to faith! What a blessed stimulus to "continue instant in prayer with thanksgiving." E. G.

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THE HOLY SERVANT.

DEAR Christian reader, what wonderful words are these: "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." (Isa. l. 3, 4.) The infinite, the eternal One, the Son of God, Jesus our Lord, has condescended to become a Servant. He, who does as He will with the heavens He made, has humbled Himself to the likeness of men!

When upon this earth, the heart of Jesus was open to the weary and afflicted, and in His marvellous service of love and of suffering, He in each act of His life glorified His God and Father.

The blessed Lord has learned in His perfect humanity the loving wisdom to speak to the weary hearts of the children of men. God spake words of sweet comfort to His people through His prophets of old, through His servants, David, Isaiah, and others; but "never man spake like this Man." Till Jesus spake, never did such words as these fall into the hearts of the weary: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The tongue of the learned, the tenderest utterances of the heart of God to man, are Jesus's only, and as we are near Him in spirit we learn His love and catch His words, the reception of which fills the longing hearer with rest and gladness.

"Morning by morning," says the prophetic word, "He wakeneth—he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner." The blessed attention of the Holy Servant of God is before us. It is not as if the Lord God gave His Son one gracious direction only to carry out when He became the Servant, but "morning by morning" He received the word from His God. We read of Him, "At that time Jesus answered and said." His ear was ever open to the words of God; He received continual directions from Him.

The "learned" one, fellow Christian, is not the wise man as men reckon, nor, indeed,

as we even very frequently regard him; the learned is he who is taught of God. Do not forget our Master's frequently-uttered words, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;" for such as have ears wakened to the words of God, being learners, become learned. Let us seek this wisdom, for there is none like it. Hearing is not the easy acquirement we often suppose. To begin with, there must be an ear to hear, and this is of God's grace.

Now, regarding the Lord Jesus in His service on earth as the example, let us not forget His prayers. After the wondrous events of the day of His ministry recorded by Mark in the opening of his gospel, he tells us, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." (Ch. i. 35.) We may reverently say the events of each day of the adorable Servant on earth were all formed at the direction of His Father. His perfections in His service we cannot tell—they are beyond our grasp. We know, however, He did always the things that pleased His Father, and that He ever was the dependent Man. The evangelist, who tells us how Jesus knew the thoughts of the Pharisees who were in madness at His grace and love, bids us know, almost in the next breath, "And it came to pass in those days, that He went into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." (Luke vi. 8-12.) Knowledge of the thoughts of men; all night in prayer to God; what contrasts, but mysteries of wisdom!

The gracious Servant, our Lord Jesus, having begun His ministry, continued it to the end; He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." "The Lord God hath opened mine ear," is the prophetic word, "and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." In the judgments set before Israel (Exodus xxi.) relative to the Hebrew servant, we learn that the Hebrew who became a servant was entitled to freedom in the seventh year. There was no obligation imposed upon him that his sabbatic year, as we may express it, his rest year, should be one of servitude. Now if his master had given him

a wife during his servitude, then he could not take her and his children into liberty, and thus he had the option of remaining a servant. He was entitled to liberty, but he could abide a servant in love. "If the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free. Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever."

Now our gracious Lord says, "Mine ear hast Thou opened." In figure His ear had been pierced, He had elected to serve, His was the constraint of love, for we remember His words, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Matt. xxvi. 53, 54.) He was not rebellious. He went on to the end in the service Jehovah had appointed. He offered Himself in love to the bitterest shame and to the most cruel treatment—yes, at the very hands of those He came to serve. He was the scorn of the drunkard, the sport of idle men, the derision of the mighty. But He turned not away back—no; on, on He went in the path of love's service. Thrice He fell on His knees in Gethsemane crying to His Father to remove, if it were possible, the cup from Him, but no, and He took the cup from His Father's hand.

Then did this blessed Servant surrender Himself to blasphemy and scorn. He was smitten, He was spit upon; they plucked the hair from His cheeks; and so He died in love for us! His dying hours were the occasion for men for whom He died to insult His person and to aggravate His grief. Was ever love like this, or were ever sorrows like unto His in the day Jehovah afflicted Him? It is, and ever will be, a mystery that God could so love us, and that His Son could so die for us. His love is as great as His power. His greatness shines not only in His heavens and His storms; we see it and adore, as we see Him crucified through weakness, Jesus our Saviour.

TAKE COURAGE.

DANGERS stand thick on every hand, suggests Faintheart. How can we help being anxious? "Only believe." The Lord "is a shield to them that put their trust in Him." Silver-tongued temptation may assail us? "He is able to succour them that are tempted." But poverty may be our lot? "The Lord heareth the poor." What if riches be ours, and we are cumbered with many cares? Give to the poor, and "thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Should we be homeless? Our Lord had "not where to lay His head." Friendless? There is a friend that "sticketh closer than a brother." Afflicted? "He bindeth up the broken-hearted." Unjustly accused? "The Almighty shall be thy defence." The night cometh? "He that keepeth thee will not slumber." Accidents may befall us? "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in." Pain and sickness? The Lord will "make all thy bed in thy sickness." The infirmity of age? "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age." Wearisome nights may be appointed to us? "He giveth songs in the night." But if death come? "It is well with the righteous when he dieth," and "death is swallowed up in victory." To the believer, every providence is but another stroke of the chisel upon the marble block, shaping it for its position in the heavenly glory. E. H.

The Mesusah.

LITTLE children have been the care of God from the earliest times; on great occasions He has ordered that they should hear His words, when perhaps they were too small to understand them. But little children can learn to obey before they are able to understand all they are told. The Lord God ordered that the children should be taught His ways when His people Israel left the land of Egypt, and again when they entered Canaan, and also when the nation of Israel was gathered together to hear the solemn word of God in the valley between the mountains Ebal and Gerizim.

And the loving Christian father and mother



THE MESUSAH.

find joy in teaching their children the holy will of God, and in hearing their little ones repeat texts from His word before they can for themselves read the Scriptures.

When the blessed Lord was here on earth, the little children of Israel were taught the words of Jehovah their God. According to the habit of their times, when a boy was five years old he was to read in the Bible, though if not very strong his school life did not begin until he was six or seven years of age.

The first concern in Israel was that the children should read the sacred Book.

You may remember how we told you of the doorways of the Egyptian temples last year, and what strange signs and marks were made on them. In that land from early infancy the children of the Egyptians were taught to look to idols and to false gods for protection, and the pictures or marks on the doors all led their eyes and minds to the worship of these vanities. There is a passage

in the book of Deuteronomy (chap. xi. 20) which says of the words of God, "thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates;" and probably to that word may be traced the use of the "Mesusah."

You must now look at our picture. Observe upon the door post, just above the staff the man holds, there is a kind of little case represented. This is a "Mesusah." We have one before us such as Jews in our times place outside their houses, and probably the little case, though in olden days made of metal, was not unlike that which we have. In this case are placed some passages of Scripture, written upon parchment, and tightly folded up. The passages are taken from the Book of Deuteronomy, and include the text already quoted. But since the words of God were hidden in the metal case, the case only and not the words was seen, and there can be no doubt that too often the use of the case was very superstitiously regarded.

The little children portrayed in our picture are both too young to learn to read; they have come to the door to see their father go out, and you notice he is kissing his hand to the Mesusah. He means by this act to render reverence to God. Or he would touch the little shining case in which the words were enclosed, and teach his children that God was the protector of his house and of them. As the godly Jew touched the Mesusah this beautiful verse was present to his mind, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. (Ps. cxxi. 8.)

We may be sure that the little ones who thus watched their father day by day would learn to do as he did, and thus from their early infancy the word of God would be connected in their minds with their father's confidence. As the father came into his house again he would do the same thing, day by day teaching his children to lift their eyes to the bright little metal case on the door post.

It is a very happy thing for us to have texts on the walls of our rooms, though we hope our young readers will not wrap them

up in a little case where their words cannot be seen. How often has such a text as "Thou God seest me" been like a burning flame before the eye, stopping the feet from their wilful course; how often has such a word as "God is love" drawn a weary heart to God's own heart, and spoken comfort to the soul.

Let the Christian parent not be behind the Jewish one of bygone years in teaching the children the blessed words of God.

BIBLE LESSON FOR THE LITTLE ONES.—II. (Read Matthew x. 1-14.)

WE were reading last, in the 9th chapter of the Gospel by St. Matthew, of the day when the Lord called the man who afterwards wrote that Gospel, and said to him, "Follow Me."

Matthew "arose and followed" Jesus.

That was the most wonderful and beautiful day of his life, and he tells us a little more about it, as you will see if you go on reading where we left off, at the 10th verse.

"And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples." St. Luke tells us that "Levi made him a great feast in his own house, and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them."

What was once said of the Lord Jesus was quite true. Some who wished to find fault with Him said, "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." And Jesus Himself tells us that they used to call Him the "Friend of publicans and sinners."

What should we do, dear children, if that had *not* been true? If the Lord Jesus had come down from heaven to look for good people, for people who loved God, and who were always kind and true, He never could have found us. But He tells us who they are whom He came to look for, in these words, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

The next place in which we read about Matthew is in the 3rd verse of the next chapter, where his name is mentioned among the names of the twelve apostles whom Jesus

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chose. Apostles were people who were sent forth to do something, or to carry some message. So we read, verses 7 and 8, that Jesus sent these twelve forth to "preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." That was their message. They were also to do wonderful things, for He gave them power to "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils."

It was a wonderful day for Matthew when he was chosen by the Lord to be one of His apostles, and was sent forth in His strength to speak His message, and to do such mighty works.

What do we next read about him?

He tells us no more about himself, neither do St. Mark nor St. Luke tell us anything of him in their Gospels; but in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke tells us that, after the Lord Jesus had gone back to heaven, Matthew was among the number of those who were praying in an upper room in Jerusalem. Look at Acts, 1st chapter, 13th verse.

Then, in the 1st verse of the next chapter, we read that on that day when the Holy Spirit came from heaven, "they were all with one accord in one place," so we are sure that Matthew was there with the other apostles. Many things are said about his life after this, and some stories are told of the way in which he died. People think that, after preaching for fifteen years in Judæa, he went to Africa, and was there burnt to death as a martyr; but we do not really know anything more about him than what we find in the New Testament. We know that God gave him the great honour of being one of those four men whom He chose to write the four Gospels.

Matthew had been accustomed, before the Lord called him, to write down the sums of money which were brought by the fishermen and others who paid the taxes at Capernaum. But to know how to write, was not enough to make him fit to tell that good story about the Lord Jesus Christ which he has told. We might have thought if he only could remember the gracious words which he had heard the Lord speak, and the wonderful and kind things which he had seen Him do, that

would have made him quite fit to write about Him, so that those who had never seen Him, nor heard Him speak, might know something of the words and ways of the Son of God when He was in this world.

But, no; it was not enough that Matthew should have been with the Lord, and have seen His ways and heard His words. In order that he should write his Gospel as God would have it written, it was necessary that God should tell him how to do it. It was necessary that God should tell him the very words in which to write it. When we read the "Gospel according to St. Matthew," we are reading the very words in which God Himself has been pleased to tell us the good story about His Son, our Lord Jesus.

Do not forget this, my child.

When you open your little Testament, and turn over the leaves, remember that every page is part of God's own writing about His Son, our Lord Jesus, and that it is because God loves you that He has given you such wonderful words to read, and to keep in your hearts.

Next time we shall read in the 1st chapter of this Gospel which God gave St. Matthew to write. I hope you understand, not only how to read your Testament, but also how to find chapters and verses. If you do not yet know how the chapters come, nor how to read the figures, ask some older person to show you. You will soon find it quite easy.

Bible Subjects.

PEACE.

THE passages in the Epistles to the Corinthians which treat of peace are chiefly of a practical nature. How a sinner may have peace before God we have previously briefly referred to, but none the less important is it for such as love the Lord, to seek wisdom from Him as to the great question of peace in daily life. We are creatures of extremes—some make everything of the last, and exclude the first principles of peace with God; others seem content with the assurance that they have peace with God, and are indifferent as to peace in daily life.

"God hath called us in (or to) peace" says the Scripture (1 Cor. vii. 15), and a great calling is this for us who live in a troublous world. Home-life is the burden of the context—the Christian in a heathen home; but there God would have peace. It must be an awful break when an idolator becomes a Christian, and the wife remains an idolator, but the burden of maintaining peace is to be borne by the Christian. Idols never give peace, nor do their worshippers obtain peace. God would have His children, even in life's most trying incidents, manifest that He has called us in peace. Let not the unconverted relation have to complain of any of us that we cause him anger by our unyieldingness. It is for the Christian, who possesses all things, to give way.

And what God would have evident in the homes of His people, He would also have manifest in their religious services; "He is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (Ch. xiv. 33.) His perfect rule constrains to peace, and where the contrary is, His rule is surely disobeyed.

Further, what God had ordered for us in families and churches He would also have regulating our general behaviour. We cannot forget that the Corinthians were not kindly disposed one towards another. Christ had not His great place in their hearts—this, alas! their favourite teachers possessed—hence their contentions. Now the apostle Paul would send Timothy to them, whose gentle spirit they could easily wound, and whom, maybe, they might intimidate. Now he was a worker for the Lord together with the apostle, and the word to the Corinthians about him was, "See that he may be with you without fear." Again, as such as elevate one servant are apt to despise others, the word was, "Let no man despise him." We need stir up our hearts to consider these things.

Now, turning to the end of the next Epistle, and remembering the happy fruit the first had produced in the Corinthians, we read, "Live in peace (or peaceably), and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (Ch. xiii. 11.) These four things, be *perfect*,

be of good *comfort*, be of *one mind*, live in *peace*, are such as we may all prayerfully emulate. Let our Christian ambition exercise itself in such directions as these, and God Himself shall be *with* us. Yes, He who is the God of love and of peace! This is one of God's most beautiful names. Sometimes, because of our evil ways, we find God with us in righteousness, or in judgment. The sharpness the apostle used was to lead the Corinthians to a godly state of soul, that, judging themselves and abandoning their evil ways, they might once more be in such a moral state before God that He might be with them. Let us above all things seek so to conduct ourselves one towards another that nothing in us shall hinder our holy God, who is the God of love and peace, being with us.



Left Behind.

DEAR children who see and read our FAITHFUL WORDS, I want you to listen very carefully, because this story is written on purpose for *you*. Whether it is Katie or Amy, or whatever your name may be, this piece is for *you*, specially for *you*, just as though it was a letter the postman brought you, addressed to your own very self.

There is a little girl, who is still alive, and whom I shall call Lily. I want you to fancy that you are in her cottage home just now. Lily and her sisters have gone to bed; but they are talking; and what is it they are talking about? Listen, and you may hear.

Emily is saying to Lily, "Oh, Lily, suppose the Lord Jesus were to come to-night, as it says in our verse, 'The Lord Himself shall descend,' and that I should be caught up to meet Him in the air—if you should be left behind, what would you do?"

Emily goes on telling little Lily more of what their dear mother often speaks to them of—the Lord's coming. This you may read about for yourselves in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, at the end of the fourth chapter. Lily knew that the Lord might

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come for His people at any moment, for she had been very often spoken to about it. She began to feel that she was not ready to go, and that she should be left behind if He came that night. Lily grew very unhappy, and said to herself how glad she should be if she could make herself ready. She had read that there was only one way, and that is to have our sins forgiven and washed away. She had read, too, that Jesus wanted little children to come to Him; so at last she left off trying to make herself ready, knelt down,



and told the Lord all about it, and just trusted herself to Him. To use her own words, "I gave myself to the Lord, and I know now I am ready whenever He comes; for He has washed all my sins away, and I do try to please Him!" Oh, how happy Lily is now—how glad she did not put off any longer coming to Jesus; for the Lord is coming for His people, and He will also come to punish those who do not love Him.

Dear little ones, it is because I want you to be ready, too, that I have told you this little story. Now, don't put this paper down and forget it. I want each of you to answer this one question: If the Lord comes to-night, am I ready?

I am sure that some who read this can say, "Yes, I am quite ready." But some of you will have to say "No"; and, dear

children, Jesus sends you a message—again He tells you He died for sinners—He loves you now. He is waiting for you to trust Him—won't you do so? Be like Lily; don't put it off; to-morrow may be too late. L. T.

HE GAVE HIMSELF.

I ASK my young friends to look out in their Bibles the words which are at the head of this paper. They occur in the twentieth verse of the second chapter of Galatians.

In a meeting specially held for the young, the speaker was anxious to find out how far the children felt that they really stood in need of the Lord Jesus; so he asked the following question: "Have you anything to give God, which will make you fit for heaven?"

There was a pause, when a little boy, named Willie, said, "A good heart, sir."

"But have any of us good hearts as we were born?" said the speaker.

Another dear little fellow quickly replied, "No, sir, there is none good."

Yes, my boys and girls, that is true; for God says in His word, "There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. iii. 10, 12.) God also tells us, in Jeremiah xvii. 9, that "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" and He it is who alone knows how bad we are. So you see, dear children, we have nothing to give to God. We have to cry out to Him like David did in the eighty-sixth Psalm, "I am poor and needy."

Now, although we have nothing to give to God, He has something to give us. I will tell you what a dear child once wrote in a letter, that you may see what she thought of God's gift. She says: "What a precious and glorious truth that God loves us! Yes, I often think how much the Saviour loves us. He gave a most costly price to redeem us—not thousands of gold and silver; not labour and toil merely; not pains and sufferings only—but Himself." (1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.)

Now, can *you* say, "He loved me and

gave Himself for me"? If not, may you be led at once to receive His word; for "To as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the children of God, even to those who believe on His name." Little Willie learnt, before he left the meeting, that he had nothing good to offer to God, but was led by the Holy Spirit to accept God's gift through faith in His word, and went home quite happy. A. K. B.

WILL YOU BE THERE?

NOT long ago, a friend of mine was telling me of her little nephew, who was staying with her—a little boy between three and four years old.

One day, he said to his cousin Emily, "Sing me 'Will you be there and I?'"

After she had finished, he said, "Won't it be nice for us three to be there" (meaning a young man, who was sitting in the room, his cousin, and himself).

"I know little Arthur will be there," replied his cousin.

He turned to her and said, "Will you be there, Emily?"

She said, "Yes, dear, because I'm sheltered beneath the blood of Christ."

He then turned to the young man and asked, "Mr. —, will you be there?" but he received no answer.

Dear children, if you were asked the question, "Will you be there?" could you say "yes" like this little boy and his cousin? or would you rather not give an answer at all.

N. N.

A WORD TO CHILDREN.

I WANT you to listen attentively while I ask you a question. What would you think of me if I saw you in some great danger and did not try at all to save you? You would feel I was very unkind, I am sure. But perhaps you will say, "Ah! but I am not in any danger."

Are you quite sure of that, dear children? Think a moment. You all know that a long while ago there was a terrible flood, when the waters covered all the earth, and no one was saved except Noah and his family? And why were they saved?

"Oh," you say, "because they went into the ark."

Yes, that is quite true. Well, now, have you never heard that, just as that flood came in Noah's time, so there is judgment coming on this very world in which we live; and just as it was God who saved Noah in the ark, so now God will save you from the storm if you go to the Lord Jesus for safety?

You know God told Noah to go into the ark, but now He tells you and me to go to His Son, the Lord Jesus. God does not tell us to go into an ark of wood, but He tells us that He loves us so much that He has sent His own dear Son for us, and now if we trust to Him He will save us, and forgive all the naughty things we have ever done. God's Son, the Lord Jesus, really took our punishment for all those naughty things. Oh, don't you think He loved us very, very much? Yes, He did; and as you read or listen to this, He sees what you think about this wonderful love. Will you not really come to Him as your own Saviour? He is very soon coming, and after that it will be too late, for the storm will come then, as the flood did long ago, and all who have not come to Christ, the Ark of safety, will be lost. L. T.

Our English Bible.

THE BISHOP'S BOOK.

WE have seen that the "Great Bible," which is connected with Cranmer's name, was the one appointed to be set in the churches in Elizabeth's reign, as it had been in that of her father and her brother. Many, however, especially when the version made by the Genevan exiles came into use, objected to the Great Bible as not being a good translation. The result was the publication in 1568, of the "Bishops' Book," so called because, of the fifteen translators who were engaged about it, the greater number were bishops. The good Archbishop Parker, an aged man, who had lived through all the troubles of the Reformation times, superintended this work.

"I trust"—so one of the translators wrote to him while the work was in progress—

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"your grace is well forward with the Bible by this time. I perceive the greatest burden will lie upon your neck, touching care and travail. I could wish that such usual words as we English people be acquainted with might still remain in their form and sound, so far forth as the Hebrew will well bear; ink-horn terms to be avoided."

This was good advice, for it would have been a sad mistake to have allowed words to remain in the English Bible which, though quite familiar to bishops and learned men, could only needlessly puzzle the minds of simple people; and this good advice was followed, so that as a rule simple, homely words were used rather than what the writer called "ink-horn terms."

The Bishops' Book contained portraits of the queen, and of two of her favourite lords. Elizabeth's portrait was surrounded by the arms of England, France, Ireland, and Wales, and beneath it were the words, in Latin—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." There are tables of genealogy, and "The Sum of the Scripture," a list of the various books; also a little record of the goodness of God in preserving His word in spite of the efforts which had been made "to decree the translating of the Scripture to be so perilous a thing that it could scarcely be hoped that it should be well performed."

The Bishops' Book took the place of Cranmer's Bible as that authorised to be read in churches, but it is not considered, by those who can best judge, that this translation, which was the work of so many learned men, is so faithful as the little volume which was prepared amid many difficulties by the exiles at Geneva, and which long kept its place in the homes and hearts of the English people.

The Rheimish version, or as it is generally called the Douay Bible, which is still used by Roman Catholics, had been published six years before, at Rheims. It is a translation made not from the Greek, but from the Vulgate, or common Latin Bible; and from the notion that the language of the

church was the only language fitted to express sacred things, so many Latin words were retained that it can hardly properly be called an English Bible. It is also full of marginal notes, setting forth the doctrines taught by the Church of Rome.

Although during the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign no laws had been made against the Romanists, yet many priests had thought it well to leave England, and it was for these priests that a college had been established at Douay, in the Netherlands, by an Englishman, generally called "Cardinal" Allen. This school was afterwards removed to Rheims, and there the translation was made by three scholars, the chief of them a priest named Gregory Martin.

The translators were anxious to show plainly in their preface that they did not publish this English version from any thought that "the Holy Scriptures should be always in the mother tongue, or that they ought or were ordained of God to be read indifferently by all, or could be easily understood of everyone that readeth or heareth them in a known language." On the contrary, they believed that free access to the Scriptures had been often, "through man's malice and infirmity, pernicious and much hurtful to many," and they go on to say that the translation has not been made by them because "we generally and absolutely deemed it more convenient in itself, and more agreeable to God's word and honour, or edification of the faithful, to have the Scriptures turned into vulgar tongues than to be kept and studied only in the ecclesiastical learned languages. Not for these, nor any such like causes, do we translate this sacred book, but upon special consideration of the present time, state, and condition of our country, unto which divers things are either necessary, or profitable, or medicinable now, that otherwise, in the peace of the church, were neither much requisite nor perchance wholly tolerable."

Finding fault with all the Protestant versions, especially on account of the great liberty taken in translating into every-day speech "words ecclesiastical," they thus

explain further their reasons for the work they had undertaken :—

“We, therefore, having compassion to see our beloved countrymen, with extreme danger to their souls, to use only such profane translations . . . much also moved thereto by the desires of many devout persons, have set forth for you, benign readers, the New Testament to begin withal, trusting that it may give occasion to you, after diligently perusing thereof, to lay away at least such of their impure versions as ye have been forced to occupy.”

Thus we see the reason given by those who made the Douay translation, for undertaking the work, was that it had become impossible, from the Scriptures being so often printed in English, to keep them out of the hands of the common people, therefore they were obliged to provide for those who were not Protestants, but still wished to read God's word, a Bible of their own. The Old Testament was not published until the next reign. It has been said of the Douay Bible, that it is “a translation that has need to be translated”; so carefully has the conviction expressed by the translators that many words were too sacred to be put into familiar language been carried out.

The Bishops' Book had been used in all the churches throughout the land for many years. Elizabeth had passed away, and her Scottish cousin had come to take her place, when the fresh translation of the Scriptures, which is now the “authorised version,” was made.

After all the ceremonies connected with welcoming and crowning the new king were over, James made a proclamation appointing a meeting to be held for the hearing and settling of certain “things pretended to be amiss in the church.”

The Puritans, some of whom were descendants of those who had been exiles for the faith which they would not deny, and who had brought back with them from their places of exile a fierce hatred of anything in religion which they conceived to be popish, had taken an early opportunity of presenting a petition to the king.

This paper was signed by a thousand clergymen, who prayed for reform in the matter of ceremonies. James, in reply, said that a conference to consider their petition, and the religious question generally, should be held in his presence at Hampton Court, the splendid palace built, a hundred years before, by the great Cardinal Wolsey.

In the course of this conference, which was held in January, 1604, Dr. Rainolds, a learned man of the Puritan party, after mentioning some passages which he considered wrongly rendered in the Bishops' Book, proposed to the king that a new translation should be made.

“Stay,” interrupted the Bishop of London; “if every man's humour be followed, then shall there be no end of translating.”

The proposal, however, found favour with the king. James, who was very jealous of the dignity of his office, especially disliked the Genevan Bible, on account of the marginal notes, in some of which he thought he saw an implied disrespect to kings, and that “divine right” by which they reigned, in which he was himself so sincere a believer.

Since coming to England he had learned, to his annoyance, that this version, although not the one read in the churches, was that which held its place in the homes and hearts of the English people. He, therefore, lent a ready ear to Dr. Rainold's proposition, and sent a letter to the Archbishop, saying that he had appointed fifty-four (the number was afterwards reduced to forty-seven) learned men to undertake the work. It was especially provided that this version should be without notes or comments, except such as might be necessary for the explanation of such Hebrew or Greek words as could not easily have their exact or full meaning given in the text, and that this translation, when completed, was to be the one used in all the churches in England. This was the origin of our “authorised version,” which, as you may see, if you turn to the beginning of your Bible, was “translated by his majesty's special command, and appointed to be read in the churches.”

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE.

ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE.

THE other morning, at a cottage door, the good woman received the gospel papers I wished to leave with such willingness that I said—"I suppose you are one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Ah, sir," she replied, "that's just what I want to be bottomed in."

"So you are not quite sure?"

"You see, sir, I think I do some days, and then dark doubts and fears come, and I be afraid I don't."

"Well, my friend, if you do not know your own love to the Lord Jesus, can you not go to His feet and say, 'Lord, THOU knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee?' It is not our knowledge of our love to Him that keeps us bright, but our faith that He loves us and gave Himself for us."

As I saw she still hesitated, I told her of the woman who went to the minister in a like frame of mind, and who was told to go home and write on a sheet of paper, "I DO NOT LOVE JESUS," and then sign it.

She stopped me with an eager exclamation, "Oh, sir, I couldn't put my cross to that."

"No," I said, "I am sure you could not."

To help her a little I asked—"What has the Lord Jesus done for you, that you should love Him?"

She lifted her hands as she took her seat by the fire, and exclaimed, "Bless you, sir, He's done so much for me, I couldn't tell you half!"

She then proceeded to relate how her husband and six children had all been taken to heaven, leaving behind such a clear testimony concerning their faith in Christ that she could count these sore bereavements amongst her choicest blessings.

She related how her boy, who had died at nineteen years of age, had passed away in triumph, and how his soul was filled with sights of glory.

"'Mother,' he said, 'my hands are dead—I can't lift them; but I can clap with my new hands.'"

"It was beautiful to be with him, sir!"

Then she went on to tell of another child, nine years of age, who was taken ill sud-

denly, about twelve o'clock in the day. "I carried him up to bed," she continued.

"'Mother,' said the child, 'I must say my prayers.' So he knelt down and then said, 'Now, mother, I must commit my little spirit to Jesus.'"

"I watched him fold his young hands and say, 'Lord Jesus, into Thy hands I commit my spirit.' He went to sleep that morning, and never awoke again. Oh, sir, the Lord has done much for me!"

"But you are not quite sure whether you love Him?"

She smiled, as if she half saw how foolish her thought had been, and then went on with the tale of her mercies. "There's our beautiful crops the Lord has given us this season; oh, what a mercy they be!"

"Yes," I said, "the Lord has been mindful of us; but what has He done for you personally?"

"Raised me up again, sir, so that I do my little bit of work. I was very ill a short time back, but, thank the Lord, He made me strong once more."

She had not yet touched the Lord's mercy where I knew her love would be "bottomed," as she expressed it; so I said—

"These mercies which you name have to do with others as well as yourself. Now what has the Lord done for *you*? Can you stand by faith at the foot of His cross, and look into those wounds, into that side, and say, 'He suffered thus for me'? Now," I continued, as I shook hands with my friend, "May I reckon you as one who truthfully says, 'I love Him because He first loved me'?"

"Yes, sir, I can say that."

I wonder how many who read this little story can say it? Can you, doubting soul? Do not be afraid of your own voice—whisper it aloud—the Lord is listening—"I love Thee, Lord Jesus." W. L.

THE Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. (Gal. ii. 20.)

GOD commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. v. 8.)

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*RESIST THE DEVIL, AND HE WILL
FLEE FROM YOU.*

(JAMES iv. 7.)

PERHAPS there is no more solemn evidence of the power which Satan, our terrible adversary, exercises at the present time, than that which may be found in the fact that he so successfully keeps himself out of sight, that his name is but rarely heard, and his existence seems so often to be almost forgotten or ignored, even among Christians; yet nothing is more certain than that his wiles are spread to ensnare us, his fiery darts hurled, in order, if possible, to throw us entirely off the ground of "joy and peace in believing," and that the warning words, "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith" (1 Pet. v. 8, 9; Eph. vi. 11-16), are as needful now as when they were written. Let us never forget that Satan is our great adversary, and may be permitted of God to tempt us, buffet us, or afflict us.

Some time ago, we were strongly impressed to call on a dear Christian man among the poor of this world. On arriving at his house, we were surprised and grieved at finding him very ill. Then we clearly understood why we had been thus directed to him. In the course of conversation he spoke of a terrible attack of Satan that he had lately had to meet.

"I was feeling very ill," said he, "and had difficulty to get into bed, when Satan said, 'You call yourself a Christian! A pretty kind of Christian you to get into bed without even kneeling down, and to spend the whole day as you have without even looking into the Bible. Can such be a Christian?' I replied, 'I know it—know it all—and my Father knows it, and knows how ill I am, and has made provision for me under all circumstances, and has accomplished redemption for me in Christ, and through His blood.'"

Now in conflict with Satan our only effectual weapon is standing firmly for the authority of the written word. We lately heard of one who said, "Satan comes to me sometimes, and I say, 'Get away; I do not

want you. Begone!'" We may be quite sure that Satan is not resisted by such words as these, however firmly persisted in, for we are taught to resist him, "stedfast in the faith," and faith knows no authority but the word of God. Hence we find the Lord Jesus, our perfect example, saying, "It is written," "It is written," and the effect was that the devil left Him, and so, we may be sure, shall we always find it—for "our words are human, but God's word has a divine power."

We lately visited another well-known Christian, who was not a poor man, but one of the rich in this world. He was very ill; both mind and body had been in a prostrate condition for many days. On one occasion he said, "How does that scripture begin about being 'reconciled by the death of His Son, and saved by His life'? Satan comes to me sometimes three or four times in the night, and I want the word of God to meet him with." We then repeated the scripture, "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

"Please, say it again." We did so.

"Where is it?" "In the fifth chapter of Romans, and tenth verse."

"Please tell my wife, for perhaps I shall have to ask her two or three times in the night for it. Put a mark against the passage in my Testament. Does not 'saved by His life' mean that such as have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son will be saved right through this present world, out of every snare and difficulty, by the living activity of Christ now in glory?"

"Certainly."

"Then I am ready for Satan. Thank you much."

That night he was not disturbed by Satan, and next day, with a smile, said, "I have not forgotten, 'If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.'"

It is well to remember we are still in the place where Satan goes to and fro in the

earth. Though he cannot devour one of Christ's sheep, yet he can buffet and lead astray by his wiles if we hearken to him, and take away our peace and comfort by his "fiery darts" if we do not resist him "steadfast in the faith." He may through our unwatchfulness and want of faith scatter the sheep, undermine the truth by attacking it, or by diluting it, and lead us into God-dishonouring ways, if he be not resisted. But one thing which cannot be too firmly impressed upon us is the need of meeting his attacks in faith, for the shield of faith is able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and the written word of God is the sword which the Spirit of God uses. Our blessed Lord was always in communion with the Father, always doing the things which pleased Him, never off His guard—always, as Man, in the perfect life and walk of faith—so that He could say, speaking of Satan, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." But, alas! it is not so with us, and, moreover, we have still an unclean nature in us—that which is born of the flesh—which, when we become unwatchful, is ready to answer to our adversary's unclean and unholy suggestions. But abiding in Him, who is in the glory, and His word abiding in us, we shall always overcome Satan, and prove that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

H. H. S.

THE PROFESSOR.

THERE is a drought and it has lasted for weeks past: the earth has cried for rain, the earth is burnt up, the flowers are withered, the forest trees hang their leaves, the cattle are dying, the birds perish for lack of moisture, and the bees follow in the gardener's steps to lave their wings where he waters his drooping flowers. But there is hope in the heavens. The wind has arisen, it drives the loose clouds across the sky. How we all look to those clouds—those clouds dark and laden with that for which we long. Ah! they are clouds without water, vain promises, deceivers, like the Christless Christian—mere show. In them is no blessing.

THE GIFT OF GOD.

"I CAN truly say my sins are forgiven." At last came these words of assurance from a dying soul, only a few hours before being taken to be for ever with the Lord.

Mrs. D. had appeared more or less anxious about her eternal welfare for five or six years. At times the tears would come into her eyes as she sat listening for hours to the story of God's great love to sinners, and the free and full forgiveness to be had by all who would believe; but again and again the thought that God must require something at her hands would come, and she would say, "My salvation must depend in some measure on my efforts."

So time passed on until the last week of her life. She had been gradually failing for some months, but no alarm was felt until one Saturday, when the doctor spoke seriously of her condition. Next day a Christian friend called to see her, and read a portion of God's word.

When she had finished, Mrs. D. looked up and said, "Supposing I should not recover?"

"Should you be afraid?"

"I don't know; things look very different in sickness."

Her friend then told her that God had devised a way whereby He could be "just and the Justifier of Him that believeth in Jesus," and that the Lord Jesus had died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and that now the feeblest believer in His beloved Son is justified from all things; and she besought her to trust in the finished work of Christ without delay.

But, though Mrs. D. listened eagerly, there was still no peace. From that time, however, her whole character seemed changed. From being most reserved about the concerns of her soul, she became anxious to converse with God's children, and begged all who came near her to read the Bible to her, or to talk to her of the finished work of Christ.

She grew rapidly worse during the week, and on the following Sunday, as the same friend again sat by her side and spoke to her of the love of God, and of His willingness to save all who come to Him by His Son,

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Mrs. D. said: "Could you—would you mind kneeling down and asking God that I may be quite sure that I am saved"; adding, "we may not have many more times together."

Deeply touched, her friend at once knelt and asked God to enable this doubting heart to rest in child-like faith on His testimony concerning the value of the death of His Son.

Truly they had not many more times together, for before another twenty-four hours had run their course, the long illness of the suffering woman was over. A Christian friend was there, to whom the dying lady said: "I can truly say my sins are forgiven," and then besought those about her to make much of God's Word. She also sent a message to one very dear to her, whom she now felt to be building on the sand. The message was short, but how much it contained! and how clearly it showed that she was now on the rock, and had found God's way of salvation—"Tell . . . to preach *Christ*."

Yes, dear reader, Christ, and He alone can save. He has satisfied all God's righteous claims about sin, and He alone can satisfy the troubled conscience of the poor sinner. But what hindered Mrs. D. from having peace during those years of uneasiness?—Wrong thoughts of God. She judged God to be like herself, not knowing that He is essentially a giving God. I often think of what a poor dying man said to me a few weeks ago: "It is a good thing that salvation does not depend on our works, for we should never know when we had done enough"!

How happy to know that

"All that blessed work is done,
God's well pleased with His Son."

But you say, "Have I really nothing to do? Does God require nothing from me?"

Listen to what the Lord Jesus says about works—"This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Yes, that is your work, to "believe on Him," believe in that glorious Person who has done the work for you.

M. W.

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

REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE.

WHAT is there to remember about Lot's wife? What was her history? She had, with her husband, settled down in a city doomed to destruction—in ignorance, it may be—but there she was, with the judgment of God suspended over her head, whilst around her iniquity was rife. Her senses were blunted by habitual evil communications. She was as one asleep until awaked by the angels from her death-slumber to the reality of who she was, where she was, and what the end would be. The heavenly ambassador's message was, "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

Called out of, as it were, a burning house, she fled, led on by an angel's hand. Under a momentary heavenly influence, she moved with others, and as others. But her treasure remained in the city upon which she turned her back; and where her treasure was, there her heart was also.

She had started in the race from death unto life, and who could say but that she, too, held by an angel's hand, would reach the goal at last? But no, she had no goal before her, no object for her heart's affection to win her onward. And then? And then, once loosed from the angelic grasp, from that divine influence which for a time surrounded her, but which never reached her soul, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, she "looked back," and became a monument to what she was in heart—a petrification!

Solemn warning to all who have a name to live, and are dead—"dead" in trespasses and sins—dead in heart and affection to the One who poured out His life-blood to pay the wages of sin, which is death—dead to Him who died to take the sting of sin from the grave, and rose again that God might be just in justifying, and righteously free to give His gift of eternal life.

Ah, well may we remember Lot's wife, for she loved not the Lord who cared for her safety, and who called her out of danger; but she lagged behind, and "from behind"

she "looked back." "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha."

By grace all who are now quickened by the Holy Ghost can say of the Lord, "We love Him, because He first loved us." Let us, then, take courage and gird up the loins of our minds by looking at a blessed contrast to Lot's wife—left us by the saints of Thessalonica. They, having heard the message of God's grace, "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, who delivered us from the wrath to come." Having found a soul-satisfying object in God Himself, they could, by grace, turn their backs upon the idols which had engrossed them before, and so, without a look behind, they could and did wait for the crown of their joy—the Lord from heaven. Their goal was the Lord Himself.

A. C. T.

THE BENEFITS OF BEING IN THE LIGHT.

"**T**RULY, the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As I passed by a cottage, I observed its window filled with plants. The leaves of one, being of a sickly white, arrested my eye. The poor little plant had been away from the light for some time—down in a dark cellar—and amidst the healthy, green geraniums its pale, sickly leaves spoke a lesson.

How like many a Christian! Instead of vigorous growth and healthy spirituality, some are of a pale, sickly appearance! In vain we look for holiness, for joy—in vain for zeal and devotion. Alas! they are not "pleasant plants." And why? They have been in some damp, dark cellar of man's construction instead of being under the light and warmth of Christ's rays.

Ye gardeners of the Master, seek for grace to bring God's plants into the light of divine holiness and love. The rays of the Sun of Righteousness will make the plants of God full of beauty.

Take cheer from the result upon that

sickly plant of its altered position. In the sunny window in a few weeks it became of rich green, put out fresh shoots, and its grateful leaves turned towards the sun. So shall the enfeebled Christian, who by grace is led to look to the Lord, become changed. Oh! turn continually towards Him, praise and bless Him, whose beams made our souls fruitful.

THE LAMB ON THE THRONE.

IN the book of the Revelation the Lord Jesus Christ is called by the name of the "little" lamb. That book of the Bible, which in so solemn a way reveals Him judging and punishing iniquity, teaches us this His name, a name of that which we reckon the utmost weakness. In no other Scripture is the Lord called the "little" lamb. In the Revelation He is so designated twenty-eight times. Further, when the throne of the everlasting and almighty God is revealed in the visions of the book, and the ceaseless cry surrounding it is recorded, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come," the "little" lamb is presently revealed in the midst of that throne, and "as it had been slain"! The majesty and unutterable glory of the throne of God on the one hand, and the shame and untold depths of suffering of the Lord Jesus on the other! What a surprise to infidelity will be that great sight! And, in the vision, we find all beings, all creation, give glory to God upon the throne, and to the Lamb.

We cannot contemplate such a sight as this without being awe-struck. From that throne proceeded thunderings, lightnings, and voices. Divine judgment issued from that throne, and the book in the right hand of Him who sat upon that throne was one of judgment. Those seals have yet to be unloosed, but God will surely judge iniquity; angels and men must stand before Him—quick and dead must appear at His bar; we all must give an account of ourselves to God. But the Father judgeth no man; He has committed all judgment to the Son. (John v. 22.)

In the vision John beheld all heaven attentive to the seven-sealed book in God's

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right hand; he heard the mighty challenge, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" Silence ensued. No creature was worthy of the work. But presently he was told the secret. The Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to open it. As he turned his eye to see, lo, instead of the Lion, he beheld the "little" lamb as it had been slain, and He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Then all heaven awoke in songs and shouts of glory, honour and praise, and all cried "Worthy is the Lamb!" and all fell down before the throne and worshipped God, and the uttermost parts of creation re-echoed the sound of glory, and those nearest the throne answered the echoes with "Amen," and they fell down before the throne and worshipped God and the Lamb.

That vision will shortly be a reality to our eyes; soon the Lord Jesus, who was slain, rejected, despised, will take the awful book of judgment, unseal and unroll it. When the great day of His wrath is come who shall be able to stand? Vain then will it be for those who now are His rejecters to cry to the hills and the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb.

Dear reader, are you ready for eternity? We appeal to you by this solemn yet hastening day to be no longer indifferent to coming wrath. Are you unsaved? Are you unfit for God's presence? Better never to have been born than to pass out of this world into eternity to live in eternal doom. Better—aye, a thousand times better—never to have been born than to live to fall into the wrath of the Lamb! God have mercy on your soul, poor unsaved sinner!

See you where God places, in the visions He gave to His servant, the suffering to death and shame of the Redeemer! See you where He places for all creation to behold, and all the holy and happy to adore, the Lamb as it had been slain! His great throne of glory! What shall Judas and Pilate and the priests and people of Calvary say, when they learn that He whom they slew with wicked hands, and nailed to a tree, is the eternal Son of God? Ah! what shall our modern infidels

say—what shall the scoffers of this nineteenth century say—yes, what will you say to the Lamb on the throne?

The hands that were stretched out upon the cross, the pierced hands of Jesus, shall unloose the seals of the book of judgment and of woe. Those hands, whence ran the precious blood, shall dispense the vengeance of God against unpardoned sin. What contemplation more terrible, more absolutely hopeless, than this—He who is the Saviour will be the Judge; He whose blood was shed to save, will execute wrath upon all who refuse divine mercy.

Sinner, bow before God's throne now. Proud worm of earth, cry for mercy while the day of salvation still lingers. Now is the day of salvation; to-morrow may be the day of judgment.

PRAYING AND BELIEVING.

How often we pray for that which we feel we need, without waiting to find out whether or not the blessing for which we pray is not really ours! Hence our very prayers are contrary to truth, and hindrance to faith. Perhaps with the sunlight shining upon a text of Scripture that tells us God is for us, or that peace is our portion, or that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, we pray God to be for us, or that we may have peace, or that the Holy Spirit may come and dwell in us! Faith in God's word must be the first thing with us. God has spoken, and what He says is true; He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. Let us see to it that our prayers are scriptural, lest we make our prayers for blessings which are ours in Christ, a barrier to our faith in God and our praising Him for what He has given us.

OBEDIENCE.

THE obedience enjoined upon us is in accordance with the desires of our new natures. A loving child delights in doing his parent's will. He seems to watch the parent's eye for guidance, anxious to catch its meaning, so that he may run the way of the father's desires.

EXTRACTS.

THE truest charity, when people are walking in sin and not knowing it, is to rouse them to the sense of their sin.

THE great thing God looks for after He has given us His mind on a given matter, is, not the mere confession what His mind is, but a humbled and chastened spirit, because of His Name.

THE knowledge of Divine truth alone will not avail us in the day of the east wind. We want One who not only commands us, but One who loves us and whom we love—and this is Jesus.

THERE is a lion in the way of many! Why? Because Christ is not before the eye!

THE only One who gives every affection its right place, and keeps everything in its right place, is the Lord Jesus.

CHRISTIANS are often cast down because of opposition. But, remember, it is life that causes opposition. People do not oppose when all is death.

AFTER all, it is not the might of the enemy that signifies, but our want of faith. No enemy can overcome where there is faith.

IN a day of evil he who enters most into the mind of God will certainly have to bear sore reproach for His Name's sake.

HE who is true to the truth of God will be feared by every unfaithful fellow servant.

WHAT we have most to be on our watch against is our own ways.

GOD is more than equal to all difficulties.

WHAT our God gives any of us to do must be great, and our business is to stick to "our" work.

WHEN a man fulfils his daily duties to the Lord, he imparts dignity into the meanest occupation.

SELF-IMPORTANCE is not dignity to a Christian. Self-importance looks down on others; humility looks up and glorifies God.

*The Tiny Shoe.*

ONE day a mother was searching through a large box in her nursery, which contained many things that had been laid aside for a time. Of course, curiosity drew all the little ones quickly around her, eager with their questions.

Presently, among many other things, a tiny shoe was found, a shoe which had only been worn for one short week, and then its little wearer had been suddenly gathered to his Saviour's bosom. The tiny feet had, as it were, but just touched life's dusty highway, when the Good Shepherd had lifted the tender, helpless lamb to His own kind arms, and thus had in His love spared it all the roughnesses of the way.

"Oh, mamma, is that one of the shoes our dear little brother used to wear?" asked one child.

"What a big boy he would be if he were alive now, wouldn't he?" said another.

"Oh, I should like to have him here now to play with me in this nursery," said little Willie.

"He wouldn't like to come down again, would he, mamma?" said Mary, "because he is so much happier up there in the 'happy land' where the dear Lord Jesus is, 'above the bright blue sky.'"

"I wonder if God has given little Freddie a lot of nice new playthings to play with," said Willie, who was not four years old; "has He, mamma? Do you think he has got a nice big horse like mine, only not broken?"

A moment before, the mother's heart had been aching sorely as she thought of her precious little one, lost to her for a time, but Willie's childish question sent a thrill of joy into her heart as the answer seemed given: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Cheerfully could she now answer her little boy—

"Yes, dear; God has given your darling little brother many new and beautiful things, so many and so beautiful, that the Bible says we can't even imagine them; that is, we can't begin to fancy at all what they are like, only we know that they are none of them broken, or soiled, or spoiled in any way, because nothing but what is perfectly pure and lovely can be where God is, but in His presence 'there are pleasures for evermore.'"

"Oh, I wish I was up there, too," sighed the little fellow, but the mother, as she left the nursery with lightened heart, prayed that, if the Lord still sees fit to tarry, her boy might be spared, if it be the Lord's will, to grow up to know and serve Him here below before entering upon the joys of the Father's house above.

Have you ever, dear children, thought much on this subject? Would it not be nice for you to take your Bibles and give a few quiet moments to finding out from God's own word what really is said about the things "which shall be hereafter," and which God hath prepared for them that love Him? But in the very first place let me ask, "Do you love Him?"—for all this untold happiness is prepared for those who love Him,



THE TINY SHOE.

and for those only! Oh, then, what an important question this is for everyone of you to answer. Pray put it to yourselves, each one of you, very solemnly, as in God's sight. If you have sadly to answer, "No; I fear I do not love God," tell Him so, and beg of Him, for Christ's sake, to teach your heart by His Spirit to love Him. If, on the other hand, you do already love Him, seek to live so as to let others know that you do, and thus "glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Now I will just add seven things (of course, there are many more) which God's word says are to be found in the Father's home above, and which we shall all be so glad to leave behind us for ever, and seven things which will all be sources of endless enjoyment. You can find out for yourselves the chapters and verses where they are mentioned, or from which they can be gathered.

NO MORE CURSE.	LOVE.
NO MORE DEATH.	LIGHT.
NO MORE PAIN.	PEACE.
NO SORROW.	PURITY.
NO CRYING.	PERFECTION OF BEAUTY.
NO NIGHT.	FULNESS OF JOY.
NO HUNGER OR THIRST.	GLORY AND HONOUR.

"Old things passed away." "All things new."

Above all—

"GOD HIMSELF shall be with them, and be their God." E. G.

WHERE DO YOU FIND THAT?

I HEARD once of a little girl, who before she went to sleep, took hold of her sister's arm, for she was afraid that if the Lord came, she would be taken away, and her sister left behind. She had been taught by her dear parents that only those who are saved through the precious blood of Jesus would be taken up to meet Him, and knowing that her sister was not saved, it made her afraid.

Now, it may be that some of you do not know that we are told in God's word that every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, whether young or old, may at any moment be caught up without dying to meet Him in the air; and that all who love the Lord Jesus are called to wait for Him.

A friend and myself were one day travelling on one of the many railroads in London, when, on alighting at the station, we enquired of a boy the way to our destination. He immediately went with us, to put us in the right direction.

He was a cripple, and walked with the aid of crutches. Poor little boy! he had such a bright happy face that I felt very much drawn to him, so I asked if He knew the Lord Jesus as His Saviour.

"Oh, yes, that I do, sir."

"And do you know your sins are forgiven?"

To which he also said, "Yes."

I then asked him, "What do you expect to take place next before you see the Lord who died for you?"

"Oh, well, sir, we shall die."

I told him that the Lord Jesus had promised to come again "Himself" to fetch us, and that we are told in God's word to look for Him, and that this is the bright and blessed hope for all who know the Lord.

The boy looked up very earnestly into my face and said, "Where do you find that, sir?"

"In 1 Thess. 1st chapter, 9th and 10th verses, where it says of the early believers, they '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;'" and if he would look in the 4th chapter, verses 14 to 18, he would see how Jesus would come. Here we parted, leaving the poor little boy brightened by the thought that Jesus might come at any moment.

Are you, my dear young readers, ready to go if He were to come? A. K. B.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR THE LITTLE ONES.—III.

(Read Matthew i. 1, 21-25.)

AS soon as you open your Testament, you find that the first writing there is the Gospel according to St. Matthew. This was the first of the four gospels which was written.

After the Lord Jesus had died and had risen again, just before He went back to God, He told His disciples about a message which they must take for Him, and He told them to whom they were to take that message first. Look for the last chapter in the Gospel of Luke, verse 47; there we see that a message was to be given in the name of Christ to "all nations"; but the first to hear it were to be the Jews, for the verse says, "beginning at Jerusalem."

You know what it is to give a message

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"in the name" of another person. If your little brother was climbing up some dangerous place, and you were sent with a message to him, and you said, "Baby, mother says you are to come down," that would be giving a message in mother's name, and baby would know quite well that though the voice was yours, the words were mother's. Just so the disciples, when their Master was no longer with them, were to give His message in His name. The Lord Jesus had come in His Father's name, and given His message, and He said to His disciples, when He was going away, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."

How wonderful that the story about the Lord Jesus, and about what He had done for God His Father, and for men and women and children who had hearts like ours—hearts which only knew how to think wrong thoughts—should be told first in the streets of the city of Jerusalem!

Just think, dear children, only a few weeks before the day when Peter stood up and began to tell that story, the blessed Son of God, who had gone about doing good, healing and helping and saving, had been there. He had walked through those streets, a man of sorrows, the cross upon which He was to be nailed laid upon Him, and the crown of thorns about His head. As he went, people followed Him, crying out, "Not this man!" others said, "Away with Him!" and others, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

All this had been done in Jerusalem, that place which was called the "holy city," and yet it was there that the gospel was first to be preached. Almost the last word that the Lord Jesus said to His disciples was that they were to preach in His name "repentance and remission of sins," first there, to those very people, for it was for them too that He had suffered and died.

How could this be?

It could only be, my child, because of what you can read in your Testament, that little verse which you have often heard, even if you do not know where to find it, "*God is Love.*"

I know you love your father and mother; now suppose you saw some people treating them very cruelly, would you not hate them for every hard look and wicked word and cruel blow they gave to those who are so dear to you?

God loved His Son, the Lord Jesus, more than we can ever think—He had loved Him always; and God knew all that would be done to His Son, the Lord Jesus, in this world; yet, after He had seen Him suffer, after He had seen every look of hatred, and heard every wicked word, and known all the dreadful way in which His Son was treated here, the words which the Lord Jesus spoke about God were still true: God had "so loved the world"—that place full of people who could treat His Son like that—so loved the world that He gave Him up to suffer it all, and has only thoughts of love for those who "with wicked hands" took Him and "nailed Him to a cross of wood."

As it was to the Jews at Jerusalem that the messengers of Christ were first sent, so it was for Jews first—not at Jerusalem only, but in all countries—that Matthew wrote his gospel. The Gospel according to St. Matthew begins by telling us that Jesus Christ was "the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." When a Jew read this it would mean a great deal more to him than it does to you. Even a Jewish child would think at once of how David was the first king whom God chose to rule over His people Israel. As he read the words "Son of Abraham," he would stop and think—for those two names "Son of Abraham, Son of David" were the names given to Him of whose coming the prophets had spoken, whom the Jews called "Messiah," or "Anointed."

You may find two verses in the Gospel of John from which we see that the Jews, even after He had come, were still looking for their "Messiah." Look at chapter i., verse 41, and chapter iv., verse 25. The words "Christ" and "Messiah" both mean the same—"the Anointed." So the very beginning of the Gospel by Matthew would show a Jew that the Messiah, of whom the prophets had spoken, had indeed come.

But, as we read the account of the birth of Christ, we find that God Himself gave Him a name, for it was said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." The name Jesus means "Jehovah the Saviour."

In verse 23 we find one other name, and the meaning of that wonderful name is explained. It was a name which God had taught His prophet Isaiah to write many hundreds of years before His Son was born into this world: "Emmanuel—God with us."

Ask God Himself to teach you to understand these wonderful names which He gave His Son, for no one can understand them in any other way. We may call a child a name and not think much about the meaning, but those names which God gave His Son mean exactly what He was here in this world, and what He is now. He was "God with us" while here; He is the "Saviour" still, for all who come to Him trusting in that blessed name.

The Way.

ON page 77 we had a busy scene upon a roadside outside a city, as it was in Palestine in the days of our Lord on earth; let us now spend a few moments thinking over a path across the country, and a road through it.

One thing that immediately occurs to us when reading through the gospels is, how often "the way" is mentioned. Now, suppose we were to read the *road* where the word "way" relates to a track on which our feet tread! We use the word "way" to express the direction in which we go, either body or soul, and also to express that upon which we direct our goings, but the word "road" usually signifies a matter-of-fact track over which men and carriages travel.

It was most likely upon some such beaten track as that shown in our picture that the sower's seed fell, which the birds of the air devoured. Had the sower taken his steps along the field he sowed, parallel with the path running through it, then for one whole length of his sowing, his arm would necessarily cast some seeds on the beaten way.

Hence, as in the sowing the good seed of the word of God now, much of that portion of his work would never fall into the ground, much less spring up and bear fruit. When we pass along the path over the fields, we may well remember that part of the Lord's parable which relates to the wayside.

The circumstances of the lovely parable of the good Samaritan were formed by the Lord from the common incidents upon the road from Jerusalem to Jericho—probably from that part of it where the road descends quickly to the plain. It was His way to teach us from things close at hand, and surrounding us in every-day life. In His perfect wisdom He taught in perfect simplicity. The road-side, the ways of men upon the road, and the flowers growing in the fields, our Lord used to teach of God and the kingdom.

Some of our Lord's miracles were wrought on the road-side; we remember how the poor demoniac held the people from passing along the road near Gadara; but the Lord went on in His gracious ways of peace and power, and by saving the poor man, and sending him home to his friends, opened up indeed a way into the hearts of the men in that country.

We never can forget the sweet story of the blind Bartimæus, and how he sat by the road-side begging, and then how he heard the multitudes passing by, and asked what it all meant. What a day of light and gladness was that to him as he, rising up from his beggar's seat, was led to Jesus, and from Him received his sight! Then, as the multitude went on following the Master, Bartimæus followed Him along the road; and not as a mere curious, unconcerned follower, nay, but as one who loved Jesus.

The young man of whom we read in the tenth chapter of the Gospel by St. Mark, ran along the road after the Lord and knelt down to Him, asking Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" He must have hastened from his home after the Lord, but having received the Lord's reply, he returned whence he came, and exceeding sorrowful. Alas! how many are earnest to ask a question about eternal things the

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A PATH ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

answer to which they cannot bear, and the consequences of which they refuse?

Never can we forget that day when our Lord with His disciples was walking along the road going up to Jerusalem. (Mark x. 32.) He was first; they were following Him, and "they were amazed." He was going to die for them, and for us. "They were afraid"! Then He took them "apart in the road," He left the throngs of the pilgrims going also up to Jerusalem to keep

apportioned the lowest. The Master took a little child in His arms as He thus taught. Then John, the beloved, owned how that they had forbidden one who followed not them to cast out devils in the Master's name! Again the Lord showed John what He valued, and again He spake of the children, and of the dear little one whom He held in His blessed arms of love—a little one who believed in Him.

How faintly do even great disciples recog-

the passover feast, and, in some silent spot, told His disciples how that the chief priests and scribes should condemn Him to death, and how that the Gentiles should mock, and scourge, and crucify Him, and how that "the third day He shall rise again." (Matt. xx. 19.)

Yes, "and then" it was that the mother of Zebedee's children came seeking for her sons special dignity in His kingdom!

Again, it was during a journey that the disciples had disputed on the road which of them should be the greatest, and Jesus told them that the least should be the greatest, and that he who seeks the great place amongst God's people shall be

nize the things that the Master loves! There is marvellous grace, and there are the deepest lessons for us in His way of teaching as well as in what He taught that day with the little child in His arms. It is now many a long century since He so spake, but His words still live in our souls: we seem to hear Him in our midst, and to see the child in His arms. Yes, and now He is in the glory, and the one who was then a little child who believed in Him is with Him in Paradise.

The early believers, before they were called Christians, were spoken of as of "The Way." No doubt the term was more or less contemptuous, but the Lord had Himself said, "I am the Way!" and the crafty Pharisee had said to Him, "Thou teachest the way of God in truth!" and again, the poor girl possessed with the demon had cried out after God's servants, Paul, Silas, and Luke, "These men show unto us 'the way of salvation.'" so that the name by which the truth of God went in early days was, after all, of beautiful significance.

And a glorious way it is! A narrow way, truly, but it leads to life, to joy, to God the Father! On what way are you treading?

TO CHRISTIAN CHILDREN.

DEAR children, as we have said before, we say to you again, there is but One Saviour, and but One Way of Salvation for all, whether we be grown-up persons or little children. God is a holy God, and no sinner in his sins, great or small, could dwell with Him; but "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all (or every) sin," and all who are cleansed are in the light.

Now there is only one way of living for God, and that is God's own way, as shown in His own book. Young or old, there is but one way for us all. Little children are called unto love, and peace, and gentleness; little children are called to serve God. I need not say that small people are not asked by God to do great things, but every little thing a child may do in God's strength for God is great in God's eyes, and by-and-by the ways of dear children will be remembered, even as will be the ways of God's great servants.

Children have often to be carried. Little people need strength. Now, each day, you must seek strength from your God to live for Him. Tell Him your difficulties. Have you difficulties over your lessons, or in your play? Speak to your Father in heaven about them. He will never fail to hear what you say to Him, and He will give you the help that is needed. Have you difficulties with your brothers and sisters? I am sure you have sometimes, and your difficulties are as great to you as those of grown-up persons are to them. Now take your troubles and your weakness to God in prayer. He is our Strength and our Shield, and as truly for you as He was for such great men as King David, or the apostles our Lord called and sent on their work. Ask your Father in heaven, believing. You would not ask your earthly parent and go away not expecting an answer. Oh, no; and so, when you ask God, believe, for He is more ready to hear than are we to ask.

Our English Bible.

THE AUTHORISED VERSION.

TO do this work of translating the Bible, by "special command" of King James, the best scholars from Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster were chosen, and were divided into six companies, two of which were to sit at each of those places. The work was then divided among them, and it was arranged that "every particular man of each company do take the same chapter or chapters, and, having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinks good, all do meet together to confer (compare) what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand." This arrangement was carefully carried out. When the translators met together, we are told that "one of them read the translation, the rest holding in their hands some Bible, either of the learned tongues, or French, Spanish, or Italian. If they found any fault they spoke; if not, he read on."

We must remember that at the time when this translation was made with so much care,

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the many ancient copies of the Gospels and Epistles which have been brought to light of late years were not known to be in existence. The translators worked faithfully, comparing the Greek text of the New Testament which they had with the various versions which had been already made from it, and with a Spanish Greek Testament. In their "Address to the reader" they disclaim any idea of making a new translation, "but to make a good one better; or, out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath been our endeavour, that our mark." Then, after speaking of their dependence for the work they had undertaken, not on their own knowledge, or sharpness of wit, or deepness of judgment, but "on Him who hath the key of David, opening and no man shutting," they add, "neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see."

The address to the "gentle reader" thus concludes: "It remaineth that we commend thee to God, and to the spirit of His grace, which is able to build further than we can ask or think. He removeth the scales from our eyes, the veil from our hearts, opening our wits that we may understand His word, enlarging our hearts—yea, correcting our affections, that we may love it above gold and silver—yea, that we may love it to the end. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; but a blessed thing it is, and will bring us to everlasting blessedness in the end, when God speaketh unto us, to hearken; when He setteth His word before us, to read it; when He stretcheth out His hand and calleth, to answer, 'Here am I; here we are to do Thy will, O God.' The Lord work a care and conscience in us to know Him and serve Him, that we may be acknowledged of Him at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the

Holy Ghost, be all praise and thanksgiving. Amen."

This Bible, which employed the translators during more than three years, and the printer two, was published in London in the year 1611, in a large black letter folio, with a very flattering dedication to King James. It took the place, by the king's command, of the Bishops' Bible in the churches, and soon became the only version in use. The whole cost of the printing was borne by one man, and the sole right of printing the Book remained to his family for a hundred years. Dr. Rainolds, at whose timely suggestion the work had been undertaken, did not live to see it completed.

Two hundred and seventy years intervened between the publishing of that version of the English Bible, the beautiful words of which have been familiar to us from our earliest childhood, and the publishing of that of which we are accustomed to speak as the "Revised Version" of the New Testament, a work which was intended to be, as its name explains, simply a revision of the Authorised Version of King James's time. It was early in the year 1870 that it was resolved at a large meeting held at Canterbury that this work should be undertaken. The revisers were divided into two companies, one of which was to work upon the Old Testament, the other upon the New. Ten years passed before the revision of the New Testament was finished, and it was not published until 1881, for this was a work, in one way, much more laborious than any which had gone before it, because the revisers had so many copies of the Gospels and Epistles to compare with each other. That we may understand how this could be, we must remember that the Scriptures have not come down to us in the very form in which they were first written. Not one original writing by the very hand of an apostle is in existence, so that we can only now go back and try to find the oldest *copies* of the original writings. It is possible that you may have heard people speak of "ancient codices," but may not have understood what was meant. The word "codex" has reference to the *wooden* tablets, smeared with wax, upon which historical

records, poems, and laws were written in old times. The name was afterwards given to writings which were not upon wood, and came to mean any manuscript copy. The earliest of the codices were written in capital letters, called "uncials," from being about the breadth of a finger nail; the letters are arranged one after another, just as the letters of the alphabet would be, with no divisions to form words, and, of course, no stops.

The first of these old manuscripts of the New Testament which was brought to England goes by the name of "Codex A," because it was thought to have been written at Alexandria, in Egypt; but nothing is known of its history, except its age. It is believed to have been written about the middle of the fifth century—a point of time which you will realise better if you remember that it was just when the Romans had left Britain, and the Picts and Scots were trying to get possession of the country. This interesting codex is now in the British Museum, but it was unknown to English scholars until it was given to our King Charles the First, several years after the translation made by order of the "high and mighty Prince James" was in use.

Another early manuscript, "Codex B," is in the Vatican library at Rome, and was there at the time of the Reformation, but could be of no use, as it was guarded so jealously that it was not until the present century that a great German scholar, with very great difficulty, obtained access to it. Its early history is unknown, but learned men believe that it dates from the fourth century, and therefore is more ancient than "Codex A."

Yet one more of these codices was brought to light by the same German scholar, who died not very long since. It is called the "Sinaitic," from the strange fact that it was discovered by him during a visit which he paid to the convent of St. Catharine, on Mount Sinai. You may have seen a view of this lonely spot if you have ever been to a panorama of the East, for it is often shown, and you may see a visitor being pulled up the high wall in a basket, the only way by which

strangers are allowed to enter. Some sheets of this manuscript were found by Tischendorf among the paper used at the convent for lighting the fires. He hurried away with his prize, and published it as a fragment. Finally, after much trouble, he obtained the rest, and the whole manuscript—which contained all the New Testament—was recovered and published in 1862. This codex is believed to belong to the middle of the fourth century.

We see, then, that the revisers of our own day have had helps to their work of which it was not possible for any who went before them to avail themselves. These ancient manuscripts, containing three more or less complete copies of the New Testament, were never consulted by those of whose labours we have been reading; but we must not forget that for those who, in danger and difficulty, with imperfect knowledge and scanty materials, wrought at the great work of giving to their fellow men the word of God in their own tongue, there was the help and guidance for which they looked, and which can never fail those who look for it in simple confidence. Four hundred years lie between the early work of Wycliff, when he sought to turn the Latin Vulgate into a tongue "understood of the people," and this latest work of our own day, of which we have all heard as the "Revised Version." At the history of those four hundred years we have been looking, with a passing glance, indeed, but in the hope that we might learn something, even from this passing glance, of the faithfulness of God in thus preserving His word to us, and supporting His servants in their labours—lonely, indeed, but for His presence with them, and overwhelming in their difficulty and danger, save to those who relied upon a strength not their own. C. P.

NOTE.—It has not been possible, in the course of these slight sketches, to quote or refer to authorities. The writer has freely used information from various sources, but is especially indebted to such well-known works on the same subject as Canon Westcott's "History of the English Bible," Anderson's "Annals of the English Bible," Tregelles's "Introduction to the English Hexapla," "Our English Bible," and "The Story of the New Testament told in connection with the Revised Version." Historical authorities: "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," Morris and Skeat's "Specimens of Early English," Hughes' "Life of Alfred the Great," Burnet's "History of the Reformation," Strype's "Memorials."

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THEM WORDS.

THEM WORDS.

DURING the autumn of last year, a poor fruit-seller occasionally called with his fruit at a bookseller's in a seaside town. Though the keeper of the shop had not spoken to him of his eternal welfare, she became interested in the man. There was nothing attractive either in his ways or person. A short, thick-set man of about forty, dressed in a blue cotton blouse, with a face that told of previous intemperate habits. But he had a soul! She thought she would give him a little book.

"Thank you kindly, ma'am," said he, as he took it; "you are good to think of the likes of me."

"God is good, my friend, not I. He made your fruit to grow and ripen; He 'made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.' He gives 'rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' And it is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance. If you've never thought of God, think of Him now. Read the book I've given you, and may God bless its message to your soul."

A surprised yet grateful look passed over his face, as, again thanking her, he hurried away.

Scarcely a week had passed, when one afternoon the fruit-seller walked into the shop. "I've thought of your words, ma'am," said he, "and my sister read the book to me."

"What words?"

"About God's goodness. I can't forget them words, and more, I don't want to. I've been a wild sort of a fellow for over twenty years, now I'm broken down in health, and I've come here for a month or two, and sells fruit that my father sends me from his garden at Swindon. But in all my knocking about, never did I hear such words as you give me. They's set me a-thinking there is a God, and I never thought that there was afore. I looks up at the sky, and I says, there is a God who made it. I looks at the earth, and I says, He made that too, and I fears Him."

"God's word says, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.'" (Prov. i. 7.)

"But, ma'am, I wants to know more; will you tell me how I can be saved?"

As he spoke he put his basket upon a chair, and seated himself upon another, while his anxious ear awaited the shop-keeper's message.

As simply as we should tell a child was the gospel told to him, and the tears stood in his eyes as he listened. It was all so new to him, and it was just what he wanted. He was a poor, broken-down sinner, guilty, and he knew it—lost, and he knew it. Wasn't he like the prodigal son, in want of the "best robe," the "ring," the "shoes"? Indeed he was. But there was more to tell him. He must hear yet more of repentance towards God, as well as of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And he heard that 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; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." (Acts xvii. 30, 31.)

Think what it cost the Lord when He was Sin-bearer and bore the wrath of the holy God in His own body on the cross. Should not such thoughts produce in us true repentance as we consider our guilt? True, the Lord Jesus is no longer under wrath, He is risen!—raised from the dead for our justification, but the true believer's thoughts go back to Calvary, for it was there the Son of God endured so much on account of sin.

"I'm a poor ignorant fellow," said the man, "but I do believe that Jesus died instead of me."

"And God knows the sincerity of your belief," said the shop-keeper, "and He says to you, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'" (Rom. x. 9, 10.)

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The shop-keeper and the fruit-seller parted expecting to meet again, but God ordered it otherwise. Within a month from that afternoon the man was present with the Lord.

Through some neighbours who visited him in his last hours, this friend heard of his happy departure. All was peace and joy; he had no doubt as to his soul's security.

"Going to be with Jesus!" "All is peace!" "So happy!" These were some of his last words, ere the spirit left the sphere of sin, want and misery, for the haven of eternal blessedness. E. E. S.

LOVE, ITS OWN MOTIVE.

LOVE is its own motive, and needs no exhortation. Love would not be love if it required stimulating; like the ceaseless fountain rising up from the depths of the earth, and unaffected by the circumstances of wet or drought, love ever flows out from its own bosom. A true mother needs no exhortation to love her child, for it is her nature to do so. We might as well ask the sea waves to roll on in their fulness, or the swallows to migrate in their season, as ask love to be constant to itself.

God is love, and His children are the objects of His love. Even the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. There is no sigh nor cry from the soul of the least child in His family unheard and unheeded by Him. And though in the discipline of this school of life we are often inclined to regard as severe the sorrows portioned out to us, yet our Father knows the needs be for them all. Do not we, as earthly parents, in pure love to our children, often check and even punish them, so that they may abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good? And the hand that chastises or the word of severity causes deeper grief to the heart of the parent than to that of the child.

No bare exhortation will ever make us love God, we indeed need stimulation to do so, but the stimulation will be the partaking afresh of His love to us who is the fountain of love. The nature of God is love, and we are partakers of the divine nature. "Love is of God: He that loveth is born of God."

HOW DO YOU GET AT THAT POINT?

A SERVANT of the Lord was returning home one fine summer's evening, and, having occasion to travel by omnibus, sought an opportunity of speaking with the driver about eternal things. This driver had been ill, and off duty for a few days, which gave our friend the opportunity to enquire as to his bodily ailment. "Are you better? I heard you were ill," said he.

In response the driver said he was obliged to come out sooner than was right; adding, "and, you see, sir, I do not get the care I used. . . . Well, certainly, I have a daughter!"

"Oh, you mean that you have lost your wife?"

"Yes; that's it, sir."

"It is well to leave this world if we go to be with Christ. On what ground do you think we reach heaven?"

"Well, I tell you what it is, sir—what my belief is. I believe if we do our best—do good to our fellow men, you know, and return good for evil—that's all we can do."

"Yes, doubtless; but that will not do for God—that will not save us. . . ."

"Stop a minute," broke in the driver. "I am not like some who don't believe in any hereafter, or as some who ride on this 'bus, who say that when we die we are no better than these horses. No; I couldn't believe that. I do believe in a God, and in a hereafter. No one can say that the sun, moon, and stars, and all the earth, were not made by someone. There, that's what I believe."

"So far, so well; but simply knowing God as the God of creation will not save your soul, nor take away your sins. You must know Him as the God who 'so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Apart from Christ and His precious blood shed on the cross you cannot be saved."

"Well, I do believe in Jesus Christ, and I'll tell you the way in which I believe. You see, there was the Duke of Wellington living once. Now I saw him, but my children

didn't, but they believe there was such a man, because I have told them, and in the same way I believe in our Saviour. *I* did not see Him, but others did, so I believe there was such a Man. And another thing, I never go to bed without saying my prayers, and asking God to forgive me my sins. There! that's what I believe."

"Asking forgiveness does not take away our sins, any more than my asking your forgiveness would pay my debt if I owed you money; someone must be found who has paid the debt before we can be free. And then, it seems to me that you only believe about Jesus Christ, that He lived and walked here as a good Man, and nothing more. But it is through His death alone we obtain forgiveness of our sins: for without shedding of blood is no remission. (Heb. ix. 22.) Still, you say you believe in Him, and the scripture says, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.' (John iii. 36.) Now, have you everlasting life?"

"No, sir, I cannot say I have."

"Well, do you not see, my friend, that God has joined faith in Christ and having life everlasting together, and if you have faith you have life; you cannot have one without the other. It is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not just believing about Him, that you need."

A moment or two's pause occurred here, during which our friend the driver appeared to be thinking, when suddenly he said—

"Well, there are many who ride on this 'bus who say they know they have it, but how (laying stress upon his closing words) do you get at that point?"

His friend then replied, "If you will look at John v. 24, you will then see how to arrive at the point; it is a verse which has been blessed to many, and I trust by it you may find the joy of knowing, as it has been my joy to know for many years, that everlasting life is yours if you receive Christ."

"What verse did you say?" asked the driver.

"John v. 24," replied his friend; "I will write it down for you in a little book, if you like."

"Thank you, sir; I will not forget to read it."

Now, may I ask the reader of this little incident, have you "got at that point"?—for doubtless you have read these words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life."

A. K. B.

THE HOME WHERE I AM GOING.

IN a dirty, miserable loft, in a house in Whitechapel, a sick girl lay upon a heap of shavings on the floor, dying. Her surroundings were too wretched to describe: the panels of the door of the dwelling had long since been used for fuel, so had what had once served for a staircase to the loft the girl called home. She was too ill now to be able to be up, but before she was ill, she had passed in with a crowd to a theatre, where an earnest evangelist was preaching. It was God who had drawn her there, though she did not know Him. It was as if He had whispered to her, "Hearken, O daughter! and consider, and incline thine ear," while He spoke to her lost soul. When she left that crowd, she had had to do with One whom she had never met before; and perhaps, like Samaria's daughter, she went on her way saying, "He told me all that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

Afterwards, when she lay languishing upon her heap of shavings, she had comfort in her heart that lifted her above the dreariness and misery in which she was. She had no Christian friend to read to her or lead her on; but, like John of old, she leaned her head on the bosom of her Lord, and when He gave her that rest, she heeded little the cold, and hunger, and want of her attic home. But she thirsted to tell out her heart to the messenger who had brought to her "the gospel of peace." So she sent and begged him to come to her.

The evangelist very gladly hastened there, and having ascended as far as below the loft, he asked the woman living on that floor to lend him a candle; but she was not willing, she said, to get a light for a stranger, and

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thus repulsed he made his way as best he could to the poor girl's apartment. When he heard her simple story what could he do but rejoice, and fall down on his knees and thank his Master? But when again he turned to her in all her earthly need, strong man though he was, and accustomed to sights and sounds of suffering in his "labour of love" in Whitechapel, what could he do but weep?

"Oh! do not cry," she said, gently; "we shall meet again." But his heart was sorely grieved to leave her thus, and he promised to send his wife to her that very day, to cheer and meet her need.

"There is no need," she answered quietly. "In the home where I am going 'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.'"

So he left her, and not long after the promised relief came; but she had not been mistaken, for God had taken her home.

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.

S. C. M. A.

TEACHING AND FOLLOWING.

"But Christe's lore, and His apostles twelve
He taughte, but first he folwede it himselve."

THESE are the words of an old English poet—Chaucer. He is about the earliest of all English poets whose writings we still read with pleasure. If we turned these words into a plain modern sentence they would be something like this: "He taught the doctrine of Christ and His twelve apostles, but, before all, he put it into practice himself." I have taken these words because I think they contain a most important lesson for us all. They are spoken of a "poor parson," who is further called "a good man of religion." Chaucer has given a long description of this truly good man, and he ends up with the words I have quoted.

You see there are two things which distinguish him particularly; first, teaching Christ's lore (or learning), and, secondly, following it. And you will notice that our old poet wishes to give special prominence to the second fact. Now why is this? Is

it not because it is easier to preach than to practice? Thank God, Christ's teaching is so simple that a very child, who has learnt it well, can teach it to others. But to put it into practice! We all know how hard that is—at least, we know if we have ever really tried. Of course I do not mean to say that anyone could teach Christ's lore without having first been taught it by God's Holy Spirit. And even then, when we do know it ourselves, it is often very difficult to teach it rightly to others. But I mean that all this is easy compared with carrying it out in our lives.

Shall we think for a moment what Christ's teaching is? St. John tells us that God's commandment is: "That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another." I think that Christ's lore is wonderfully summed up in these few words. "Believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ." Is it not a wonderful name? To believe on this name is clearly something very different from believing, for instance, that the old poet, whose words I have quoted, is called Chaucer. You believe that, perhaps, because you know it already; perhaps, because I have told you so. Anyway it does not make much difference to you. But if you really believe that the Son of God is the Saviour of men, and that you must therefore come to Him with your burden of sin and care, and that He is the Lord, and you must therefore obey Him—this must make all the difference in the world to you. And here you see how much easier it is to teach than to do. You can easily enough teach anyone that God's commandment is "to believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ;" but really to believe it yourself, and thus to *follow* Christ's lore, is another matter. We can never accomplish this save by the grace of God.

And so with the second half of the command, "love one another." A very simple command, is it not? Only three words, and so plain and obvious that anyone could learn, and understand, and remember it. But how comes it, then, that our Lord and St. John so constantly repeat this command,

just as if it were the hardest thing imaginable! I think we need not look very far to find the reason. If we look around us a little, or look into our hearts, we shall soon see how very, very hard it is to *follow* this part of the teaching. To be perfectly kind and loving towards every one, to do everything we ought for them for one day—this is a task which will prove too hard for most of us.

Our religion is apt to be “much cry and little wool,” to be “talking” rather than “practising,” “teaching” rather than “following.” Let us earnestly strive to do the one, and not to leave the other undone; to teach Christ’s lore when we can; but above all, by God’s grace and help, to follow it every day and hour of our lives. C.S.P.

THE OLD MAN’S MESSAGE.

SOME years ago I became acquainted with an old man, whose mild, peaceful countenance and white locks made me think of the words, “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” After a time, I found he was laid low by sickness. One day he was much cast down. As he was very deaf, it was with difficulty that I made him hear the words, “The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth from ALL sin;” with which words I left him. The next day, on entering his room, he greeted me with a beaming face, and exclaimed, “My soul doth magnify the Lord.” He then told me that in his youth he had been wild and thoughtless, but that one day, the word of God was so fixed in his heart that he had no rest, till he came to Christ as his Saviour. For forty years he had, in his humble way, served the Master; but he told me the thought of the previous wasted years had caused him many hours of sorrow. Then he added—

“Tell the young people to whom you speak that I wish I had served God years before I did, and ask them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth.” And I send you, young friends, the old man’s message.

E. A. L.

CAN GOD BE KNOWN?

THERE is an immense difference between knowing a person and merely knowing about him. True, very much may be known about a person—his character—his ways—his habits of thought—all, in fact, that is public in his life. Just as those in exalted stations become subjects of popular criticism, and their form is imaged in the mind, yet, whilst very much may be known of them, they themselves, in their private capacities, are, of course, unknown but to their immediate relations.

In like manner much may be known about God without any real knowledge of Himself; and yet it is the knowledge of Himself that alone is of any saving value. Hence the Lord Jesus said, “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3); and Paul said, “I know whom I have believed.” (2 Tim. i. 12.) It is not an acquaintance with truths that makes Him known, nor with doctrine merely, but knowledge of God Himself. It is certain that without such doctrine He could not be known—saving as Creator, or in ways of providence that declare His majesty and inscrutability—but there may be the clearest apprehension of the letter without the smallest knowledge of God. There is no reason why one might not master the contents of the Bible, or become a lucid expositor of them to others, who himself has never been divinely illuminated. In fact, that such is the case to-day is abundantly demonstrated, and the Church has no greater enemy than teachers of a truth that has never become effectual in their own souls by the power of the Spirit of God. A corpse may be very beautiful and possess a complete organism, but the vital spark is wanting. In like manner a brain may be replete of doctrine, theology, truth in letter, and yet the heart be totally ignorant of God.

Now, I do not know a more important truth for the day than that Christianity brings us (believers) into the knowledge of God—makes “the living and true God” personally known to the soul—His truth, His love, His

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grace, His power, His sympathy, His holiness, His patience—all that He is in Himself, and all for the soul; He has revealed Himself in a way that makes Him known. Creation did not confer such a revelation, nor does providence, nor law; but, as Christ said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and further, "No one knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him"—such an one knows the Father. What a blessed answer to the "agnosticism" of the day, which tells us that God is unknowable, and also to the miserable shuffle which, in order to please science, and, at the same time, patronize revelation, says that God is both knowable and unknowable! Science (alas! falsely so called) means neither more nor less than that God cannot be known—revelation declares the opposite. And so we read in 1 Cor. ii. 12, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

This is true, notice, of the believer, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God . . . but he that is spiritual discerneth all things."

"The things of God," therefore, are revealed in Christianity, and to the Christian, in whom the Spirit of God dwells. This is a blessed fact. Proud agnosticism may scorn the idea, and cry "Impossible," but the fact is divinely real, however incommunicable by men. The impossibility is in getting blind eyes to see, and deaf ears to hear!

Tell us plainly that we have no sins that need forgiveness—no tempest-tossed conscience that needs to be tranquillised—no burdened spirit that needs relief—no finite mind to be instructed—no wearied heart that craves rest and comfort, then we can accept your cold hypothesis that there is no sin-pardoning God—no cleansing blood—no burden-bearer—no fount of wisdom—no bosom for the weary and heavy laden—no hand of sympathy to wipe the tear away—no throne of grace to comfort, to nerve, to strengthen, to cheer—no Friend that sticketh closer than a brother—no arm to lean on

when others break—no heart to trust when others prove untrue. Ah! what means Bethany? what Gethsemane? what Calvary? What the Spirit, sent as Comforter from the glory into which that Friend has entered? What the Spirit of adoption that gives the cry of "Abba, Father"? All a vast deception—a splendid delusion—a magnificent imposture! Not thus speaks the soul that "has tasted that the Lord is gracious," or that has proved His power.

Instance the intercession of Moses for his rebellious people in Num. xiv., at a time when the Lord spoke of smiting and disinheriting them: "Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of Thy mercy, and as Thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word."

Or, again, look at the prayer of Joshua, in chapter x., when, in order to achieve a complete victory over the five confederate kings of the Amorites, "He said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. . . . And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man."

Or, again, call to remembrance the challenge of Elijah to the prophets of Baal in the reign of the wicked Ahab. He stood alone. They numbered four hundred and fifty. The poor bewildered people of Israel "halted between two opinions"—whether Jehovah was God, or whether Baal was God! The test was simple—an offering to Baal, and another to God, and he that answered by fire was to be God. The challenge was accepted. The prophets of Baal cried on the name of Baal from morning until noon, "O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered."

This state of things continued until the silence of their deity became intolerable. All that men, in downright earnest, could do they did—"They cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives

and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." But all to no purpose. Baal did not hear. After this Elijah, the solitary witness of Jehovah, the man of faith, steps calmly forward, prepares his offering, turns in childlike confidence to God, saying, "Let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel . . . then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice . . ." Thus Jehovah answered, and proved that He, and not Baal, was God in Israel. This might have been a subject of unbelief to some of the people, and a mere "opinion" to others; but to one who, like Elijah, lived in constant intercourse with Jehovah, it was a blessed certainty. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him."

Now, it may be asked, "Why does God not display His power in some such fashion at the present time? Is there not as much unbelief in Christendom as there was in the days of Elijah in Israel?" And supposing that He did, as He surely might, what would be the consequence? It would just be judgment on the opponents. They would assuredly suffer, as did the followers of Baal in another way. But the wondrous reason is that "His longsuffering is salvation." Ah! what a secret is thus made known. The infidel may disbelieve, the sceptic may carp, the scoffer may despise, the agnostic may ridicule, and the atheist may deny, but little do they dream that the tender hand of God's longsuffering holds back, awhile, the bolts of His certain judgment. Yes, "awhile"! For longsuffering with the sinner does not mean indifference as to his sins; and this kind of suffering, if "long," is not eternal! Longsuffering is salvation — let the suffering cease and then—?

A word in closing on what Christianity does for the believer. St. Paul's expression has been quoted, "I know whom I have believed." If it be said, "Yes, Paul; but he was an apostle." True; but he connects this knowledge with believing and not with attainment. But St. John says, in writing to the babes in Christ, "Ye have known the Father;" and one of the articles of the

new Covenant is, "They shall all know Me, from the least to the greatest."

We are set as Christians in this relation. It is for our constant enjoyment now, and will be valued by us, and borne witness to, just in proportion to our energy of soul and the measure of our communion with God. J.W.S.



All Aboard.

Colorado, U.S. America.

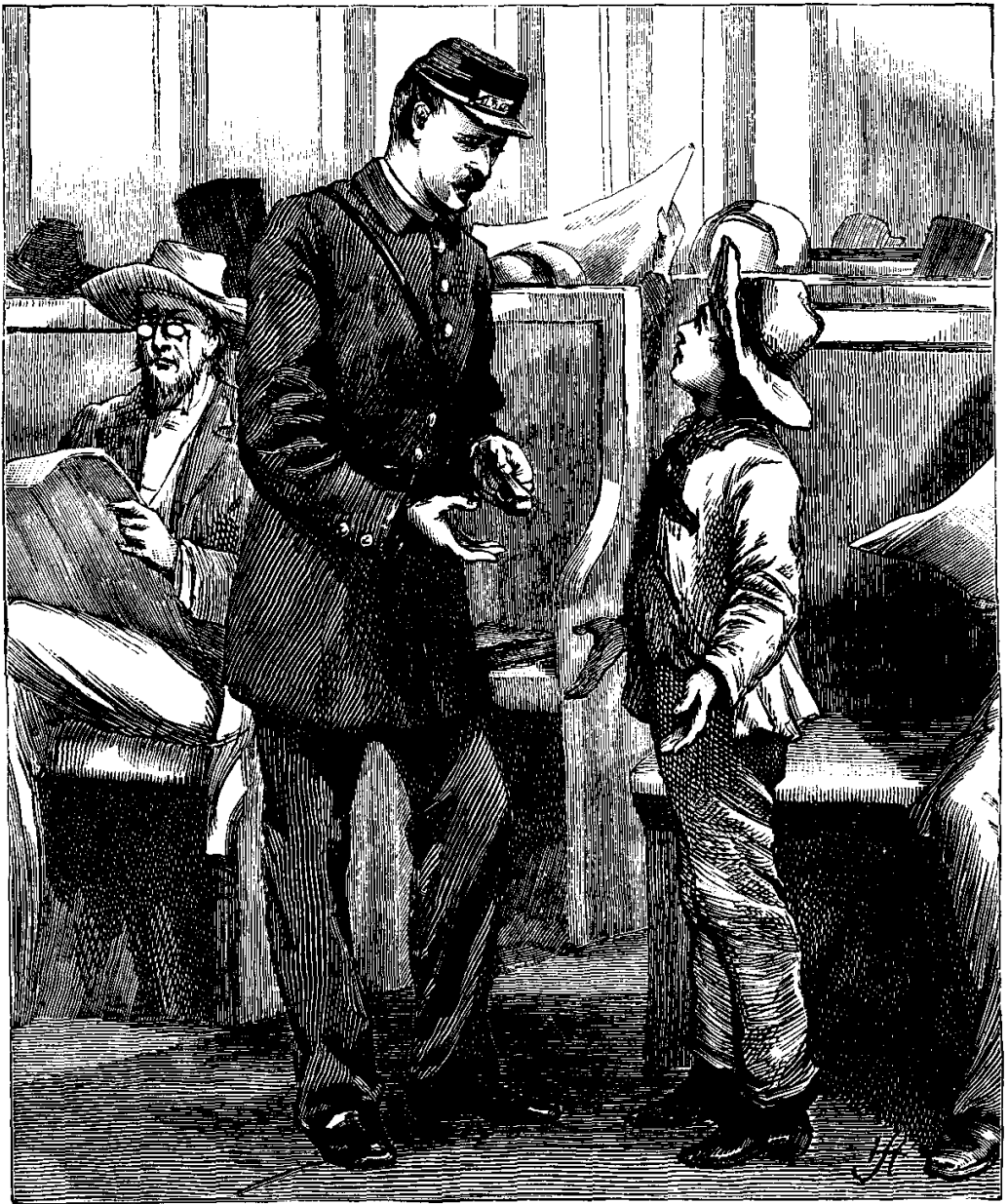
"MY dear little Friends,—When I lived in dear old England, several times I had the privilege of addressing you through the pages of FAITHFUL WORDS. Now I am separated from you by nearly three thousand miles of sea and more than two thousand miles of land. Here in Colorado, where we have made our new home, it is difficult to realize that we have passed through winter, as we have seen none of those dark, damp, foggy days experienced in England. Our days have been bright, clear, and genial. It scarcely ever rains here, and but seldom snows, although we are five thousand feet above the level of the sea. Whilst we have many advantages in the way of climate, we sadly miss the dear familiar faces of home friends, and lack many spiritual blessings enjoyed in the old country. This country is wild and unsettled. As I look out of my cottage window I can, on the right hand, see the rugged, snow-capped peaks of the Rocky Mountains, still the home of the wolf, bear, and elk, and, on the left, nothing but a desert, like a vast, smooth sea, as far as the eye can reach, which will not produce a tree without artificial watering, and was, until recent years, the track of the Red Indian, the buffalo, prairie dog, and rattlesnake.

"In such a country we hear many strange stories. One touching incident I would like to narrate to you. A little boy, whose parents died a long way out in the country, thought if he could get to a town he would be likely to meet with some one who would give him

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work, and assist him in gaining a living. How to get there was the difficulty. He wished to reach Chicago, but that city was many hundreds of miles away—further than Edinburgh is from London. Even if his little legs would carry him, he dared not attempt to walk, as wild beasts might devour him. The roads are not so well marked as in England, and there are no sign posts to guide him. Certainly the train would carry him, but then he had no money to pay for a ticket. Notwithstanding all the difficulties in the way, he set out for the nearest railway depôt. The train was long in arriving; when it did come he jumped on to the cars and took his seat. After travelling some distance, the guard—



“YOU STRETCHED OUT YOUR HAND TOWARDS ME AND SHOUTED, ‘ALL ABOARD!’”

or, as he is called in America, the conductor—came round and asked for the boy's ticket. ‘Please, sir,’ he replied, ‘I am a poor farm boy, and have neither ticket nor money to buy one.’ ‘Then you must get off the cars at the next depôt,’ said the guard. When the train stopped, the boy got off, but stepped on again as the engine started. Astonished on his next round to find the boy still in his seat, the guard said, angrily, ‘Didn't I tell you to leave the cars when they stopped?’ ‘Yes, sir, and so I did,

but, as you did not tell me to stay off, I got on again,’ piteously answered our little friend. As a matter of duty, the official felt obliged to insist that next time he must understand that, not only was he to get off, but to remain off until he could purchase a ticket. At the next stoppage the boy left the cars, and stepped on to the platform with a sad heart, and watched the busy scene around him. A moment before the train started the conductor, as usual, stretched out his arm and shouted, ‘All aboard.’ At this the lad's face

brightened up, and as quick as lightning he jumped into the train, taking his accustomed seat. Away the engine started. Meeting him the third time, it is easy to understand that the ticket collector was more than ever amazed, and, addressing the boy in severe terms, said, 'Now, didn't I tell you to get off, and keep off the cars?' 'Yes, sir, and so I did, but just as the train was moving you stretched out your hand towards me and shouted, "All aboard"; I thought that meant me, so I jumped on again.' Overcome by the child's earnestness and evident desire to reach Chicago, struck also by his quick perception in taking advantage of every opportunity that offered to carry out the great desire of his heart, the guard could not refrain from smiling, and this time patted the boy's head, saying, 'Well, I suppose we must carry you right through now to Chicago,' and allowed him to remain until they reached that city.

"Now, dear children, whilst I do not think the orphan boy was right in riding on the train without a ticket, it was his taking advantage of and at once profiting by the guard's using the little word 'all' that struck me so much, and made me think how often God uses that word in His gracious invitations to sinners. In the first place He tells us that '*all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God'—that means you and me. Then, speaking of the way in which He has made provision for us, He says, 'Christ died for *all*'—that is, for you and me. The result of believing what God says, we learn in another Bible invitation, which says, 'Come unto Me, *all* ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' and the righteousness of God, by faith of Jesus Christ, is 'unto *all* and upon *all* them that believe.' You cannot doubt that God means *you*, since this wonderful salvation which Jesus worked out for us by His death on the cross is for *all* who believe. Now the question is, do you believe, first, that you are a sinner; second, that without the forgiveness of sins you never can be saved; third, that Jesus is your own Saviour, that He died for you—yes, you—your own self? If you have not yet, seriously

and in the heart, received the Lord Jesus, let me beg you to do so without a day's delay. To-morrow, the day after you read this, the Lord Jesus may come, and leave behind all unbelievers. The poor orphan boy had much to discourage him—you have everything to encourage. Your soul's eternal welfare urges you to accept Jesus as your Saviour at once. God wants you to receive Him; your teachers press you to do so. The Scriptures say again, '*All* things are ready; come.' The poor boy was told to go—you are invited to *come*. I will pray God to save all the dear boys and girls who may read my letter from the Rocky Mountains." C. G. D.

FREDDIE'S SAVIOUR.

A LITTLE while ago, at a children's service, little Freddie heard a servant of God speak of the dear Saviour who came down to this sad, sorrowful world to give up His life so that dear little children might enter the lovely city with pearly gates. The speaker described the home above, and told the children that the loving Saviour, Jesus the Lord, had died for our sins, and how that every little child who sought the good, kind Lord, might reach the home above, for the Lord had paid with His own life for them, so that they might enter in.

Freddie sat very quietly by his mother's side. At the end of the service the speaker asked those who trusted in the Lord to stand up. As they returned home, Freddie's mother said, "Why did you stand up, dear?" Now Freddie was not seven years old, and she thought perhaps he did not understand what he was doing. Little Freddie could not answer for the tears, which flowed freely down his cheeks; but when he was calmer, and his mother gently bade him tell her what he meant, he said to her, "Because I love the Lord Jesus."

His mother was very thankful to hear her little boy say this. The next morning Freddie said, "I belong to Jesus, mamma. I must do all I can to please Him."

When Freddie was being dressed for school it began to rain, and his mother said, "I hope you won't catch cold, dear." He said,

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"The Lord Jesus will not let me hurt; I belong to Him, and underneath me are His arms." So he went to school, trusting in the Lord to take care of him.

In the evening, he said he must tell his little sister about Jesus, for he wanted to do his best to speak of Him at home.

Now, dear children, it is Freddie's mother who is writing this to you. Will you not trust the precious Jesus simply, just as my little son has done? The Lord Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd." Just the One for weak children—the Good Shepherd, so kind, and true, and tender. Oh, dear children, I would speak to you so lovingly of Jesus. He keeps His lambs—yes, He carries them in His bosom, and you know, don't you, that Jesus is the Lord God.

Ask Him to make you His little lambs. He will, my dear children, I know He will. I have known the Lord Jesus for many years, and know

"It is His great delight to bless us,—
Oh, how He loves!" C. E. H.

COALS OF FIRE.

I AM accustomed, when the weather is fine, to have two of my little girls drawn out by a lad in a perambulator. The elder of these children is nearly four years old, the other a year younger. In our neighbourhood lives a little boy, about seven or eight years of age, who, when our little ones first went out this spring, took every opportunity he could to tease and even injure them. The little fellow's attacks became, at last, very serious, and finding my remonstrance had no effect upon him when I was out of sight, I made up my mind to call upon his parents, with complaints against him; but that day I was taught a better lesson by my little ones. On their return that day, the younger one said to the other, "I don't love little Thomas, because he throws stones and is a naughty boy."

"Oh, dear Mary!" replied her sister, "but mamma says we must love everybody: so I try and love little Thomas."

"And so will I try, too," said Mary.

In the afternoon when they were out,

little Thomas was standing at his gate, and as they passed, little Jane said to him, "I love you, little Thomas."

The boy immediately went indoors, and they saw no more of him that day. And after this, whenever they saw him, they nodded to him, and repeated, "I love you, little Thomas."

Soon afterwards, while they were one day taking their airing, I sent each of them a bun. Just at that time little Thomas came past, and they both called out, "Little Thomas, have some of my nice bun," at the same time giving him half.

He looked rather foolish, and said, "I don't want so much as that"; but he took what they gave him, and walked quietly up and down by their side.

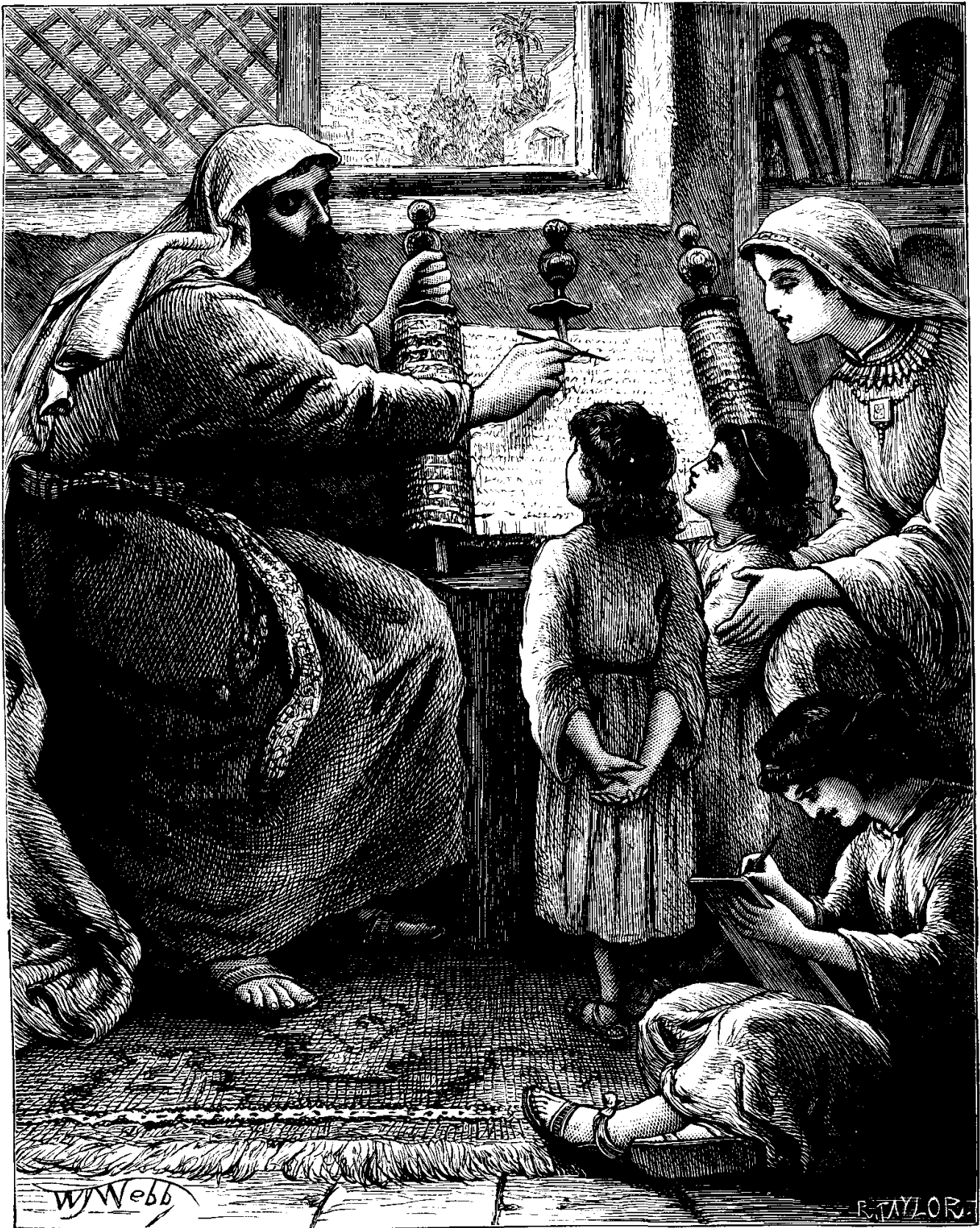
From that time he has gradually become their friend, and is now rather a protector than an annoyance, and his general behaviour is also greatly changed.

Is it not easy to love those who love you? but Christ says, "Love your enemies."—
Extracted.

Teaching the Little Children the Law of the Lord.

YOU remember the Mesusah, of which we spoke on page 120; let us now think of the godly father in Israel, teaching his little children the law of the Lord. In the olden days men had not such nicely shaped books as we now have, but the words of the law of God were written on long pieces of skin, wound up round a roller. In our picture you will observe that the father is holding this roll, and teaching his children from it.

Most particular was the God of Israel that the little children should be taught His commandments, as this one passage suffices to show: "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God." (Deut. xxxi. 12, 13.) And none the less in these our



TEACHING THE LITTLE CHILDREN THE SCRIPTURES.

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days does our God look to godly parents to teach the young His holy Word. In the New Testament we find how that from his babyhood Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures: his godly grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, instructed him well in the holy words which are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus; and as we think of this, we can but say that the early training by a pious mother is the greatest blessing any man can have.

As well as the large rolls or books, there used to be little rolls for the children containing portions of the Scriptures, so that they might be made familiar with the great truths God has revealed, which the scripture says, "belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. xxix. 29.) You observe in the top right-hand corner of our picture several rolls in a cupboard, some of which seem to be the little ones for the children. Indeed the teaching of the word of God to the children was not only insisted upon in the Scriptures, but was practised diligently in Judæa in the times of our Lord. The boy sitting down is busy writing out some portion of the sacred word.

We would earnestly press upon every Christian parent the solemn necessity of teaching the children the great truths of the Bible. Children are ever pleased to search out things in Scripture. They find great interest in looking out for their parents, or, if too young for that, with their parents, Bible truths as to the Holy Trinity; the hatred of God against sin; the greatness of God's love to sinners; the value of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; the everlasting existence of man hereafter; or other great truths God has revealed to us.

Every child in every Christian home should know something at least of such truths, and we are assured that with a parent's encouragement, the children would delight in searching the Scriptures. The Lord bids us search or explore the Scriptures! We look for things when with our children in our walks, and everything we

find in nature fills us with interest. In the word of God there are beauties and wonders in every page, but searching is needed. And in our day those children who have been grounded in the word of God will rise up and call their parents blessed, and in this day of growing infidelity, what greater joy can godly parents have than seeing their children delighting in the word of God?

COUNSEL FOR THE DAY.

FRET not thyself.

Trust in the Lord.

Delight thyself in the Lord.

Commit thy way unto the Lord.

Trust also in Him.

Rest in the Lord.

Fret not thyself.

Read the opening verses of the 37th Psalm. Yes, read them again and again. What King David wrote from the bottom of his heart will help you in your daily life, dear young Christian.

Three times over does David say to us *Fret not thyself* about other people (vv. 1, 7, 8). Let us begin the day with this counsel, *Fret not thyself!* Do not worry about any naughty person.

Trust in the Lord. He rules, orders, protects. Do not try to arrange matters; trust in the Lord. He loves to be trusted; and keep on doing good yourself whatever anyone else may say or do. This is a most healthful occupation. Be busy in doing good yourself, whatever anyone else may be busy in.

Delight thyself also in the Lord. Do not be drawn off from joy in Him, for whatever anyone may say. Keep your heart fixed on Him and you will rejoice. And as you set your heart upon the Lord, so will He give you the desires of your heart. He delights to bless those who delight in Him. A Christian who delights himself in folly must not expect answers to his prayers.

Commit thy way unto the Lord. Take your path to Him and leave it with Him. We often take our troubles, our difficulties to the Lord, but seldom leave them there. Seek for grace to commit them to Him. He is perfect in love and in wisdom. Hand over

your cares to the Lord. If you will keep your hands full of cares be sure you have not handed them over to the Lord.

Trust also in Him. This will follow committing your path to Him. Confide in Him. He will undertake for you. He will arrange the various matters on your way. He will bring it to pass. Do not doubt Him.

Rest in the Lord. Having given over your difficulties to Him, and trusting Him about them, now rest in Him. No earthly friend will do for you what your Lord God will. Wait patiently for His intervention and deliverance. You will glorify Him thus.

Yet one word more. As day by day passes by, and we are tried and tested by what surrounds us—*Fret not thyself!* Fret not thyself is the frame for the picture set out at the beginning of this little paper.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR THE LITTLE ONES.—IV.

Read Matthew ii. 1-12.

THIS chapter tells of something which happened some time after the Lord Jesus was born into this world. We do not know how old He was when the "wise men" came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is He who is born King of the Jews?" but He was still quite a little helpless child, cared for by Mary, His mother.

When He was born, the shepherds, to whom the angel brought "good tidings of great joy" about the Saviour, were out in the fields, minding their sheep in the night. Just at the same time, in a far-away country, those "wise men," of whom you have just been reading, looked up to the sky and saw a star, which they had never seen before, shining down upon them. You may think, when you look up at the sky on a clear night, that there are so many stars, glittering like little points of light, that you would never notice if a new one came. In the country where these men lived the stars shine very brightly; you never saw any starlight so beautiful as that of an Eastern night; and they were so accustomed to look at the stars that they called a great many of them by names, and watched for their shining. When they had

seen this wonderful star they understood that it was the star of the Messiah, the King of the Jews. How do we know that they understood this? Read what they said when they came to Jerusalem: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him."

We cannot tell how long these men were on the journey from their own far-off land to Jerusalem; but one day they arrived, and made their camels kneel down, that they might take off the loads which they carried, and then went about the city seeking for the King. It would not have been hard to find the palace where King Herod dwelt, but he was not the true king of the Jews; a cruel, wicked man, who had no fear of God, was then ruling over His people in Jerusalem; he was not of the family of David, but belonged to the people who had Esau for their father.

When King Herod heard what the wise men were asking, he was troubled. Now, take your Testament, and read the fourth and fifth verses. You see Herod could not answer the question; he would not like to think of the King of the Jews being born; but he had a great meeting of the priests and the scribes who were the most learned men, and asked them where the Messiah was born.

The scribes used to spend a great deal of their time in making copies of the Old Testament, and they answered that a prophet had said long before that He who should rule God's people Israel was to be born at Bethlehem.

Bethlehem is about six miles from Jerusalem. It never was a beautiful city like Jerusalem, but only a village where humble people lived; it was known four thousand years ago, but was then called Ephrata or Ephratah; it was there that Jacob's beloved wife Rachel died, and he set up a pillar over her grave to mark the place. Bethlehem is sometimes called the "city of David," but we remember it most because of its being the birthplace of Christ, "great David's greater Son."

When Herod had heard from these learned

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men that Bethlehem was the place where the Messiah, the true King of the Jews was born, he sent for the strangers secretly, and asked them at what time they had first seen the star, and then he sent them on a message. Read the eighth verse.

Herod said he wanted to know where the young child was that he might worship Him too. The wise men really tried to find Him that they might worship the King of God's people, though they could not say "Where is *our* King?" because they were strangers. We shall soon see why Herod wished to find Him. Now read the ninth and tenth verses.

How glad the wise men must have been to see the star again! "They rejoiced with exceeding great joy," for the same star which had shone in the clear sky of their own country was now going before them, showing them the way, till it "came and stood over where the young child was."

And where was that? We cannot tell in what sort of "house" they found "the young child, with Mary, His mother," but we know that when He was born, there was not room in any house in the village of Bethlehem. He said, when He had spent a good many years in this world, "foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," and where He did lay His infant head was in the manger, in the place where the cattle used to feed.

Whatever the house may have been, however poor and lowly, the wise men knew at once that they had found Him whom they had come from their own far country to seek, and they "fell down and worshipped Him."

God had said long before that the Gentiles should come from far, and should bring gifts to His King, and Matthew, who speaks so much of Christ as King of the Jews, tells us how God's word was fulfilled by these strangers, who were not Jews, coming from their distant land with one thought and one wish. Their thought was that One was born King of the Jews, and their wish to find Him that they might bow before Him, and honour Him with gifts. We are told what those gifts were: they opened their

chests and "presented unto Him gifts—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Gold and incense were brought to God's King, for frankincense and myrrh are sweet-smelling gums which are found flowing from the bark of some trees in Arabia, and were considered costly gifts as long ago as the time when Joseph was sold to the Arabian traders, who were passing by on their way to Egypt to sell the precious loads of spices and perfumes which their camels carried.

Now look at the last chapter but one of this gospel and see whether you can find any Gentiles—people not Jews—who called the Lord Jesus "King of the Jews," not as the wise men did, but in mockery.

See, too, whether you can find where the written words, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," were once placed.

Dear children, we cannot now bring precious gifts, as the wise men did, to the Lord Jesus, but do not forget that God is pleased when even a little child honours His Son in his heart and in his ways.

Bible Subjects.

PEACE.

WE now turn to what God's word, as written to the "churches in Galatia," teaches respecting peace. The burden of the epistle is no doubt familiar to us. We know that the Galatian Christians were, in spirit, getting away from Christ, and were in danger of placing themselves under law. They had hearkened to preaching and teaching which was different from the tidings they had had delivered to them by the apostle. They had given heed to a "different gospel" (see ch. i. 6, and read *different* instead of *another*), "which," says the Scriptures, "is not another," for there is but one gospel of God, and but one faith once delivered to the saints. Yet, because they were God's people, God greeted them with grace and *peace* (ch. i. 3), for our God is a faithful God.

Now, when a man is born again, the great question for him is to give God glory on this earth. How shall this be done? God looks for fruit from us. Legal strivings to be what

we feel we should be, will never make fruit to grow such as God loves. How, then, is fruit acceptable to God to be found in us? It must be of Himself. The Spirit in us brings forth fruit in our lives; and, mark, it is the fruit of the Spirit!

We must resist the enticements of our own hearts to trust in ourselves. Whatever advantage of religious teaching we may enjoy, it is very certain that each one of us has in his own heart an ally to legality. "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (ch. v. 18). And it is God's way to *lead* His children, and our happy path is to seek for grace to follow His leading. Now each of us who can call God our Father can assuredly say we received the Spirit by the hearing of faith. For when we heard the Gospel of God concerning His Son, and when we believed God, He put His Spirit in us. All was of God—all of His grace. We *did* nothing, we simply *received*. No one who has the Spirit would say, "I received Him by the works of the law, by my own efforts, my goodness," and the like (see ch. iii. 2). Now, as we began, so must we go on; therefore for daily life, for fruit-bearing, the Spirit is our power. Let us emphasize this great reality, for many live in a sort of half grace, half legal way, and in their *practical* religion mix up law and grace. If we strive to make self good, instead of seeking to let Christ be everything in us, we are resembling the Galatians.

"Love, joy, peace" (ch. v. 22), are the first triplet in the nine blessed things here spoken of as the Holy Spirit's fruit. Love is of God; and God sheds abroad His love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given us (Rom. v. 5); and where divine love grows in the soil of a human heart, none less than God the Spirit sustains it. Joy of a divine kind will never be far off where such love is. How closely are these connected in John xv. 9-11. The Lord says, "Abide in My love," sets out our path of obedience, and then adds, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you." Following the joy is *peace*. Peace characterizes the believer who is abiding in Christ. Struggling and striving to be saved are not

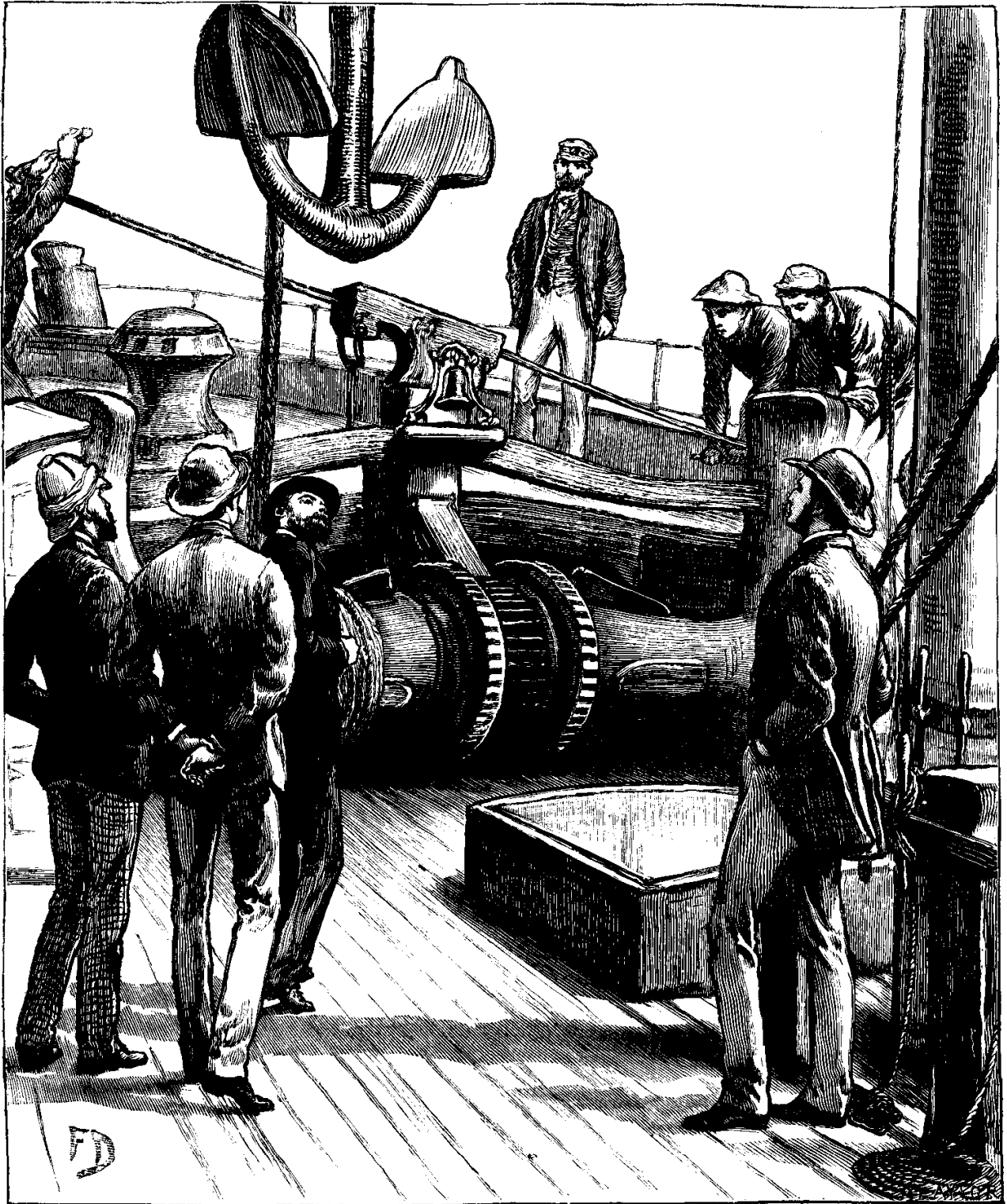
peace; vainglory and envy, if we know we are saved, are not peace; far, far from it. Peace is like the calm lake reflecting heaven on its bosom. None other than God's own hand effects such a result in our souls. May each of us have wrought in us this fruit of God the Spirit!

As we read this verse, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (ch. vi. 16), we can but feel that the apostle was, in effect, saying to these Galatians, "The gospel of God brings peace to its followers!" What was "this rule"? Just this: "neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (verse 15). Do what we may to our mortal bodies, it amounts to nothing; what God requires is new creation; and He alone can create! And if any one is in Christ there is new creation, therefore to seek to apply the law which was given to men in their old nature state to men in Christ, is to be far astray from the good news of God! Let us seek to walk by this rule, and to so conduct ourselves, that in every way Christ and the Spirit may be seen in us.

We spoke of Col. i. 20, on page 75, and add here a few words on Col. iii. 15: "Let the peace of Christ (so it should read) rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." The margin of the R. V. has "arbitrate" for rule. What a blessed arbitrator in our hearts is the peace of the Christ! There used to be a judge or arbitrator in the public games, whose rule was law on those occasions. We who are Christians are now exhorted to be under the rule of the peace of the Christ. If we read from the twelfth verse we shall feel the force of this blessed exhortation. What different Christians should we be from what we often are were we so ruled! How gentle, how forgiving, and how beautifully robed in love! And where such a spirit of peace rules in the hearts of those who are one in Christ and one with each other, we may be sure a praising, thankful state of soul will follow.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



SHIFTING THE ANCHOR.

NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.

THE solemn incident which I am about to relate is a striking comment upon the words of Scripture which form the title of this little paper. My reader will remember that I simply tell what happened before my eyes; there is no need to try to heighten by any exaggerated language the awful reality of a scene which can never pass from my memory.

In the year 1874 I was on a voyage, with some friends, from New York to Jamaica. One evening, after our late dinner, we were talking over an eloquent preacher whom we had heard the Sunday before we left the city. It was a remarkable sermon; the preacher plainly set before us "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," and spoke in earnest words of entreaty to any of his congregation who might still be neglecting God's gracious offer of salvation through the atoning death of His Son, urging them to accept God's mercy without delay. "God's time is *now*," he said—"His word is, 'Now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation,'"—and he closed his solemn appeal by relating some facts from life to show the danger of making light of God's call—that call which is so full of mercy and entreaty, but which, if disregarded in time, may be remembered, when too late, throughout a lost eternity.

Our conversation, which had become very serious, as one and another recalled the words so lately heard, was suddenly broken in upon by one of the party, a young man, about twenty-two years of age, a pleasant, amiable fellow, of good birth and education, and the picture of health and strength.

"I mean to enjoy my life," he said. "Time enough when I am an old man to think about God and heaven. Yes," he went on, as if seeking to entrench himself in his resolution, "I have heard and read that there is forgiveness even at the eleventh hour, so I am sure to have time enough on my death-bed to think about salvation. You fellows are always airing your Christianity; you want people to think you are the only saints!" and, without waiting for a reply, he left the saloon.

How true it is that "we know not what a day may bring forth"; how necessary the warning, so often unheeded, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow"! Little did that poor young man, as he turned on his heel with those boastful, confident words about the "life" which he meant to "enjoy," think that in one moment the slender tenure by which he held that life would fail; that for him there was to be no "death-bed," with its delusive promise—no time "at the eleventh hour" to "think of God and of heaven"—for, quick as the lightning's flash, time would for him be lost in eternity.

It was about two o'clock the next day, and we had just finished lunch, when word was brought that the sailors were busy moving an anchor from the fore-hatch to the fore-castle. Any sight is welcome to break the monotony of life at sea, and we all turned out to see the anchor set in its place. The heavy mass was hanging on the foreyard, just over the passage along which we all had to pass in single file on our way to the fore-castle. The first passed—then another—but as the third followed, with no thought of danger, the sling by which the anchor was held gave way; the crushing weight of metal dropped upon his head, and he was killed in an instant!

The story is easily told, but who shall measure the horror of it? Those on board shuddered and grew pale as they spoke of the terrible "accident" which had happened, and of the young life, so fair in its promise, which had been so suddenly cut short. But to some of us who remembered the conversation in the saloon the night before, the event of this afternoon was terrible indeed.

My reader, do you wonder that I almost shrink from relating this dreadful story?—the young man, in one second of time, full of life, and vigour, and careless gaiety, in the next a crushed and helpless heap, motionless, breathless, *dead*, was he who but eighteen hours before had counted upon old age, and was sure he should have time enough on his death-bed to think of salvation.

About an hour from the time of his sad end, the poor mangled body was "committed to the deep," amid sobs and weeping. The

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effect upon all who were present at that melancholy scene was indescribable. God grant that to many it may have whispered, with accents of solemn authority, the words, "Now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation." It has often been remarked that God's word holds out no promise of salvation for "to-morrow"—no guarantee that there shall be for any of us a to-morrow in this world of death and change. What a mercy it is that His time is always *now*—that the word of Christ is ever, "*Come*." "*Come unto Me*," and "*Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out*." F.

PURPOSE OF HEART.

THE ploughman, with hand upon the plough, cannot look behind: he must keep on with eye steadily fixed on the object before him, for thus He makes straight the furrows. So the Christian must not look back if his testimony is to be worthy of the kingdom of God, but keeping his eye fixed upon Christ steadily go forward. A ploughman with his eye wandering about could not plough straight, neither can a Christian be fit for the kingdom with a wandering purpose.

TRUST IN THE LORD AT ALL TIMES.

IN your most burning heart-sore, He is with you. "In all their afflictions He was afflicted." Cast yourself upon His sympathy. No mother's bosom is so tender to her child as is the pillow of the Lord's heart to His tried people.

TRUST in the Lord at all times—not merely when it is dead calm, but when the storm winds drive your vessel you hardly know whither. Pour out your heart before Him; tell Him all that is in your heart.

REBEL not against the Lord because He smites you, and reproach Him not for His ways with you, for He loves you and yours perfectly.

IT'S AWFU' PLAIN.

WHILE making a few visits in the district in which I live, I knocked at the door of Mrs. ——. Knowing that God had lately been showing to many in the neighbourhood His way of salvation, I asked her, after a little conversation, how long it was since she had known the Lord Jesus as her Saviour? A sad expression came over her face as she said, "Ah, but I am not saved yet!"

I tried to show Mrs. — that God desires that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: and then, turning to the well-known scripture, John v. 24, asked her to read it for herself. As she read the words of Christ, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life," I stopped her, and asked—

"Have you got everlasting life, Mrs. —?"

"I could not say that," she replied, earnestly.

"Then you do not believe what God says to you; read it again."

When Mrs. — had read the verse, I said, "'Hath everlasting life.' I wonder whether God is telling us the truth when He says 'everlasting life'!"

Mrs. — looked startled. "If God says so," she said, slowly, "I must have it."

"Look at your Bible," I said, "and see whether God says so."

Oh, what joy broke over her face when she simply believed the words of Christ, and by trusting those blessed words knew that she had "everlasting life"; knew that she should "not come into condemnation," but had "passed from death unto life."

Presently, turning to a young girl, about fifteen years of age, Mrs. — said to her—

"Oh, M., don't *you* see it? It's awfu' plain."

Before long, M. too received the truth of God's salvation, and ran home to tell her father and mother that she knew the Lord Jesus as her own Saviour. Before I left, the husband came in, and as soon as the wife saw him she said, in her simplicity—

"Oh, let Willie see it! let Willie see it!"

"Only God can give him eyes to see," I said.

"Only speak to him, as you spoke to me," pleaded the wife; and I did speak to her husband, but he had not yet seen himself to be a lost sinner, in need of salvation, and so, for the time at least, the words fell upon careless ears. God grant that he may yet know what it is to be one of those "lost" ones whom Christ came to seek and to save! R. M.

NOT THAT WAY.

"OH, yes; I am going to heaven!" a woman said to me not long ago.

"How do you know that?" I asked her. "You are by nature a sinner, and God cannot have sin in His presence."

"Yes," she answered, "I know I am a sinner, but I am trusting to the mercy of God."

She looked surprised when I said to her, "You will never get to heaven that way. It is of no use for you to hope for the mercy of God at the last; God is *love*, but He is also *light* (1 John i. 5, and iv. 8 and 16), and, though He is 'not willing that any should perish' (2 Peter iii. 9), He is of 'purer eyes than to behold evil' (Hab. i. 13). To imagine that after a life of sin, heaven can be entered because God is merciful and kind, is a delusion. God *is* love; He *so loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life; but by that very gift is displayed not only His love but His righteousness. At the cross of Christ the love and mercy of God to sinners were fully manifested, and manifested righteously. To trust, therefore, to the 'mercy of God' apart from Christ is to ignore the wondrous sacrifice that has been offered."

"I pray," said another poor woman, "I pray to God *so* earnestly every night."

"What do you pray for?" we asked; "God has given *His Son*: what more *can* He give? The question is 'have you accepted what God offers you—eternal life in Christ?' The work has been finished; God has fully proved His love; Christ has died for the ungodly; He has risen, and now is glorified on the right hand of God—a perfect Saviour. B.

SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST.

"WELL, B., I wish you knew the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. The Gospel 'is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth'; and if you only knew God, His power would preserve you—body and soul—from evil."

"And don't I believe, sir?"

"Indeed you do not, B., for if you did, you would be saved, and know you were, too."

"But how can any one know that, sir?"

"A man knows it when he believes God's word. And there is this also: 'By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.' There is that blessed company on the earth now—God's children, who are known to be such by loving one another. For example, if you, B., were a true Christian, you would love me as a fellow Christian."

"Oh, I don't think people can be so sure as all that."

Such was the substance of a conversation I had with my driver one morning as we drove past T—, in the county of S—. B., poor man, was addicted to intemperance, had several times "taken the pledge," but as often broken it; and having quite recently broken through afresh, he that morning bore upon his face unsightly indications of his dreadful propensity. He had heard little, and knew less, of the power of God's blessed grace to preserve him from sin and its terrible consequences.

We drove on some miles, to a locality to which my duties called me, and on our way I pointed to a respectable-looking farmer's homestead, where, I presumed, we should be allowed to feed the horse whilst I executed my duty. On my return, the farmer's wife accosted me with the kindest affability, offering her hand, and saying, "You are a Christian, I presume, sir?"

"Yes, thank God, I am," I replied.

The greeting—all the more welcome, because so unusual and unexpected—being over, she assembled her family together, and we spent a refreshing hour looking at the unfolding of the grace of God given to us in Luke xv.

I was quite at a loss to know the means by which the Lord had opened the woman's heart in the way He had towards me, and how He had brought those He loved thus together. On enquiry, the following account was given me. My driver, having attended to his horse, entered the kitchen and sat down by the fire. Then, seeking to elicit sympathy in his unbelief, he related what I had been saying to him. But, so far was he from succeeding in his purpose, that his story became the means by which Mrs. — discovered a fellow believer! and this not only to poor B.'s confusion, but also in illustration of what I had been saying to him that morning!

How wretched is unbelief! It will accept sympathy from any quarter in the "broad road," rather than yield to the light which makes its rebellious character manifest. God's word presses upon the conscience, for weak man is dimly sensible that he, guilty as he is, has to do with his righteous Creator; and he cannot get on without the sympathy of his fellows in unbelief, which in self-will he seeks, unless he turns to the outstretched everlasting arm, and then proves the tenderness and mercy of divine love. How blessed to be enfolded in those everlasting arms, and feasted by that matchless love! Those "without" may feel envious, and essay to mock or despise; but, hearing the sound of "music and dancing" of heavenly sort "within," they must own in their consciences, if not with their lips, "Happy is the people that is in such a case; yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord."

J. K.

OUR STANDPOINT.

THE horizon of a man standing upon a plain is limited to a few miles, while that of a man standing on a high mountain is almost measureless. Our idea of what is around us is according to our standpoint, and it is generally the case, that the less a man sees, the more he thinks he knows. This is distinctly so in Christian things—for the narrower a Christian's horizon, the more positive he is about the things lying beyond it, which are utterly out of his knowledge.

We strongly advise every Christian to exercise his soul by climbing the mountain at times, and thence let him take a good look round at what God is doing for the glory of Christ in saving sinners and cheering on His saints. He will get a sight that will enlarge his soul. He will come back to his own circle a wiser and humbler man.

Let us set the goodness of God before our eyes, and not so much the badness of our times! The great prophet of Israel thought he was the only man left in Israel who had not bowed to Baal, but Jehovah showed him there were seven thousand like himself, whose knees He had kept, and whom He had rescued from idolatry for His own glory. Looking at our own things, and not at the things of others, we become mournful prophets; we grow apt to judge of the people of God by the measure of our own small ideas, and in secret we are ready to say, "I, only I, am left alone to serve Thee."

From the mountain top we shall see what the Lord is doing amongst His people, and what, by His grace, they are doing in His strength; and, having seen the zeal, holiness, and love of very many of His people, we shall return to our small corner, and, looking around, discover that what we considered was our breadth of vision was simply the result of looking at our things from the low place of our own standpoint.

EXTRACTS FROM SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

WHEN I look to my guiltiness, I see my salvation, one of our Saviour's greatest miracles, either in heaven or earth. I am sure I may defy any man to show me a greater wonder. ONLY my loathsome wretchedness and my wants have qualified me for Christ, and the riches of His glorious grace. He behoved to take me for nothing.

FAITH apprehends pardon, but never pays a penny for it.

IN conversion, all the winning is in the first buying. Many lay false foundations, and take up conversion at their foot, and get Christ for as good as half nothing, and had never a sick night for sin; and this maketh loose work.

SEEKING A SIGN.

SOME time ago I was sent for to visit an elderly gentleman who was ill. He had lived for this world, for money-making, but now in his declining days the money for which he had toiled so hard brought him no comfort. He was anxious about the future, for he felt he was without "hope and without God in the world." (Eph. ii. 12.) He knew the plan of salvation in theory, but did not know the Lord, whom to know is eternal life. (John xvii. 3.)

I read to him scriptures on sins being laid on Christ (Isa. liii. 6); sins borne on the cross (1 Pet. ii. 24); sin put away (Heb. ix. 26); sins forgotten by God (Heb. x. 17).

After reading these blessed scriptures he said, "I see it all—it's very clear—but I want to feel something here," laying his hand upon his breast, "so that I could be sure God had pardoned my sins."

I said, "You are seeking a sign, are you?"

"Yes," he replied, "I am wanting a sign from God that I am saved; then I could be happy."

"You will never get a sign of your salvation until you are saved, until you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," I said. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John v. 10.)

This remark of mine brought out from the old gentleman the following:—

"My dear departed wife," he said, "was a very happy Christian, but at one time in her life she had doubts of her salvation, and she remained in darkness for a long time. But one night she dreamt she was standing by the side of a lake, and she saw floating upon the surface of the water a girdle. Whilst she was gazing at it someone said to her, 'Go, get the girdle, and put it on.' She did so, and on looking at it she saw written upon it in letters of gold these words, 'Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.' (Eph. i. 4.) She awoke; it was but a dream. But," continued he, "from that time to the day of her death she never had a doubt about her salvation; and I want a sign like that."

In reply to what I could only regard in him as a superstitious trust in a dream, I

said, "You remind me very much of a king we read of in the word of God (2 Kings xx. 1-11) who received a message from God by the lips of a prophet, saying, 'Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.' He at once believed it, and 'turned his face to the wall.' The same day, perhaps the same hour, the same prophet returned with a different message—one of life—'I will heal thee' (ver. 5); but the king would not believe that without a sign. You have believed the message of death—you own you deserve eternal death—but will not believe the message of life without a sign. God has never promised to give you one. He gives us His word in which to trust." After prayer I left.

A few days after, I was sent for to see him again, as he was in great misery of soul. Whilst I was reading the word of God to him the doctor entered, and I left. I returned a few hours after, and to my surprise I found him bright and joyous.

"After you left this morning," he said, "these words of the Lord Jesus came to my mind with power, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.' (John vi. 29.) I believe, and I know I am saved."

Now, dear reader, are you seeking Christ? Then look not for a sign, for that is unbelief. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar." (1 John v. 10.) You may think that looking within your own heart for feelings of some kind is a pious exercise, but it is after all but the fruit of self-righteousness, and is dishonouring to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. God testifies of His Son in His word, and you are rejecting His testimony. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him." (John v. 23.) It is dishonouring the work of the Son, and despising the work of the Spirit, who has shown you your need, and now points you to the Lord Jesus Christ. Look away from self—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29)—and then you will be filled with peace and joy in believing. God grant this to you!

J. H. J.—G.

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I WILL COME AGAIN.

JOHN xiv. 3.

IT was just like the blessed Lord, that when speaking to His disciples of leaving His own in this world, He should say to their sad hearts, "Let not your heart be troubled . . . I will come again."

They had been with Him from the commencement of His ministry; they had just eaten with Him the last passover; Judas had received the sop, and had gone out to betray Him, and then the Lord uttered these striking words: "Now is the Son of Man glorified;" words, the meaning of which He alone could then understand. He was looking beyond the things around Him, beyond the darkness and the storm of the awful hour which was approaching, and on to the glory with which God should glorify Him. He had come down to earth from heaven to accomplish His Father's will, and foreseeing that will accomplished, He spoke of the glory into which He should enter after its accomplishment—the glory wherewith God should crown Him, and He said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified."

Now it was when thus speaking of God straightway glorifying Him, that He announced the news of His going away, which made the hearts of His own so sad. Yes, His words conveyed no pleasant tidings to their ears. Jesus distinctly said to them, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you." They had left all to follow Him; and now He for whom they had left all was Himself about to leave them. Yet they seemed not fully to understand Him. The Lord addressed them as "little children." Full well He knew the weakness of each one of that little company. But if they understood Him not, they loved Him indeed; and the loving zeal of one had led him to say, "Lord, I will lay down my life for Thy sake." They knew not their own weakness, nor comprehended the solemn moment fast approaching when the strength of each of them would be tested, and each would learn for himself his feebleness.

If the disciples failed to understand what the Lord's going away would be to them, and if the thought of His going away led them to despond, the Lord would stay them upon Himself, saying, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me." And further, He gave them words which have filled and still fill the hearts of multitudes with gladness: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Blessed, beautiful promise! Consoling, comforting hope of God's suffering people! Received in simple faith, these words raise the heart above the darkest earthly prospects, and the hope they bring before us loosens the tongue to sing of His unfathomable love.

"I will come again, and receive you unto Myself!" O suffering, desponding, sorrowing people of God, let the glorious words of the all-sufficient Christ, like the fresh, cooling rain on the withering grass, refresh your drooping hearts! "I will come." Consider His "I will," and melody shall be made in your hearts unto Him.

When the Lord told His disciples He was going away, Peter, with zeal not according to knowledge, said, "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now?" But the great work of salvation had not been accomplished then. He had not then made a way of life for His people through death—a way right up to glory, and how could any follow Him until He had opened the way? Now the gracious work is done, and God has raised the Accomplisher of the work from the dead, and has thereby declared His unbounded satisfaction in what His Son has wrought.

The risen Christ was seen on earth of His disciples forty days. At the end of that time He led His disciples out from Jerusalem as far as to Bethany, and while in the act of blessing them, He was parted from them, and was carried up into heaven, and a cloud received Him out of their sight,

As they adoringly gazed on Him ascending higher and higher to the heavens, surely each heart beat with mingled feelings of rapture and of sorrow. They stood beholding the wondrous sight, the like of which none had ever witnessed before. They steadfastly beheld the ascending Saviour, and still stood gazing into heaven, when two men in white apparel came and stood near them, who also said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts i. 11.) Having seen Him carried up into heaven, and being told that this same Jesus would come in like manner, the disciples "worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." (Luke xxiv. 52, 53.)

Dear Christian reader, you too are looking for the coming of this "same Jesus." He is coming to receive you unto Himself. Are you living in expectation of meeting Him? Is it the great source of joy to your heart that this same blessed Jesus is so soon to come again? The same Jesus in whom all your eternal welfare is centred; the same Jesus who was wounded for your transgressions, and was bruised for your iniquities, and was forsaken of God for you; the same Jesus who died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God; enduring untold agony and shame, and who suffered for you the unmingled judgment of God. Does not your heart hear Him say to you, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself?" It is His own beautiful promise, and soon, oh, how soon, He will fulfil it.

Think of the purpose of His coming for you. Seek to enter into the deep love of His heart, as He says, "That where I am there ye may be also." And where is He? In the glory of God and with the Father. There He would have you also, along with Himself. Think of the object of His heart! Hear His words: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory,

which Thou hast given Me." Nothing short of this will satisfy His heart of love! The Lord Jesus is looking on to that moment when He shall "descend from heaven," and when all His own shall "meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) W. M.



Buried in the Sand.

LATE in the afternoon of one bright day a group of merry, light-hearted children were playing by the seashore, not far from their parents' dwellings. The group consisted of five in number, while their ages varied from a tiny boy of about four years of age to a rosy-cheeked girl of nine. Three girls and two boys formed the members of the little party. Very bright and happy they all looked as they stood together on the shore of the beautiful bay they so dearly loved. Yes, it was pleasant to stand by the side of the moving waters and to watch the white-crested waves, as one by one they came creeping in to the sandy beach at their feet.

For some time, charmed by the soft rippling music of the waters, the children stood and watched the ceaseless ebb and flow of the snowy waves. But they tired of this occupation at length, and sought for recreation of some other kind.

Wooden spades were at hand, and as the evening was a little chilly, Nina, evidently the leader of the little party, led her companions to a sheltered spot beneath the neighbouring cliff. Here they might carry out their childish play in shelter and comfort. It was not long ere boys and girls were all busy at their mimic labours.

Sweeter and sweeter sounded the rippling of the advancing waters as the children worked on at their new occupation. Half-an-hour had passed, and still their task was not completed; but the setting of the sun in the distance reminded them that it was almost time to return to their fathers' dwellings.

But their work must not be left unfinished. Already eager little eyes were glowing with delight at the success of their united labours. Five minutes more, and their triumph would be complete.

And Nina, as we have said, leader and director of the little party, issues her orders and gives advice and encouragement in all directions. Her merry voice may be heard higher than the others, and her ringing laugh echoes more distinctly along the overhanging cliffs. Look at her now! See! She is kneeling on the soft damp sand, trying to put a finishing touch to the miniature tunnel which the children have just constructed. Her

lips are parted with evident satisfaction at the result of her suggestions, while her bright blue eyes seem to catch some reflection of the golden sunset, and to light up her rosy cheeks with more than their usual brilliance. One hand rests against the steep sandbank at her side, by which means she supports herself as she bends over the hollow entrance.



THE SANDS.

ness, and no more! A minute later, and a large heap of sand is all that is to be seen on the spot where the children had stood. A sandbank had slipped, and buried little Nina and two of her companions beneath it.

Terrified and affrighted, the little ones called loudly for aid. Ready help was at hand. Strong men with willing hands rushed to the rescue. Thank God! The two little ones are safe. Fresh air and cold water will soon revive them.

But what of poor little Nina? Ah! They come to the little prostrate body at last. Scarcely five minutes have elapsed since the sandbank fell; but little Nina no longer breathes. Her spirit has passed away for ever. Yes, death has come to her in the midst of her play. By the side of the rippling waters, and beneath the shelter of the majestic cliffs, little Nina had been called away from this beautiful world. Suddenly, and without one word of warning, the dear little girl had been ushered into eternity.

How many of my dear young readers are longing to ask, "Did Nina love Jesus? Oh, tell us that!"

Dear boys, dear girls, how I wish that I could answer your question. But I do not know. I could not learn that she did; none could tell me that she had ever owned Jesus as her Saviour.

Then perhaps you will say, "Why, why did you tell us this sad story?"

I will tell you why, dear children. It is just because I want to ask you, Are you ready to die? If death were to surprise you in the midst of your play, as it did little Nina, would your happy little spirits pass into the presence of the loving Saviour? Jesus died to save you, and to make you fit to enter the heavenly mansions which He has prepared for them that "believe" on Him. Have you trusted Him, and are your sins washed away in His precious blood? If not, dear boys, dear girls, come to Him at once. He waits to receive you. His arms of love stand wide open to welcome you. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. Oh, how safe are the lambs for whom He careth! Yes, safe for time and safe for eternity. Not one thing can happen to them without His knowledge. Life and death are in His hands, and no harm can come to the sheep for whom He has died.

Trust Him, dear little reader, and even should He see fit to call you away as suddenly as poor little Nina, you will pass joyfully into the Saviour's presence, knowing that your sins have been washed away in His precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin.

M. V. B.

LITTLE FREDDIE AND THE SNOW.

MY dear little children, I am going to tell you about a little boy named Freddie. Two or three days before he was going to start on a long journey, to be away for a long while from his home and all his brothers and sisters, I thought I would have a talk with him, to see if he was afraid of anything happening to him on the journey. So I said to him, "Freddie, suppose the train got blocked on the line by snow (for the snow was very deep where he was going), or an accident should occur, do you know where you would go if you were killed?"

He smiled and said, "Oh, yes."

Then I said, "Can you tell me where?"

What do you think he said? —

"To heaven."

Well, this little boy said he was going to heaven, so I said to him, "How do you know you would go there?"

Then he said, "Because Jesus washed my sins away in His blood."

Ah, Freddie knew the way to that beautiful place. What was it that Freddie knew? Why, he knew if he came to Jesus, and "believed" on Him, he would be saved, and so he had come.

Dear little children, will you come to Him now, this very minute? Do not wait any longer. Come now, and own to the Lord your deep need of Him. Will you come to Him now, and live for ever, always to know the Saviour's love and compassion? Once more, dear little readers, will you come?

It does not matter how small you are or how weak you are, you may come, for the dear Saviour Himself said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

M. McB.

Faithful unto Death.

THIS is a picture of a Roman soldier. You notice his strong helmet, and his spear, and shield, and the calm, steadfast expression of his face. He looks like a man who would shrink from no danger in the path of duty—like one who could be "faithful unto death." The story about this soldier is very

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beautiful, both in itself and because of the beautiful things of which it reminds us, and it is a story which was not told until long, long after the brave man of whom it speaks had passed away. But, before we speak about this soldier who was faithful unto death, tell me whether you can remember anything about soldiers in the Bible. Ah! I see you have thought of a good many places where soldiers are mentioned. Remember that they were generally Roman soldiers, not Jewish ones. Roman soldiers, dressed like this one in the picture, crowned the Lord Jesus with a crown of thorns, and mocked Him, and, when they had crucified Him, made four parts of His garments, to every soldier a part—for there were four of them there on that solemn day; it was a Roman soldier who lifted his spear to pierce the side of the blessed Saviour, who had just given up His life for such as he was; and it was the centurion, the captain of those soldiers, who said, "Certainly this was a righteous Man; truly this was the Son of God." It was to Roman soldiers, too, that Peter was delivered, that they might guard him safely; and you remember how, when the light shined in the prison and the angel's voice was heard, Peter was asleep. He was quietly sleeping, with one of these soldiers on each side of him, and outside the door others were standing—keeping guard, just as the soldier in the picture stands.

The first thing a soldier has to learn is to obey. This is true in the case of all soldiers, but if a Roman soldier disobeyed it would cost him his life. You remember how the keeper of the prison at Philippi, when he thought the prisoners had escaped, drew his sword, and was just going to kill himself. He might well be frightened, for it was his business to keep them safely, and it would have cost him his life if he had let them go.

But the soldier in the picture is not one of those mentioned in the Bible: we should know nothing about him if his bones had not been found long, long after his death. And now you shall hear the story about him, and you will understand why we say that he was faithful unto death.

You have all heard of the beautiful Bay of Naples, and perhaps you may have seen a picture of it, with the burning mountain, Vesuvius. Beside this bay, at the time when our Lord was on earth, there was a wonderfully beautiful city, called Pompeii. If you had gone to the place a few years after—even before the Apostle John had died—you would have found no fair city there; it had quite disappeared, and nothing but black desolation was left behind in the midst of that lovely country and beside that blue, sunny sea.

The people of Pompeii were very light-hearted and careless, and, though they knew that all was not safe—for more than once an earthquake had given warning of danger—they still went on building their beautiful villas higher and higher up the sunny slopes of the mountain. At last the day came when sudden destruction burst upon the fair city, with its gay, careless people. One bright August morning, as they looked to the mountain top, they saw a sudden column of black smoke shoot up into the cloudless Italian sky. The pillar of blackness spread out until it looked like a great pine tree, wrapping the city in its shade. A darkness like that of night came over everything, while again and again a lightning flash showed for a moment the pale faces of men, women, and children, who knew not what was coming upon them.

A few moments, and a thick shower fell, not of gentle rain, but of ashes. Presently, instead of ashes, small stones, hot from the burning mountain, poured all around. Then thick, black mud ran like a torrent down the mountain; none could stop it or turn it aside—on it came, rolling through the lovely gardens, blocking up the streets, filling the houses. Some of the people who had tried to find refuge in the country round were killed by the falling cinders, and their bodies lay in the open fields or scattered along the shore. Many escaped in time; but the destruction of the city was so sudden and so terrible that, in three days from that August morning when the pillar of smoke first appeared, nothing was to be seen



THE FAITHFUL SOLDIER.

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We may now read the account of what befell the city of Pompeii in a letter written by a young Roman, who lost some of his relations there; but, as time went on, people began to forget all about it. A green mantle of grass covered the black mud, and soon vines, with their rich clusters of grapes, were trailing over the desolate places. Then houses were built, and busy people lived in them, and got up in the morning and went to bed at night with no thought of the old city which lay buried beneath.

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And so the years went on, until more than seventeen hundred had passed away. At last somebody thought of digging deep below the grass and the vines, and the old city, which had so long been buried away out of sight and out of mind, was found. Strange things were discovered in the search which was then made, and it was plain that a very sudden ruin had come upon that city, with its splendid houses, where the gay people had lived so thoughtlessly. In one street there was a baker's shop, and the loaves which he had put into the oven were still there; he had fled for his life, never thinking of what he might be leaving behind.

But at the chief gate of the city was found one who did not fly—the Roman soldier of whom we may indeed say that he was faithful—"faithful unto death." He was young and strong, and might well have saved himself, but he was a sentinel—his duty was to stand at the gate and guard the way, and so there he stood, as the ashes fell around him, covering his mouth with his cloak. But it was no passing shower; thicker and faster the dreadful rain of ashes fell, until at last they buried the brave, faithful soldier—buried him until, after all these hundreds of years, he was found, still grasping his spear with one hand and with the other covering his face. And this is how the story of his death has told itself; so that we cannot mistake it, though we know nothing of his life—not even his name. "Faithful unto death" the soldier had been whose skeleton still stood at the gateway, and faithful, too, was the gentle dove whose skeleton was found in a little niche overlooking the garden of one of the beautiful houses of Pompeii. Those who found her there must indeed have wondered: they must have asked, "Why did *she* not fly—why not spread her soft wings and leave the scene of danger and death far behind?" Ah, her story, too, was soon told; beneath the bony breast, once so fair and warm, lay an egg—she would not leave it.

Dear children, I am sure you think that it is a beautiful thing to be faithful. You will find a great deal in the Bible about it, for "faithful men" are spoken of there, as well

as those to whom it shall be said, "Well done, good and faithful servant." The Roman soldier was faithful because it was his duty; he just did the right thing, looking for no reward. The dove was faithful because of the "kindness which God has put into the heart of His creatures"—by what we call an instinct of her nature she was forced to stay and protect her young. But to those who are faithful to Him now, the Lord Jesus has promised a reward, for He says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

But we can only be faithful, dear children, even in the least things, if we know the Lord Jesus Christ, and how He has proved His faithfulness to God and to us.

We are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews to "consider Christ Jesus who was faithful to Him who appointed Him," and it is well for us to think of the way in which, when He was forsaken by all, the Son of God, who had said, "I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me," did that will to the very uttermost, becoming "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It is well, too, for us to remember that He is now "crowned with glory and honour." God has owned His faithfulness, and given Him a "Name above every name;" and there is a time coming when He, who in obedience to His Father's will laid down His life that He might take it again, will have around Him all those redeemed by His precious blood, the fruit of His faithfulness unto death, of whom He said, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me, where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

THE BLUECOAT BOYS' CUSTOM.

THE writer was, not long since, passing through one of the most crowded and busy of the streets of London, when the traffic was suddenly stopped to enable a procession of some hundreds of boys to pass by. The eyes of the multitude were directed to the

lads, each of whom, according to ancient custom, had a piece of paper upon his breast, with these three words printed thereon in large letters: "HE IS RISEN."

As the bluecoat boys filed along, the constant repetition of the words "He is risen" seemed to bid every believer in the crucified Saviour to declare, "He is not here—He is risen." Were this great truth as clearly borne upon the hearts of God's people as the words were upon the bluecoat boys' garments, there would be henceforth an end to doubts and fears of being saved in the people of God; and not only so—what a grand life-testimony would be rendered by the vast company of God's people in this Christ-rejecting world, had each one ever on his breast these gracious and mighty words, "He is risen."

And what a testimony to Christ Himself is such a word written on the heart—"He is risen"! He who died for us, who passed through earth's trials and sorrows for us—He is risen. Our Lord and Master is here no longer, but in heaven, and whither He has gone we are going. Our commands come from our Lord who is above. We are not of the world, as He is not of it. Ah! in this busy life how would the world at large stop, as it were, to observe God's people had they upon their hearts these words, "He is risen." Seek, dear young friends who love the Lord, to present to onlookers a holy and heavenly testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ, who died and rose again, and who will so soon come again to call us home, that where He is we may be also.

SPEAK THE TRUTH.

LISTEN, boys and girls, to these words of God: "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are His delight." (Prov. xii. 22.) Avoid lying; it is an awful snare, as well as an awful sin. God hates lying. He very often punishes lying lips in this life, and He has said that "without" his beautiful city is "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." (Rev. xxii. 15.) Tell the truth at all costs. God knows your inmost heart, and tell the truth, remembering His eye is looking right down into your soul.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR THE LITTLE ONES.—V.

(Read Matthew ii. 13-23.)

YOU remember how King Herod had told the wise men that they must go and search diligently for the young Child, and when they had found Him, bring him word again, that he might come and worship Him also.

Why did they not return to the king?

It was because God took care of them; He did not allow them to go back to Jerusalem. That cruel King Herod never saw them again, for God sent word to them in a dream, telling them not to go him. They went back again to the far country from whence they had come, but they had found Him who was born King of the Jews, and they had seen Him, and laid their treasures at His feet. They had not come in vain, the great wish that God had put into their hearts had been fulfilled, for they had worshipped His King.

King Herod had said just what the wise men had said. They said, "We are come to worship the King of the Jews;" and Herod said, "I wish to come and worship Him, too."

But God, who knows all the thoughts of our hearts, knew what Herod's thought about Him who was born King of the Jews was. In the first verse you read, we see that God told Joseph, the husband of Mary, not to stay any longer at Bethlehem.

In the dream which God sent him, Joseph heard these words, "Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

Then this was why Herod wished to find Jesus; he wanted to kill Him; that was really the thought that was in his heart, though he had spoken such good words about wanting to bow down before Him, and do Him honour.

The land of Egypt was some way off, but Joseph did not wait for the morning to come before he started to go there. It was still night, and the stars were shining down from

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the sky when the young Child, with Mary, His mother, began the journey, and fled away from the cruel purpose of the King. God watched over the young Child, and no one could hurt Him. There was another reason, too, why, when the Lord Jesus was so very young, He was taken to the land of Egypt. If you read the fifteenth verse again, you will find that reason plainly told. God's prophet had said, long before this time, that God had called His Son out of Egypt; and all that God's prophets have spoken must be fulfilled.

When was that word which the prophet Hosea had spoken brought to pass?

We do not know how long it was after the journey by night down into Egypt that God sent Joseph another dream. You may read in the twentieth verse the very words which he heard as he lay asleep in that strange country. An angel of the Lord said to him once more, "Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life."

Yes, the wicked king was dead. How dreadful to think that, though men called him Herod the Great, what God tells us about him is that he tried to kill His holy Child Jesus!

You have been reading how he tried to kill Him; how, that he might be quite sure of putting Him to death, he killed all the children in Bethlehem, from those who were infants in their mothers' arms to those who were just able to run about, and call their parents' names! The poor mothers loved their little children as much as your mothers love you, but they could do nothing to save them; they could only mourn and cry, and no one could comfort them, because their little boys were gone.

Where did Joseph and Mary intend to go, after the word of God's prophet had come to pass, and His Son come back from Egypt?

The twenty-second verse tells us that he feared to go to Judæa, the country where Jerusalem is. Jerusalem was the royal city of King David, but Christ, the Son of David,

did not go there. Herod's son was king now; he was a cruel man, like his father, and Joseph was afraid of him. Perhaps he might not have known where God wished him to take the young Child and His mother, but once again God told him in a dream just what to do. Joseph was to take Christ, the Son of David to Galilee. Ask some one to show you this country on the map, and then see whether you cannot find for yourself the town of Nazareth.

I am sure you can find it, and you will not forget the name of the place where the Lord Jesus had His home when He was a child. Nazareth is not spoken of once in the Old Testament. The name of the town means a branch, and it was not at all a grand place, but lay far away among the hills, which are green in spring time, with soft grass full of sweet and gay flowers. You remember that this was the town where Joseph and Mary lived before they went to Bethlehem. They came back now to their old home, and the holy Child grew up in a place which was thought so little of that a man of Galilee once wondered that "any good thing" could come from it. It was three days' journey from Jerusalem, and the poor people who lived there did not even speak so correctly as the people of Judæa.

But it was not because it was Mary's home that they went to live at this poor place. Look once again at the last words you read, and you will see that the reason is given: "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."

Here we find another name given to the Lord Jesus; not "Emmanuel," God with us; not "Jesus," Jehovah, the Saviour; not "Son of David;" but "Nazarene."

No prophet had spoken exactly these words about Christ: "He shall be called a Nazarene," but more than one had said He should be despised and thought nothing of, and this is just what the name means. The blessed Son of God grew up in this world a poor Man, among poor people, in a place which everyone despised. He was despised and rejected of men.

Bible Subjects.**PEACE.**

WE are coming to the end of our volume, and can speak only of a few verses out of the many that remain on the subject of peace. We shall do best to look at the practical and experimental side of the subject. Most gracious are the divine teachings respecting peace which we find in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians. In effect verses 6 and 7 say to us, Give God your cares, and God will keep your hearts with His peace. Do not worry about anything, but in everything make known to God the special things that you really need by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, then God will put into your heart, as a garrison, His peace through Christ Jesus. Perhaps nothing like a well-garrisoned heart proves to others that the believer has been to God, and is walking with God. How differently do some of God's people bear their trials from others; some have their hearts kept by the peace of God, others are in confusion or overwhelmed, for in the day of trial we find that we cannot keep ourselves. Let us seek for grace to carry out the exhortation of verse 6, for then we shall not lack the blessing of verse 7. We say, seek for grace, for no one can in his own strength fulfil such an exhortation, but God will give the grace where there is true waiting upon Him.

Then again says the apostle, in effect, in verse 8, Occupy your mind with things in which God has pleasure, and, in verse 9, practise them, then you shall have the blessed nearness and companionship of the God of peace. If our children occupy themselves with things we approve not, we cannot have companionship with them. Our practical state of heart is in question in these verses, and the blessings they propose to us will be ours so far as we, by grace, carry out the conditions on which the blessings will be realized.

St. James gives us, through the Spirit, a solemn yet sweet word on peace (ch. iii. 18) — "The fruit of righteousness is sown in

peace of them that make peace." Read the whole chapter. What a searching word it is to us!

Men guide great ships with a little rudder, and direct powerful horses with a very small bit; but who is he that has a helmsman's hand upon his tongue? A child by dropping a little lighted match may burn down a forest, and by the fire of the tongue the prosperity of whole communities of men is consumed.

Oh, these our untamable tongues! Men tame lions and other wild beasts, "but the tongue can no man tame."

Ah! how this unruly evil shows us what we really are in our spiritual progress. How the secret state of our hearts is laid bare by the tongue! Our very mouths have each in them that which is "full of deadly poison." What a call is this for prayer to the Lord to set His watch at the door of our lips! The very mouth that has opened to let out the glad throng of words of praise to our God opens again to send forth its dark utterances against our fellow men. The contradictory tongue is a marvel of misery.

But let none of us be deceived, the secret of an unruly tongue is a low state of soul, a carnal condition, a wisdom that is earthy, animal, devilish — not by any manner of means of God. But heavenly wisdom, that which comes from above, is first pure—it is the result of nearness to God Himself. God is holy, God is light: in Him is no darkness at all. The first thing then in this heavenly wisdom is its pureness. Meekness of wisdom, not smartness or overbearing ways, characterises the truly wise, that is the heavenly wise! How lovely is this wisdom—peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated; how wealthy—full of mercy and good fruits; how holy—without partiality, without hypocrisy! Blessed are the peacemakers; happy before God are they "that make peace." They sow righteousness in peace, and the result of such sowing is holy fruit.

If there is any one practical thing more to be sought after than another by the Christian it is "the wisdom that is from above."

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE TWO RAILWAY GUARDS.

THE TWO RAILWAY GUARDS.

A MISSION was being carried on in our village, and a large hall was crowded every night; many remained to the after meeting, some deeply anxious about their souls, a few merely from curiosity. Among the latter was a young man, a guard on the railway: honest and upright, of a free and amiable disposition, beloved by all who knew him. But to him the love of Jesus was but an empty sound; it had never yet awakened a responsive echo in his heart; and even now, after hearing it pressed home with unusual earnestness and power, he remained scoffing and indifferent. Engaged at the other end of the room, I saw one of the preachers, himself a young man, in earnest conversation with him, and, having presently to pass that way, I overheard the latter part of their conversation. The evangelist was urging upon the young man the necessity of accepting Christ now.

"I mean to have Christ by and by, but not just yet," the young man replied.

"But you may never again have the opportunity," said the evangelist, solemnly.

"I'll chance it," was the careless answer.

"But think—if you should be called to meet God to-night, with your sins still upon you, how would you do?"

"I'll chance it," he said again, and turned away.

I felt extremely sorry at the time for this young man, but more sad when, a month or two later, I heard of his death. It did not come upon him unawares, for, some time before, the doctors gave no hope of his recovery; but, with death staring him in the face, he again rejected Christ, and died, as he had lived, taking his "chance" for eternity!

Ah, how solemnly true is it that there can be no such a thing as chance with God! He has presented to man a free salvation through the death of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and whosoever in this life accepts Him as his Saviour has life everlasting; while for him who rejects Christ there is no hope.

A striking incident, similar yet different, occurred a few years previously in a neighbouring city. A mission was being carried

on there, and many were being awakened to a sense of their need as lost sinners, and were seeking and finding peace. One evening, a band of young men went to the meetings with the intention of getting up a disturbance and "making fun." The leader and life of the party was a young railway guard, and, like him whose story has been told, was of a kindly disposition and winning manner. He, too, was admired and respected by those who knew him, and he, too, scoffed at the grace of God.

On this occasion he appeared anxious not to be behind his companions at the meeting in making game of the preachers, but, at the very beginning, the text, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," arrested his attention, and he listened earnestly to the word of God. At the close he remained behind, deeply convicted of sin. His companions left him with scoffs and jeers. That was nothing to him; his one thought was that that very night *his* soul might be "required" of him, and he knew he was unsaved. He was urged to accept, through a simple faith, Christ's finished work for the pardon of his sins; but not until far into the morning did his soul grasp the truth of the glad tidings of God's salvation. At last he went home, with joy beaming in his countenance. He awakened his father and mother to tell them the good news; but they could not see anything good in it, and said their son had "gone cracked." Still he knew Whom he believed, and told all his old companions of his new-found joy.

He was making the second run for the day, when, jumping on to his van, his foot slipped, and he fell in front of an approaching train. Gently they lifted up his bleeding and mangled body, and laid it in the waiting-room, where he slowly opened his eyes, and faintly whispered, "Jesus, my Saviour," when his happy spirit winged its flight to be for ever with the Lord.

Reader, have you accepted Christ, or are you still rejecting His offered mercy? Accept Him now, for it may be your last opportunity. It may be said of you, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." K. R.

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THE HISTORY OF A CONVERSION.

THE following is a brief account of the way in which God, by His word, brought one of His children to the knowledge of Himself:—

It was just at the end of the year—now some time ago—that God, by His Spirit, first began to strive with me, or, rather, the time of which I speak was the first time I have any distinct recollection of His doing so. Till then I had never given any serious thought to the all-important matter of the salvation of my soul.

Although at times I took pleasure in that which I knew to be evil, in order to win the applause of foolish companions, yet I was not what people would call bad, and often would look forward to a time when, grown to manhood, and free from the temptations that then beset me, I might, by generous ways, uprightness, and pity for the helpless, win the praise and admiration of those whose good opinion I, at heart, most valued.

Many a struggle did I make to become all I dreamed of being at a future day. At times I succeeded a little, as I thought; but well I know now that there was not one good thing in me in God's sight.

It was at the time of which I speak that I began to read my Bible, and to pray to God in my own words. I did so regularly for a time, and on the last day in the year, having read a little in God's word, I took up a book which was lying upon the table, and read its last "night watch." The paper contained earnest entreaties to the reader not to delay thinking about salvation. I went to bed in tears, and determined not to delay. But how was I to meet God? Satan whispered, "Go on as you have been doing; struggle hard, and pray to God to help you." That suggestion soothed me for a time, and soon after all the anxiety of that night passed away and was forgotten.

Again, not quite a year after this, I took a second time to reading God's word, and determined as I read it to guide my ways by it, but every word seemed to condemn me. I thought of the scene described in Rev. xx.,

and of having to stand alone, face to face with the God who had seen my every secret sin—who knew my every secret thought, and of having to be judged by Him. I shuddered, and fain would have persuaded myself that the God of the Bible could not exist. But in vain.

I saw that God was holy—that all His demands were righteous; but oh! I feared Him, and would fain have found some way of escape from Him, but could see none! This went on for a long time, until one night, having read, "Whosoever keeps the whole law, and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all," I wondered how I could be saved. It was then that St. Paul's answer to the Philippian jailor came to my mind—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and I thought, "I have always believed on the Lord Jesus, I am not an infidel; I believe all I read about the Lord Jesus, and, therefore, I must be saved." This belief in the head for a time satisfied me. Every time I read about believing on the Lord Jesus I was comforted, but when I read about the holiness of God I was distressed.

At last, I read in Romans, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and in Isaiah, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" and thus God showed me that there was nothing good in me, as well as that I was not able to win my own salvation.

It was then that God taught me from His word that He had sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, into the world, and that He had died for my sins—that "He was bruised for my iniquities . . . Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him." (Isaiah liii.) I saw that the punishment which Christ received for my sins had satisfied the righteous God. Through grace I accepted as a gift that which I never could win from God by my merits, and thus can I now look up to heaven and see, by faith, Christ, who was punished in my stead, seated at God's right hand, and if in any measure I do anything that is pleasing in God's sight, it is because His love constrains me and His power enables me. G. O.

THE RECKONING DAY.

WHETHER we are servants of God or servants of Satan, the reckoning day will surely come for each one of us. The man who travelled into a far country, and who left to his own servants the responsibility of trading with the talents he committed to them, "after a long time" came and reckoned with those servants. Each servant of the Lord must give an account to Him for the opportunities and abilities with which he has been entrusted.

Many an one in our professedly Christian land takes service in Christ's Name without really asking his or her soul, "Am I one of Christ's people?" Therefore the first question for each of us is, "Am I still at enmity to God, or am I one of His people?" We read in St. Matthew xxv. 24 of the unprofitable servant who called his Lord "an hard man." Now, if we are Christ's, His love constrains us, and we shall not thus speak of Him. It will be a mournful day when the reckoning time comes for those unconverted people who have taken upon themselves to serve Christ.

The avowed servant of Satan will have his reckoning day. It is a terrible contemplation! All things are recorded in God's books of our works—the secret sins which never come to light on earth, as well as the open sins which are published abroad, crimes known and unknown will all meet the sinner by and by. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after." (1 Tim. v. 24.)

We do well to think of the reckoning day, we do well when we live in the view of our Master's judgment of our work. Idleness He condemns, and no greater waste can we be guilty of than idling away our opportunities. One source of missing opportunities for doing good unto all men, and especially unto those of the household of faith, is dwelling on the memory of happy bygone times. Obviously, this is a snare that is most frequently laid for older Christians, who so frequently regard the past as brighter than the present. It is a woful mistake for eternity, to sit telescope in hand studying the disappearing forms of joys long gone by.

To him or her who lives for the hour, we suggest as a fitting emblem of such a life the dancing of the day-fly in the sunbeam. Immortal beings were made for an eternal destiny, not to trifle away the present golden moments. A Christian was never made to spend his time like the creature of an hour. Let us keep in view the reckoning day; it is a grand corrective to folly and a great incentive to good.

When the reckoning day comes, how shall the Christian, so often cast down and distressed about his imperfect work for God, stand before the Lord? One thing is certain, the Master will remember for good all that is done simply and faithfully in His Name. Not even the cup of cold water given to a disciple for His sake or in the name of a disciple, will lose its reward. The Lord will hold in gracious remembrance every loving deed performed out of regard to Himself. The reckoning day will be a joyous day for His servants. Yet the greater joy of that day will be the Lord's, for when He says, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord," He will have the brightest portion. A parent's joy in his children's happiness is greater than that of the children, and so, only in an infinitely deeper way, will the Lord's joy exceed that of the servants He rewards.

Keep in view, dear reader, the reckoning day—the day so seldom held continually before the soul. If you are still an enemy to God by wicked works, lose not a moment, but seek His pardon. If you are a true believer, above all else seek to be acceptable to Him, who is the Lord.

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." (Matt. xxv. 35, 36.)

"Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." (Matt. xxv. 45.)

"Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing." (Matt. xxiv. 46.)

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AN AGED CHRISTIAN'S TESTIMONY.

A FEW weeks ago, I had occasion to call at a person's house on business. While there I observed a very aged woman, the mother of the mistress of the house. She was seated in a large arm-chair by the fire-side, and, as I looked at her, my heart yearned to know whether she was the Lord's. After a few remarks on commonplace matters, I said, "Dear friend, you must have reached a great age?"

"Yes, sir," she said, "I am eighty-three, and although I have been a poor, ailing woman for many years, I have reason to be very thankful, for I have been well cared for and kindly treated."

"I am glad to hear you say so," I said. "How much we all have to thank God for in this life! But what about the future? There is One who has gone to prepare a place for those who love Him. Do you know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour?"

A bright gleam of joy lit up her aged face as she replied, "Oh, yes, sir; I do know Him—He is all my trust. I have known Him ever since I was sixteen years of age—whatever should I have done without Him!"

My heart bounded with praise and thanksgiving as I listened to this dear saint of God telling out her sixty-seven years' experience of the goodness of her blessed Lord and Saviour. She had, indeed, learned of Him who was meek and lowly in heart, and had found rest to her soul, and she was only waiting until her Lord should speak the word and take her to be with Himself, never more to be separated from Him.

Do you, my reader, know that One who is coming quickly? Oh, let me tell you that you need Him! You need to know the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour. Then you will know what it is to have abiding peace and joy, and you will be able to say, like this dear old Christian, "I do know Him. He is all my trust."

"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me; Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands."

TO OUR READERS.

WHERE, we wonder, are those who, thirteen years ago, were little children of from eight to twelve years of age, and who wrote to us answering our Bible questions, many of whom promised so happily for eternity? Some, we know, are in paradise; some are earnest workers for the Lord who loves them; but some, we fear, have failed in their early promise, and are going with the stream—Where?

"Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of" (2 Tim. iii. 14), we would say to our young Christian readers. Go on in these things. Be not drawn away from heavenly realities. Satan will offer to sell you anything in this world's fair, but you will live to find you carried home a sorry purchase, and parted with your peace to get it. Life is short at the longest; waste not yours by buying bitter experiences. Though all things are new to the eye of him who has not seen them before, there is nothing really new under the sun. Dear young Christians, the only happy way to go through the world is to live for Christ; the only joyful way of spending time is to live for eternity. Be you out and out for Christ.

"Be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. iv. 2), we would say to our readers whose life is no longer that of spring-time. As years increase, responsibilities accumulate, cares grow, labours multiply. The expectation of younger days that middle age would bring more time for meditation and for serving God, is found to be but a dream. It is a stern fact that numbers of the earnest young men and women of some ten or fifteen years ago are now like heavy-laden ships that can scarce rise over the waves. A parent's first concern is the home, and too often the cares of the business, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word and it becometh unfruitful.

When John Berridge was called up before his bishop for his zeal in preaching Christ, he said, "My lord, I preach but on two occasions." The small number of occasions charmed his worldly superior, who asked

him what they were. "In season and out of season," said Berridge. We are not all preachers, and there was but one John Berridge, but let our practical Christianity be merely on these two occasions and we shall do well.

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (2 Cor. iv. 18), shall be our word to those of our readers who are in the autumn of their lives! And who can tell which of us is nearest to the edge of the sickle! However, to all the Lord is near, and for all the day of grace is hastening to its close. Poor Christians are they who are looking at the things which are seen! Each passing hour notes a fresh change in life's shifting scenes. How many unexpected changes have our eyes witnessed this year! Every wave has a family likeness to its fellows, but each is different from the others—so it is with our trials and our difficulties; but look not, mariner for glory, on the waves breaking before or rolling under your vessel, look at the harbour lights. Seamen steer not by the waves—though a small vessel must learn how to creep round the biggest seas if possible—they steer by some object firm and stable. So, look not at the unstable things which are seen, if you would surmount life's trials, but at the things which are eternal, which are firm and abiding.

How the excitements of the hour, or the mental perturbations of the day, distract our souls from eternity! Oh, look at the unseen things! Faith is long-sighted; it beholds objects afar off; it pierces farther than the telescope; it reaches right on into eternity. As the sight of the well-known hills surrounding our home infuses freshness into our steps, so the sights of glory bestow new zeal on our flagging spirits. The eye is a wonder-working power, yet the eye does nothing save take in the sight of what is before us. But the sight is so wonderful that a man is no more the same when he beholds the glad object before his eye. The eternal things, when seen by faith, make us regard the trials of life as the waves over which the vessel either bounds or struggles to her rest.

HOPE THOU IN GOD.

LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling-place." How far can we really say this? Is our home *our* dwelling-place? or, are *our* life-surroundings? Ah! it is a blessed thing in the presence of death, or life's shifting scenes, yea, of broken hearts, to say, sighing, it may be, as we say it, "Lord, *Thou* hast been our dwelling-place."

Do not judge God harshly because of His ways with you, for "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." Take rather in your trials a sign of His favour.

It is easy to utter the bare words, "Thy will be done," but oh, what breakings of heart, what wrestlings of spirit, what humblings of soul before Him must occur ere our souls can really say to our Father Himself, "Thy will be done."

Do you not hear the voice of Jesus saying to you in your sorrow, "It is I"? Let then these billows of affliction become your servants; let your sorrow but make fresh room in your heart for Himself. He is waiting to enter into your wounded heart, to be your Friend in a personal way hitherto unknown to you.

GOD does His own work in His own way. As the heaven is higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than ours. Do not seek to measure God, He is infinite; do not misjudge Him, He is love.

THESE rough winds of trial, these bitter tears of grief, will produce fair flowers for His heaven, if we are but tender in spirit before Him. Oh, to be of a broken spirit!

LET not the Lord hear your heart say, for your lips would not bethus rebellious, "Thou hast been unkind to me in sending this trial," for He is love. He knows how to do the best thing for you in the best way for you, and that is just how He is acting on your behalf.

"HOPE thou in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him who is the health of thy countenance and thy God."

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BIBLE LESSON FOR THE LITTLE ONES.—VI.

(Read Matthew iii. 1-7; 13-17.)

MANY stories have been made out about what the Lord Jesus said and did when He was a Child, but we cannot believe these stories. God has told us that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Try to find this verse for yourself, without asking anyone to help you. It is in the second chapter of the Gospel by St. Luke.

In the same chapter we are told of some words which the Lord Jesus said when He was twelve years old. You will find them in the forty-ninth verse, and in the next verse you may read that Joseph and Mary did not understand what He meant when He spoke of being about His Father's business. The next verse tells us that Jesus was "subject unto them." While the Son of God lived in that poor house at Nazareth, growing up to be a man, He behaved at home as a child should behave, and was obedient to the wishes of Joseph and of Mary, His mother. But, all the time, in all His thoughts and in all His ways, He was pleasing God, His Father; for the Lord Jesus, when a Child, was quite different from any child who ever lived before; other children thought about themselves, and tried to do what they would like, and to get what would please them, but He never did one thing to please Himself, but was always meek and lowly in heart, and the grace of God was upon Him.

In the first chapter of the Gospel by St. Luke we read of the birth of John the Baptist. The name John was given him before he was born, by an angel sent by God to his father. It means "God is gracious." When this name was given to him, God taught his father something wonderful about his son, and he said to him, before all the people who were there, "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His way." He said, too, that this child should turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

The time was now come for the saying

about John to come true. Thirty years had passed away since the time of which we last read, when the child Jesus, with Mary His mother, went to live at Nazareth.

The chapter which you have just been reading tells us about the preaching of John the Baptist, and Matthew explains to us that he was the one of whom God's prophet Isaiah had spoken many, many years before. The prophet had said there should be "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." This voice was the voice of John, and it was in the "wilderness of Judæa" that it was heard, crying aloud, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The wilderness of Judæa was the place where John had lived a long time: if you find on your map where the Dead Sea is, you will know about where John the Baptist first preached. He wore a rough-looking dress, most likely very much the same as the "mantle" which Elijah wore; camel's hair cloth is hard and coarse, but is a very good dress for keeping a man safe from heat and cold and rain. John ate locusts and wild honey; the locusts were a kind of grasshopper which the poor people of that country still eat when they cannot get better food. They catch them and dry them in the sun, and eat them with salt, as you eat shrimps, and sometimes they are eaten with butter and honey. There are wild bees in the "wilderness of Judæa," and travellers who have been there have gathered honey, not from hives, but from the trees and rocks.

In this chapter we are told who John the Baptist was, and how he used to live, and the words which he said when he gave God's message to the people.

What does "repent" mean? Those who heard John cry that cry and understood it, those to whom God taught what His message meant, knew that they were quite wrong in all their ways and thoughts, and so they went in crowds to John and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Crowd after crowd came, and all had the same story to tell; they spoke of the wrong things they had done; they came "confessing their

sins," not trying to hide what they really were, as they came to God's messenger to be baptized "unto repentance."

At last, some came who did not confess their sins, for they trusted in themselves that they were righteous. These were the Pharisees and Sadducees. John spoke to them, and told them the truth about themselves, and then he began to speak of One who was coming after him. "He is mightier than I," John said; "I am not fit to carry His shoes." Slaves used to carry their masters' shoes, and John meant that he was not worthy to do the least thing for Christ, whose way he had come to prepare.

How surprised John must have been to see Jesus come to be baptized! It troubled him very much, and he tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me?"

Jesus answering said unto him, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," and John allowed it to be so.

We may be surprised, too, that the holy Son of God, whose thoughts and ways were all for God, all perfect and beautiful, should come to be baptized with these poor people from Jerusalem and Judæa who had found out how wrong their thoughts and their ways had always been. They were confessing their sins, and the Lord Jesus had no sins to confess; but, in a place where all the people were sinners, there were some who did not try to cover themselves up out of sight, but said they were wrong. These people, who did not pretend, were the only right people, and the Lord Jesus came and took part with them.

But how did God in heaven show the difference between the Lord Jesus and all the people who had been baptized in the river Jordan?

Read the last two verses of your chapter, and you will see in what a wonderful way the difference was shown.

"And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and, lo, a voice from

heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

See whether you can find, in the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, how John the Baptist first knew that the One whom he had baptized was indeed the Son of God, the One of whom he had spoken to the people, saying, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

C. P.

On the Mountain Top and in the Valley.

BALAK, the King of Moab, sent for Balaam, the prophet of Pethor, in Mesopotamia, saying, "Come . . . curse me this people"—even Israel, the people of Jehovah, whose hosts had pitched their tents in the plains of Moab, close by Jordan and the promised land. The arms of all the warriors who had risen up to prevent Israel's course to Canaan had failed, and now King Balak sought, by the arts of the false prophet, to stay their march through his country.

But God said to Balaam, "Thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed." What words of grace! And who shall curse whom God has blessed, or who shall accuse whom God has justified? Happy people on their way to glory, partakers of the heavenly calling! God has blessed them, and "they are blessed."

Despite the word of God and God's ways with him, Balaam could not resist the proffered reward of Balak, and he went to him. Then the king built altars for the prophet, who offered sacrifices upon them. But in vain the altar, in vain the bullocks and the rams; God took Balaam's mouth and poured out therefrom blessings on His people. Then Balak tried another view of Israel; he brought Balaam to another place, whence he could see "but the utmost part of them," and, said he, "Curse me them from thence." So from the top of Pisgah Balaam looked upon the people. Once more the word of the Lord came to him; the prophet went and stood by the smoking altar, and near the king and his nobles, and said, "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He



BALAAM AND BALAK.

said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good? . . . He hath blessed." In vain the anger of the king, in vain the perversity of the prophet, "God hath blessed." In vain all the varied standpoints from which Israel might be regarded, cursings should not come on them, for them "God hath blessed."

Now, fellow Christian, when life's day is come to its end—yea, when this day of grace shall close, and that of glory shall dawn, it shall be said of each and of all of God's people, "They are blessed." Satan may see, and does see, enough to call forth wrath upon the failing and often sinning people of God, but no enchantment against them shall prosper, for God's purpose can never be shaken. Of each and of all it shall be said, "What hath God wrought?" And when the pilgrimage is over, the promised land entered, the glory reached, how shall these words of wonder be in the lips not only of the saved people themselves, but in those of rapt angels—"What hath God wrought?" "He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God." He has made the glory certain for us, come what may on earth. "Therefore we are always confident." May the ways of God in filling Balaam's mouth with blessings instead of cursings encourage our hearts in our God!

A PARTING WORD.

WE must bring to a close for this volume our happy work of speaking to you, dear children. May you all love God's holy word, and may you read it with godly fear; for God is great, and He knows every single thought of our hearts and every word that comes out from our lips. God is very jealous over His word; He will allow no one to add to it, or to take from it; He will burn up the earth, but His word shall endure for ever.

The word of God shows to us what everlasting life is, and how we may have it; it teaches us how our sins are pardoned, and the way we may find forgiveness for ourselves. The word of God is the true Christian's meat and drink, his guide and lamp, his comfort

and meditation; the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, and is our defence against Satan. Search the Scripture, learn texts from it—such knowledge will serve you, when you are older, more than all the wisdom of the world. If we can sow some seeds of truth into your hearts we shall not have lived in vain, for those seeds will spring up for eternity. Now farewell, and may God bless you, every one.

Bible Subjects.

PEACE.

WE will conclude our remarks on the subject of peace with a few words on the greetings opening the epistles. The first eight have the greeting in these wondrous words—"Grace to you and peace from God our (in Galatians, *the*) Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." That to Philemon is the same, with the addition of "*mercy*." Those to Timothy are very similar to that to Philemon, as is also that to Titus, only it ends, "The Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour," and omits "*mercy*." The greeting in the second Epistle of St. John runs thus—"Grace be (or, shall be) with you (or, us), mercy and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love," and that in the Revelation is as follows: "Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, and the Prince of the kings of the earth."

If we receive a letter from a friend, its mode of commencement and termination has a peculiar interest to us, and so must it ever be with us as we read these gracious letters, penned by the servants of God to us, but indited by God through His Spirit. Grace to us and peace to us is the beginning of the words our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ address to us. Let us seek to fill the soul with this fact each time we read but a verse from these portions of the sacred word. Let this be our chief thought—for it is the practical one—in considering these most precious greetings.

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The Father does not sound quite so close and near to the heart as *our Father*. Perhaps the Galatian believers having gone so far in listening to legal teaching may account for this difference in the greeting to them. There is surely a sense of nearness in "*our*" Lord (not *the* Lord) as we read in the greeting given in the Epistles to Timothy. But why *our*, before Father, is left out in the second of these is not so simple to explain. We feel the sweet force of "*our Saviour*" in that to Titus, for in the difficulties the epistle deals with, to know Him as "*our Saviour God*" is rich assurance to the soul. Also to have "*mercy*" added to grace and peace is most comforting to the heart, for mercy is what we all daily need. Why the letters to Timothy should open with the word *mercy* and that to Titus should not have it, may be explained by the presence of the words "*our Saviour*" in the latter case, for the title *Saviour* conveys the thought of *mercy*.

Again, in the greeting of the second Epistle of St. John, how beautiful are the words there added, "*the Son of the Father, in truth and love.*" It was a day when the Person of the Lord was attacked by false teachers, and the aged apostle sends to the elect lady and her children, through the Spirit, not only the blessed assurance to them "*Grace shall be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,*" but adds the words which express the glory of the Eternal Son. What joy would a greeting contain for us, were we ignorant of the person sending it?

And as we open that book of judgment, the Revelation, what comfort it is that at its very beginning the words of grace and peace come to us from the Everlasting God, the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus, the Prince of the kings of the earth, whose rights in reference to this world God chronicles in the book, which so fully tells of Christ's coming and kingdom. He who is going to judge this world that rejected Him, and the people who crucified Him, sends to us whom He loves the gracious greeting of grace and peace, before He unrolls the coming judgments.

A CHILD'S THOUGHT OF GOD'S LOVE.

A LITTLE girl of about six years told me just now that "*God loves good children.*" She would not believe that God could love children who were not good. We know that God is holy; He cannot look upon sin; God cannot love the naughty ways of naughty children. This is true. But if only good children are loved by God, what would become of you, my child?

Your own heart tells you that you are not good. God's word tells us that "*There is none that doeth good; no, not one.*"

My little friend also told me that none but good children could go to heaven. If this is so, and God has said of all—little children as well as other people—"There is not one good," how can any children be in heaven? Surely not one could be found in that happy, beautiful place.

There is a verse in the New Testament which explains how children, who are all badness in themselves, may yet go to God's holy heaven. Find the second Epistle to the Corinthians; now look at the twenty-first verse of the fifth chapter.

This verse means that God once made the Lord Jesus, His own Son, the pure and spotless One, who knew no sin, to be what even the youngest child is—"sin," for us. Why did God do this? The rest of the verse answers that question: "*that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*"

God, in His wonderful love, has provided that which can fit you to be in heaven, and to be happy there; but you must come to Him just as you are, without any thought of trying to make yourself good, or even better, before you come.

May God lead you to accept the Lord Jesus as your own Saviour, for His name's sake.

J. M.

THE PALACE.

"CAN you tell me, please, on which side the palace is?" enquired a little girl, who was seated beside a lady, of a passenger in a railway carriage, the other day.

"Which palace do you mean, my child?" he said.

"I mean the Alexandra Palace," was her answer.

Having satisfied her, he said,

"Now, I will ask you a question. Can you tell me where is the Palace of the Great King?"

"You mean heaven," replied the child.

"Yes, and who is there?"

"Jesus," she answered.

"And do you love the Lord Jesus?"

"Yes, I love Him," the little one answered, "and my mamma is with Him."

LITTLE LOUIE.

LOUIE was a quiet little girl—a child who was never particularly noticed. Her aged grandmother bestowed much love upon her, and taught her many texts and sweet, simple little hymns.

Little Louie came to school day by day with me. The various exercises which constitute school-life's routine were not easy to her, except the hymns, and these she would sing even before she thoroughly knew the words. Little Louie's grandmother, who has been a great invalid for more than twelve months, was pondering over the last month's FAITHFUL WORDS the other day, and she desired to mingle in those pages "the last words of Louie."

In the commencement of this year the child went to stay with an uncle, who sang to her, and with her, the hymns she loved so much. Her favourite was—

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

The uncle used to say, "'Jesus loves me' never grew old with Louie," and he thinks now of her sweet smile and earnest plea, night by night, "Now, uncle, sing again 'Jesus loves me.'"

Shortly after little Louie returned home she was taken very ill, and for some weeks her sufferings were acute. Her great wish was to see her dear grandmother, and she,



LOUIE AND HER GRANDMOTHER.

under great difficulties, being such an invalid, came to Louie's home, and stayed with her.

After the turn of one midnight, Louie asked if it was one o'clock, and repeated the inquiry again and again, adding, "It won't be long before morning now, will it? Granny, let me lie on your arm! It won't make you tired, will it?"

Shortly after her mother was called to the little child, she, with a feeble little voice, said, "Good-bye; I'm going to heaven to live with Jesus—Jesus—blessed Jesus. I love Jesus, and He loves me—gentle Jesus. Good-bye, dada; mamma, little sister, Auntie Emma, good-bye. I'll ask—Jesus to let you all—come." Good-bye a-ll. Auntie Nellie, g-o-o-d-bye." And so she passed from earth to paradise.

Z. B.