

GOD'S
GLAD TIDINGS.

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THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

CHAP. I.—THE BRIDEGROOM.

“And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men’s feet that were with him. And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on. And he said, I am Abraham’s servant. And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. And Sarah my master’s wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my father’s house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.”—GEN. xxiv. 32–38.

THE Twenty-fourth Chapter of Genesis gives a most beautiful illustration of the Gospel of God, now presented by the Holy Ghost to the guilty children of Adam. It is a pictorial representation of the time in which we live. In the bygone ages, Abraham desired for his son, Isaac, that which would be a joy and comfort to him; and at this present time, God does the same for His Son. He is seeking that which shall be the source of endless joy to His only, His well-beloved Son, Jesus. And what is that? A BRIDE.

The Son’s Bride, with her jewels of silver, and

jewels of gold, and raiment, is what I desire to call your attention to ; and beloved reader, rest assured this has not been left on record merely as a family transaction in the history of Abraham's descendants, but because it is fraught with the deepest interest to us now, and is full of instruction and beautiful simile.

In the beginning of this chapter we have Abraham giving directions to Eliezer, his servant, to go to his country and to his kindred and take a wife from thence unto his son, Isaac.

In Eliezer we have not only a ready and faithful, but also a prayerful messenger, and need we marvel then that his mission from Hebron to the distant city of Nahor in Mesopotamia was so prosperous? No ; we can but share, as it were, in the faithful messenger's joy, as he recrosses the desert, taking with him to his master's son the one who shall be so dear to his heart. And in these days there is One who has come from heaven's far off land on a similar errand—the Holy Ghost. He has come down to us ; angels have been passed by, and to man, fallen man, has been delivered the Gospel message of peace ; and from the family of Adam the Holy Ghost is gathering out those who shall form the Bride, and He is leading across the pathless desert of the world this Bride for the Son, to whom the Father has given "*all things.*" Safely is He leading her onward to that happy moment when

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she shall be presented, radiant with the jewels that have been given her by her long expected Bridegroom, the Lord of All.

Have you ever thought that there is a lonely Man, seated on the throne of heaven, waiting and longing for the time when the Church, His Bride, shall be associated with Himself in glory, and when He shall share all the honour and dignity of that throne with the one for whom He died? So it is. "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it;" and, of Him, individually the believer can say, "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." How happy and blessed are they who form an integral part of the Church! Reader, can *you* look forward with joy to the meeting of the Bride and Bridegroom? Can you picture the scene, and share by anticipation in the joy, when all heaven shall be in ecstasy, because "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready"?

Twice in Scripture do we read of ecstatic joy amongst the heavenly hosts. First, at the birth of the Lord, we are told: "And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke ii. 13, 14). And again at the marriage of the Lamb: "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants and ye that fear him, both small and

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great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. xix. 5-8).

Do you wish to form part of the Bride here described? I do not now ask, Do you want salvation? or do you want to escape from hell? No; I ask now, Do you want what God calls you to? Do you desire to possess the honor He here offers you? Will you have the dignity and glory he puts at your disposal? Will you accept it, or refuse it? *Which?* Can you for a moment hesitate? Oh! better far spend eternity as the happy Bride of the Son of God, in the brightness of heaven's glory, than spend it in the darkness of hell; better far be bound to Jesus with the cords of love, than be bound in hell with the cords of your own sins, for in one state or other must eternity be spent.

But let us return and look in detail at what is here written. The scene represented is in the distant country of Mesopotamia, and the servant is there telling a tale that will allure one to leave all that is dear to her in her native land

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and go to be the Bride of him whom she has never seen, but of whom she hears such wondrous tidings.

Eliezer's mission is very simply and clearly told. He is a true and faithful servant, his sole desire is to serve his master. He says, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, *I pray thee*, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham, Behold I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water; And let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, *I pray thee*, that I may drink, and she shall say, Drink; and I will give thy camels drink also; let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master" (verses 12-14).

What a beautiful example this is to each servant of God! Would that we all were more prayerful, more dependent on God for the success of all we undertake in His service, then might we look for an equally blessed result. He *prayed*, nor had he long to wait for an answer, for we are told, "And it came to pass before he had done speaking, that behold Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very

fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her ; and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up." Mark here the eagerness of the servant in his Master's work. "And the servant *ran* to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord ; and she hasted and let down the pitcher upon her hand, and gave him to drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking." (Verses 15-19.)

Rebekah, type of the sinner, meets the messenger thus at the well ; and does not God delight to meet thee, dear soul ? Yes. You think you have something to do, that you must get into a certain condition before you can get into the presence of God ; but you are mistaken. Rebekah, going just as she was to draw water, is met by Eliezer, and so, too, the sinner, just as he is, has presented to him, and must receive from God, His testimony to the Person of the Lord Jesus.

What does drawing water signify ? It is the action of an unsatisfied soul, an expression of thirst. We have in the New Testament an account of one who came to draw water at Samaria's well, and to whom the Lord said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked

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of Him, and He would have given thee living water. Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The truth taught figuratively here is the necessity for you to have Christ now as your own, and to be satisfied with Him, for it is He alone who can satisfy the cravings of the needy soul. As Eliezer met Rebekah, so would the Lord meet you. "Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher" is the first address of the seeker to the sought one.

So, in the 4th of John, when the blessed Lord would win the confidence of Samaria's erring daughter, "*Give me to drink*" is the gracious word that began an interview which did not end till, *convicted* of her sin, and *commanded* by His grace, that *revealed* heaven's best gift (Christ) to earth's worst sinner (herself), she left His side only to bring others back with her to that sacred place of blessing by the words, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ?"

Such, my reader, is the lovely way Divine grace stoops to win man's heart. It has won mine. Shall it not win yours also?

Having secured her attention, got into her company, and gone with her to her mother's house,

Eliezer begins to unfold his mission; and see his earnestness: "I will not eat till I have told mine errand." And what doth he tell? "And he said, I am Abraham's servant. And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and He hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and menservants and maid-servants, and camels, and asses. And Sarah, my master's wife, bare a son to my master when she was old: *and unto him hath he given all that he hath.* And my master made me swear, saying . . . Thou shalt go unto my father's house and to my kindred, and *take a wife unto my son.*" (Verses 34, 38.)

His first care, you see, is to unfold the tidings about this only-begotten son; *i.e.*, he presents distinctly, a PERSON enriched with all that the Father's love could give, and concerning whom he had *purposes* which deeply concerned one of those who, for the first time, heard of this would-be Bridegroom, Isaac.

What a type of Christ! We must not forget, too, that in Gen. xxii. we have in a wondrous figure the death and resurrection of Jesus, as of that scene it is written, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises, *offered up his only-begotten Son . . .* accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. xi. 17-19).

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Thus it is not till Christ has died, risen again, and ascended into heavenly glory, that the Holy Ghost comes to seek the heart of the Bride for the absent one.

Before Isaac gets *his possessions or his Bride*, he is the risen heir; and thus is he a type of our Lord, who had first to die for His Church before He could have her with him in glory. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24). How far the anti-type exceeds the type I need not say. How wonderful it all is, and how blessedly true! What the restraining arm of God saved Isaac from, his own beloved Son had to endure. He hung on the cross, He died a shameful death, He descended into the grave, as the Church's representative; and, blessed be God, He rose again entitled to claim "His own" in virtue of His atoning death and blood-shedding.

What does the Holy Ghost reveal of that only-begotten Son of God? All that the Father hath is His: "Unto him hath he given *all* that he hath." The Man in the glory is the One to whom the Father has given everything. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (John iii. 35). He also hath highly exalted him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in

earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Scripture abounds with testimony that all has been given to Jesus : but there was one thing yet in the mind of God, of deeper and greater value than all that had been given, a priceless gift in the sight of Jesus, and that was a “Bride” to be His help-meet. How wonderful is the thought that the Son of God so loved that Bride as to come down to earth and give up His life in order to possess her ! He loves the Church—loves her with so great a love that we are told He “for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.” For her he left his Father’s home on high ; for her he became a “Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ;” was mocked and scourged, and at last crucified between two malefactors. But the fruit of all His sufferings is that He shall have a spotless Bride for ever seated by His side in glory. All has been done to win her, and she shall be His. That was what sustained His heart while here on earth ; that was what He looked onward to in the midst of all His untold, His unutterable agony. He was doing His Father’s will, was paying the costly price demanded by a righteous God to redeem those who are to form His Bride. Costly, indeed, was the ransom ! Great, indeed, was His love ! but it is joy to know He shall have

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full recompense for all His labour, all His sufferings; that His heart shall be fully gladdened, when He shall have the Church, His Bride, with Himself in glory.

“ He and I in that bright glory
 One deep joy shall share ;
 Mine, to be for ever with Him,
 His, that I am there.”

O, beloved reader, will you be there? God wants you to share this joy and love, and to rank with Him to whom He has given all things. But you say, “Can this be for *me*? Does God mean this for me?” My answer to this question is very simple. How did Rebekah know she was the one Eliezer wanted for Isaac? She could have no doubt on that point, for she stood by as the servant (see ver. 42, 52) detailed to Laban how he had prayed to the Lord that he might meet the “appointed” one at the well; and recognise her by this sign, that when he should ask water for himself alone, she should not only yield this request but volunteer water for the camels also. Now Rebekah knew that she had exactly corresponded to this wanted personage, having said and done thus to the letter, and therefore must be the one the servant was in quest of.

If you have any doubt whether you are the one Jesus wants, just tell me. Are you a sinner? “Yes.” Then listen, “This is a faith-

ful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*" (1 Tim. i. 16).

"Yes, but I do not know whether I am 'appointed' to be saved, in other words if I am among the elect." Very likely, and I did not know that the night I came to the Lord, but I knew something far more to the point, viz., that I was "*lost*." Do you know and acknowledge that? "Yes, indeed, I do," you may reply. Very well, hear the Saviour's words, "The Son of man is come to *seek*, and to *save* that which was *lost*" (Luke xix. 10). Now what do you think? Are you the wanted one? You own you are a "sinner," and further, a "lost" one, and God says it was for such Jesus came. How can you escape the conclusion that He wants you? It is impossible to do so. Whether you want Him, and are willing to accept God's wondrous salvation is the only open question. He offers it now to you, and it only remains with you to accept or reject His offered gift.

The exalted Son of God is patiently waiting till the last heart shall be won for Him. Say, shall your heart be won for Jesus? Shall the strong chains that bind you to the world, and the slavery of Satan be broken even now by the tender accents of the Bridegroom's loving voice saying unto you, "Come unto Me."? Can you look back on the dark scenes of Golgotha,

and see all that He suffered there to win you to Himself, and yet refuse to give Him your heart's affections? Surely not.

I ask you in God's name, and as a herald from heaven's far-off land, Will you come to Jesus? I take up the words of Rebekah's friends and say to you "Wilt thou go?" Let yours be the heart that joyfully responds, "I will go." Look at His beauty, He who is "the chief among ten thousand" and "altogether lovely," and rejoice in the truth that you may be *His*. He lingers over you with deepest patience and strongest love; He is knocking at the door of your heart; oh, soul, open unto Him. He lures you with all the deep affection of His true heart of love; He would draw you to Himself. Again His accents fall upon your ear, calling you this day, and saying "Come unto Me."

Let your response be that of Rebekah's when she unhesitatingly said, "I will go." What decision there is expressed in these three words, "I will go;" and will you be less decided than she? Her vista was one of earthly joy, tarnished with earthly sorrows, and ending with death; but that which is now offered to you is perfect, unending, unclouded joy, and glory with Jesus in heaven. God, in grace and mercy, proposes to lift you from your present state of degradation in which your sins have placed you, and deliver you from the eternal future of misery which awaits

every unsaved soul. He invites you to association in all the love and glory of heaven, as the Bride of the Lord of all.

This, then, is the call which now by the Gospel falls on every sinner's ear. That which fits the sinner for the presence of God is provided also through the finished work of Jesus, and doubtless typified by the “jewels of silver, jewels of gold, and raiment,” which Eliezer gave Rebekah, and of which I shall treat, with the Lord's help, in future chapters.

W. T. P. W.



“THOSE PRECIOUS WORDS HAVE
FREED ME.”

INSTANCES of God's wondrous grace to the sinner are of frequent occurrence, but, surely, to those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, every fresh instance of His goodness is as good news from a far country, and to be received with thanksgiving. And to those who are yet in nature's darkness, every conversion becomes a telling witness to the truth of God's Word.

I write the following account of Mrs. G.'s conversion as another proof of God's signal mercy to the sinner, and as a corroboration of His promise, “Call upon me in the day of trouble: I

HAVE FREED ME."

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will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psa. l. 15).

Upon returning home, late one evening, I received a message asking me to go and see a person who was dying of consumption. "She is very unhappy," said the bearer of the message, "and is continually calling upon God for help. A minister came to see her a few days ago, but his visit seemed to do her no good, and since then we have vainly sought for one who could give her comfort. To-night Mrs. G—— thought of you, will you come?"

"Most gladly," said I, "and I do trust that she may receive the truth as it is in Jesus, and find rest and comfort."

The sick woman was coughing violently as I entered her room, so, silently taking a chair proffered by her husband, I looked to the Lord to give me the right words to speak to her. But a minute was given to me, for though scarcely able to speak from exhaustion, the sick one beckoned me near her saying,

"I'm so glad that you've come, surely—God—has sent you."

"What is your trouble," I said, "are you afraid to die?"

"Yes," she quickly replied, "for I am—not fit—for His presence. Oh! this fearful agony."

"What agony?" I asked, "your poor body?"

"No, no," she answered, "the pain—of this

—poor frame—is nothing, it's my poor soul. Help me if you can, O do help me.”

“Dear woman,” I replied, “you must look above me, I am only a poor creature like yourself, but I can tell you of One who is able to save you. ‘Come unto me,’ says the Lord Jesus, ‘all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.’ Does not this meet your need?”

“I do want rest,” she replied, “but it don't help me. Please tell me more.”

“Have you heard the story of the brazen serpent?” I asked. She nodded assent, and I went on. “Those Israelites bitten by the serpents were dying fast, but God told Moses that whosoever looked upon the uplifted serpent of brass should live. And so it came to pass. You, Mrs. G——, are like to a bitten Israelite—sin has destroyed you, but God has provided a way whereby you may be saved. His Son has been lifted up—Jesus died upon the cross for sinners—the work of salvation is completed—look and live.”

“Look and live,” she repeated, while a ray of brightness passed over her poor sad face.

“Yes,” I said, “this is God's saving way, are you willing to be saved His way?”

“What else can I do?” she replied, “I am helpless, vile, and ready to perish.”

“Then what says God's Word, Mrs. G——? ‘And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the

HAVE FREED ME."

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wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that *whosoever believeth in him* should not perish, but have eternal life.'" I waited a few moments ere I spoke again, and then I asked her if she trusted the Lord Jesus—whose blood had paid sin's heavy debt. Then came another pause.

"Bless God!" at length came from her lips, "I can trust Him! Oh! the power of those, little words!"

"What words?" I asked.

"'Whosoever believeth in him should not perish,'" she replied.

"And so you can fully trust Him? and believe that you will not perish? and that you have eternal life?" I inquired.

"Yes, bless His name," she responded, with fervour, "I can believe all that; those precious words have freed me."

"Then you are not afraid to die?"

"Afraid!" she replied, her face lighting up as she spoke, "Oh! no, I'm very very happy! I'm quite ready to go. His is a complete salvation. I know I shall go to be with Christ. I long to see Him!"

Together we praised God for His wondrous love in revealing Jesus, and then I rose to go.

"How can I thank you enough" she said, as she grasped my hand, "for coming to tell me such blessed news? The Lord bless you."

“Don't thank me,” said I; “thank Him!
The work was His alone—

“ Alone He bare the Cross,
Alone its grief sustain'd;
His was the shame and loss,
And He the victory gained;
The mighty work was all His own,
Tho' we shall share His glorious throne.”

‘Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen’” (Rev. i. 5, 6).

And so we parted for the night.

Contrary to all expectations, Mrs. G. lingered for several days. She became unconsciously a witness for the Lord. Her neighbours, who had witnessed her former condition were amazed at the change, and took knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus. Never a doubt crossed her mind as to her acceptance. When questioned as to the ground of her trust, she would say, “I rest upon God's Word which cannot alter. God says whosoever believeth on His Son hath eternal life; I believe what He says, and therefore know that I'm saved.”

One day I repeated to her that hymn beginning,—

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,”

As I came to the last verse she was much affected and said,—

“Truly His name does ‘quell the power of death.’ Before that night you came to see me, my fear was very great, not that I wanted so much to stay in this world of sin and sorrow, but I feared the judgment following death. Oh! that time was very dreadful, it makes me think of what Jesus suffered when He was forsaken of God on account of sin. I’m glad to know that sorrow is past for Him, and, all praise be to His name, for me, too!”

The Lord took her home one Lord’s-day morning. Very quietly she passed away, declaring with her latest breath her happiness in Christ.

Dear unconverted reader, are you, as Mrs. G. was, afraid to die? Do you dread to stand before God with your sins upon you? If so, I trust that the scriptures that spoke peace to the heart of Mrs. G. may find an entrance to your heart, for your present joy and everlasting good. Know, on the authority of the Word of God, that “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12). Take your place as a lost, helpless sinner, and receive God’s free gift, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ.

E. E. S.

“HIS BLOOD BE ON US,

“HIS BLOOD BE ON US, AND ON OUR
CHILDREN.”

“Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death, for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it. Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell, for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.”—NUM. xxxv. 31.

“If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him, then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain: and it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city, shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke: and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley. And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried. And all the elders of that city, next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley: and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the innocent blood from among you.”—DEUT. xxi. 1-8.

SOLEMN was the scene, the pale corpse of the slain man, ghastly in its blood. Beside him lies the yet warm, quivering body of a heifer, from which all the red life-blood had streamed in unchecked outpour. On one side stood the priests

the sons of Levi, appointed of God to judge and try every dispute and stroke; on the other, the elders of the city next unto the slain man.

"If he that showed mercy unto him" was neighbour to him that fell among thieves, who, think you, was neighbour to Him who died upon the cross? Were not they who showed *no* mercy on Him? He that was left half dead found a deliverer. But this poor man cried, and there was none to hear. He looked for some to pity, but there was none—for comforters, but found none—there was not a helper. Yea, instead, His own familiar friend, in whom He trusted, lifted up his heel against Him, and trod down His life upon the earth.

But no deed done in darkness this! This thing was not done in a corner! Boldly, flauntingly before the eyes of God and man. "The heathen tumultuously assembled—the people imagined vain things—the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ: for Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together to do" What?

His eyes were open toward that place night and day, even toward that place of which He had said, "My name is there," and now in His name was done What?

The innocent blood had been betrayed! not in

a moment of hot wrath, but by the sly, slow, scheme of malice. Nay, more! the Holy One upon whom He looked with daily delight and cries of love—His righteous servant—His well-beloved—had been taken, and with lawless hands both crucified and slain in the broad light of day, with cruel mocking, scourging, spitting, before His eyes and in His name.

Earth shudders at the crime! All nature stands aghast! The heavens drop a veil of darkness o'er the deed! But nought can hide from Him, to whom both day and night are alike, and before whom all things are plain and open.

What have *they* done? What will *He* do? He will destroy those murderers. Nay, nay! He is God, who from bitter can bring forth sweet, and out of the eater meat.

Can the puny hand of man or devil turn Him from His will?

To faith how great a change. That pale and murdered man, by God's hand, and according to His counsel before determined, becomes a sacrifice, an offering without spot or blemish. The life of such an One poured out under wrath and judgment, in the stead of the guilty, is a propitiation for the whole crowd, by which the guilt of all may be covered up, hidden for ever from the eyes of God. A substitute for sinners is found, a Just One's death for the unjust. The

judgment of their guilt, and God's wrath are borne in the person of another—that other, the victim of their malice, but God's Lamb, manifested to take away the sin of the world, the Son of Man, the Son of God.

One died for all. He gave His life a ransom for many. He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the Tree. He is the propitiation for our sins. He died for our sins.

But if the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin; and there is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, and He died for all: if He is the propitiation for the whole world, and God hath set Him forth a propitiation through faith in His blood, how is it souls are lost? Because grace is slighted, and Christ refused.

Have you faith in His blood? Then are you justified? Have you come to God by Him, because you have confidence in the cleansing power of His blood? If so, the just God has justified you, constituting you righteous for ever, since the blood of His Son covers up, blots out, cleanses away all the sins it has had to do with. You are righteous as Christ is righteous; your sins have been atoned for, your guilt blotted out, your nature judged by God, who does His works for ever, and knows them from the beginning.

Do you not see God's gracious way to save? He charges the extreme of guilt on each and all,

providing at the same time a way of escape righteous, perfect, unimpeachable.

But, dear unconverted reader, though this dreadful deed lies at your door charged against you by the Father—God (into whose ear that innocent blood cries yet aloud for vengeance) who has singled you out and brought it home to you, since every mouth is stopped and all the world stands guilty before Him, — though this righteous God thus judges that *you* are worthy of death, declaring that the sin lies at your door, and in the same breath saying — nay, it may be even in the same word — that the sin-offering lies there too—a refuge and a test—a refuge for the sinner from the stroke of judgment, a test to prove the guilty wilful murderer; yet you are deaf alike to the demand of justice and the word of grace. You eat, and drink, and sleep, and work, and play, and build, and plant, and buy, and sell; you educate, improve, develope; but withal you have an ear deaf to the cry of blood, deaf to the demand of God, deaf to the beseechings of Christ, and are yourself totally regardless of His claims.

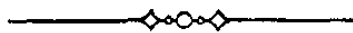
You prefer to answer for that blood, rather than have that blood to answer for you. . . . You prefer that sins and pleasures should cover that blood from your eyes, rather than that it should cover your sins from God's eyes. In your carelessness you prefer to be gathered with

the men of blood rather than to wash your hands in innocency. . . . You decide to be a betrayer of innocent blood rather than have the innocent One delivered up for you. You will not wash your hands of the deed and say, "My hands have not shed this blood, neither have my eyes seen it;" but you through unbelief *will* be a partaker of their evil counsel and deed who did it.

Beware! beware! Yet there is time. Fast is the separation taking place. Multitudes have decided to have their part with Christ. Yet there is time! Now is the day of grace. Now is the day of salvation. God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him, all that believe are justified from all things."

While yet the day lasts, wash you, make you clean in the blood of Christ! Arise and wash away your sins, calling on the Name of the Lord. Save! save yourself from death, judgment, and the lake of fire.

T. W.



EVERY man must either be born twice or die twice. He who is born once only, dies twice, most surely; but he who is born twice can only die once, and, should the Lord come, not that. Reader, which of these alternatives is yours?

ZACCHÆUS.

“He sought to see Jesus” . . . “When Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste and come down, for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.”—LUKE xix. 1-10.

“MAKE haste!”

The gracious summons fell on ears
 Attent to hear, above the noise of life.
 The worldly throng unheeding pass'd along,
 But he who half-unconsciously had sought
 To see the Saviour as He went that way,
 Had climbed above the hindrances of earth
 With the one thought intent—to see the Lord!
 He heard the gentle summons, met the look,
 That wondrous look of love which on him fell,
 And thought not how intent his own had been.

Not so the Lord!

And He had caught that glance, and saw it all,
 The vague life-longing which that look expressed,
 The tale it told of sorrow and of sin,
 Of hope deferred, and vain regrets which moaned
 Over the stranded wrecks of early years,
 And now the longing for a helping hand,
 A sympathising heart, a Saviour's love.
 He saw it all; and then He gave him back
 A glance all full of purest sympathy,
 Of tenderness, which could not brook delay,
 A glance which uttered, e'er the words were said,

ZACCHÆUS.

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“Make haste! Come down, I want thee here with Me,
 And well I know that thou want'st Me; but I
 Have sought thee sorrowing these many years.”
 And the glad heart responded to the call,
 Opened the door and took the Saviour in,
 And joyfully abode *inside with Him*.
 And such the history of a seeking soul
 A seeking Saviour too.

Oh! is it thine?

Hast thou beheld His look of speechless love,
 Or heard His gentle call, “Come unto Me,”
 And answering to it gone to dwell with Him?
 If not, delay no longer, but make haste,
 Come to the Saviour now, for night is near,
 The night of judgment on this guilty world,
 And which must fall on thee, if not shut in,
 Before the storm descends—at home with Him.
 Long has it lingered, but 'twill surely come,
 And from the darkening terror of that day,
 I fain would speed thy steps!

Oh, it will be

A night of hopeless sorrow and of pain,
 Of anguish all unknown throughout the past;
 When never more His look of love thou'lt see,
 Or hear His voice with its rich harmony,
 Sounding the invitations of His love.
 But all that will remain is one long night
 Of endless wild despair!

A night without

One single gleam of hope to cheer the soul,
 Or break the awful darkness and the gloom,
 Nothing but horror of a great despair!
 An agony of hopelessness and loss,
 And bitter memories of rejected love.

And far away,
A glimpse of what is gone,
Gone past beyond recall for ever now!
A glory streaming through an open door
From the glad Father's House.

And sounds of joy
And song,
As if a Master Hand had struck
Some chord of deep and wondrous harmony,
Which flooded all the atmosphere with joy,
And thrilled and quivered through the universe,
Shall float unto thine ears.

And thou shalt see
The Father welcoming each wanderer home,
The Saviour beckoning each redeemed one in,
While thou'rt shut out for ever from the joy,
Shut out for ever from the light and love!
Oh! can'st thou bear a future such as this?
And wilt thou brave a lost eternity?

* * * * *

A. S. O.

A SURE RECEIPT FOR A HAPPY NEW
YEAR.

“BLESSED is the man that trusteth in the
LORD, and whose hope the LORD is: for he shall
be as a tree planted by the waters, and that
spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall
not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be
green; and shall not be careful in the year of
drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”
(*Jer.* xvii. 7, 8.)

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

CHAP. II. THE BRIDE'S "JEWELS OF SILVER."

"And the servant brought forth *jewels of silver*, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah."—GEN. xxiv. 53.

THE effect of the word of God, when it for the first time really reaches the soul of a sinner, is to raise the question of fitness for the presence of God. Am I fit to go to God? is the query which the awakened soul will put to itself, and answer in the negative when the gospel call has aroused it to the invitation of God. Now the perfection of the Gospel of God is this, that not only does it call the sinner to God, but shows the soul the way to come, and the ground of access to Him. In other words it provides that which fits the guilty sinner to stand in God's presence cleansed, forgiven, and happy.

Further, before the soul is called on to decide for Christ, it has brought before it the tale of His work and its effects for all who believe God's message about His beloved Son. This truth is strikingly illustrated in the verse at the head of this chapter. Having found the one whom he wishes to gain as a bride for Isaac, Eliezer brings out the things which were at once the pledges of the reality of his message, and the

answer to any question of poverty or unfitness to respond to his call by reason of the lack of these things. The jewels of silver, jewels of gold, and raiment, were suited to the glory of the sphere whence they came, and to which she was invited; and once accepted and worn by Rebekah, would make her personally suitable to the scene and home to which she was called. These gifts must have for ever silenced her fears (if she had them) that she did not possess the attire and the ornaments that the bride of such "a mighty man of wealth" should possess. Nay, more, she receives and possesses them ere she has to decide whether or not she will accept the call to be the bride of Isaac.

Let all this have its application to you, dear reader: God wants you for His Son, and the Holy Ghost tells you, in the gospel, what Christ has done by His death, to fit you for the presence of God.

But you may say, "God may be willing to receive me, but I am quite unfit to go to God. How can I, who am such a sinner, go to be with Jesus in glory?"

Let not the question of unfitness keep you back, for God does not invite you without putting before you the jewels and raiment that will fit you for His presence, and for the place He calls you to. It is *He* that fits you, bear that in mind; you cannot fit yourself. All your at-

tempts to fit yourself will but end in being clothed in filthy rags.

Rebekah has listened to the messenger, she has received the gifts; he has told her about his master's son, of the wealth and honour of him who is sole heir of all his father's possessions; he tells her also that he has come to seek a bride for him, and Rebekah at length discovers that *she* is the one whom he seeks. She is asked to be the bride of Isaac. Does the thought cross her mind of her fitness? or is the question asked, "Does he wish me?" We are not told so; but, trembling, doubting one, the heavenly Bridegroom wants *thee*. Art thou willing to go? Wake up, O sinner, to see that it is *thee* he wants. Rebekah may think of the riches and honour that shall be hers as the bride of Isaac; but great as they were, they pale before the glory that shall be yours when in association with Christ in heaven.

We read in verse 53, that "the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah," thus fitting her with the bridal raiment suited to the high station about to be hers. Reader, do you want that which will fit you to be the bride of the Lamb? It is all ready for you, offered to you, as Rebekah's was to her. Will you accept as she did "Jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment"? How rich and how rare are these jewels. Let us look at them separately.

The jewel of silver is the first in order ; and as we gaze on its beauty we see engraven upon it, in sparkling letters, REDEMPTION. Gold is the symbol of DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS, while RAIMENT tells of a suited covering. Thus you see the believer has three things : 1st, Redemption ; 2nd, Righteousness ; 3rd, Raiment ; and they are all free gifts ; you have not to purchase them, you are not to work for them. Eliezer *gave* to Rebekah, and she *received*.

The meaning of the Jewels of SILVER we learn in Exod. xxx. 12-16, where we read of silver in connection with making atonement, or giving a ransom for the soul, *i.e.*, Redemption. "When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a *ransom* for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them ; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary : (a shekel is twenty gerahs :) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. 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 your souls*. And thou shalt take the *atonement*

money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, *to make an atonement for your souls.*"

In Exodus we have the first mention of redemption, and in Revelation we have the last. It is found all through Scripture till it culminates in that magnificent song of heaven: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and *hast redeemed* us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. v. 9). The blood of Jesus is the believer's redemption money—that, dear reader, is the jewel of silver he offers *thee*. Wilt thou accept it? Thou must either be redeemed or be eternally lost; and as it was of old, so is it now: "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less." The same for the rich, the same for the poor, every one must have the same Saviour, the same salvation through His sacrificial death, the same redemption price, and that is Christ. Christ from first to last, we owe all to Him. He alone is our Redeemer, our precious Jewel of Silver.

On turning to Exod. xxxviii. 25-27, we read: "And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was an hundred talents. . . . And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of

the vail; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket." The boards of the tabernacle (type of the believer) rested on the sockets of silver, in other words, had a foundation on redemption, and figuratively teach us to rest on atonement. Precious indeed in the sight of God is this fair Jewel of Silver, and shall we fail to value the heavenly gift?

How often is redemption brought before us in Scripture! Let us look at a few passages in the New Testament: and first in that epistle which gives the foundations of man's relationship to God after he has sinned. I allude to Rom. iii., where the Holy Ghost says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through *the redemption* that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation *through faith in his blood.*" Man's sin is met by God's grace, which provides a Redeemer, and a redemption based on the shed blood of that Redeemer. The sinner has only to believe in Jesus in order to enjoy present and eternal redemption from the consequences of sin that God must judge.

After man's sin, and before God's judgment of him and it, at the great white throne, Christ steps in, bears sins, and is made sin on the cross; sustains God's judgment in respect thereof, fully satisfies all the claims of God's righteous throne, makes propitiation or atonement, and effects re-

redemption for every poor sin-stained soul that trusts in Him. Mark, redemption and purchase are not the same. If I *buy* a slave, the slave is mine, and is still a slave. If I *redeem* a slave I take him out of the condition in which he was a slave, and the moment I redeem him, he is a slave no longer, but a free man through the redemption which I have effected—perhaps at a great cost to myself—but which he now rejoices in. Mere *purchase* would still leave his fetters on him, but *redemption* means their being for ever knocked off and the man set free.

Now this is exactly what the Gospel does, it delivers the sinner who believes from the righteous judgment of God,—Christ having borne it—and from the present power of Satan—Christ having overcome him. What a blessed Redeemer, and what a redemption! Who would not have Him and it when both are to be gotten by faith?

Again, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and *redemption*” (1 Cor. i. 30). How plainly it is stated here that Christ is made our redemption; but do you believe it? Are you willing to be redeemed?

Again, “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” (Gal. iii. 13). What more could He do for us? He has redeemed us “Once for all.” Once

is sufficient, for that *once* has satisfied the righteous claims of God.

We are redeemed by the blood of Christ, but oh, remember, divine judgment will inevitably overtake you if you are not sheltered by that precious blood. To be without the blood will be as certain judgment to you, as it was to the Egyptians on the night of the Passover in Egypt: but yours will be eternal judgment.

Have you ever thought of the extent of the meaning of *Redemption*? and how it affects you? What does it mean? It means that you may be set free from the judgment due to you on account of sins. "The wages of sin is death." Oh sinner, will you not flee to the refuge from the wrath to come?

Then, in Eph. i. 7 we read, "In whom we have *redemption* through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Here we have not only redemption in the Beloved, but we have the forgiveness of sins, and it is according to the *riches of his grace*.

Again, as it were, does the heavenly Bridegroom open the casket and anew offer to you this precious jewel of silver. Do not undervalue it, it may not again be offered; do not refuse it lest to the pangs of hell be added the bitter remorse, that redemption from its flames and torment had once been offered you, but you refused to be redeemed.

Again in Col. i. 14 we read, "In whom we have *redemption* through his blood;" and in Titus ii. 14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might *redeem* us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." What did He give? He *gave Himself*; to redeem whom? *All* who will receive this silver jewel of redemption. Christ Himself is the half shekel of the sanctuary; yea, He is the sanctuary itself where all may find rest and salvation.

In Hebrews ix. 12, we have it spoken of as an *eternal* redemption. "But Christ being come . . . neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained ETERNAL REDEMPTION for us."

The Spirit of God also speaks of it as a present, known, precious, and *perfect* redemption; Christ was perfect therefore his work was perfect. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter i. 19). You see it is no mere hope of redemption that is offered to you, it is a blessed certainty "*Ye know.*" Mark it well, beloved fellow-believer, "*Ye know*" it, for the precious blood of the Son of God *has* been given to redeem you.

If you simply believe in Jesus you are entitled

to swell that song of heaven which rises to the ascended Lamb of God. "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and *hast redeemed* us to God by thy blood" (Rev. v. 9).

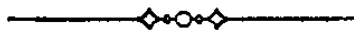
What a note! "Redeemed to God!" If you believe in Jesus you are not only redeemed from judgment and the lake of fire for ever, but "*redeemed to God*" now. I have not reached heaven yet, but I have reached God, every simple believer in Jesus can truly say. It was to effect this He died. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might *bring us to God*" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

Dear reader, Do you believe these blessed truths of God? Let me urge you not to despise them. Your own eternal ruin—spirit, soul and body, will be the sure result if you do. As the servant "gave" the "jewels of silver" to Rebekah, so do I bring to you the tidings of God's gift to the world—His Son a Redeemer, a Saviour. Oh, be entreated to accept this blessed Saviour now, and enjoy "redemption" as a present portion. The slave cannot redeem himself, nor can you. "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him" (Psa. xlix. 7). If you cannot do it for your brother, much less can you for yourself. You must let another do it for you. The only One who could do it is Jesus. His work

of redemption is finished. "He *gave himself* a ransom for all." See the cost of our redemption. Himself. Can you refuse any longer to trust Him? Nay! trust Him simply, receive Him as your Redeemer—as your redemption—and then go on your way, not ashamed to wear the priceless and sparkling "jewel of silver" sovereign grace has given you, always singing—

"My Redeemer! oh, what beauties
 In that lovely name appear;
 None but Jesus, in His glories,
 Shall the honoured title wear.
 My Redeemer,
 Thou hast my salvation wrought."

W. T. P. W.



THE GOSPEL, THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION.

In the town of R——, which is situated in the North of Ireland, lives a dear brother in the Lord, named Mc N——, whose time is wholly occupied in travelling on foot through the country, selling Bibles, Testaments, and Scriptural books. He also gives away numbers of tracts, and has many opportunities for preaching the Gospel and speaking to individuals in their own houses when on his rounds.

In the early part of 1875, he called with his books at the house of a young married man

named J. B——. Beginning to talk about the things of the Lord, they interrupted him by saying that a young man was going about the neighbourhood preaching, whose constant enquiry of his hearers was, "Have you settled the question of your soul's salvation yet?"

"Well" said McN——, "I will tell you what happened to myself. I was walking near ——, when I met a Christian lady who asked me 'Have you made your peace with God yet?' 'No ma'am' said I. 'What!' she replied, 'and you go about selling Bibles, distributing tracts, and I am told even preach the Gospel sometimes?' 'I do all that' I said. 'And yet you *have not made your peace with God?*' 'No, ma'am;' I again said, '*I could not make my peace with God, but, blessed be His name, more than eighteen hundred years ago, our Lord Jesus Christ made peace by the blood of His cross; and through grace I have been led to accept, and rest on His work, to believe on Him, and I have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*' "

J. B——'s mother (his parents lived in the same house with him and his wife) thereupon exclaimed "I think you could put the Gospel yourself;" and on his expressing his willingness to preach wherever the Lord opened the door, they at once offered their house, which was gladly accepted, and a day named for the meeting.

THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION. 41

Our brother McN—— preached several times there, and the word was used to the awakening of J. B——, who was led of the Spirit of God to see his true condition as a ruined, helpless, and hell-deserving sinner.

On the 20th December, 1875, McN—— called to see him. He gave him a copy of “*God's Glad Tidings*” for that month, and left, after calling his attention to an article entitled “It's just as God sent it, drink it up man.”

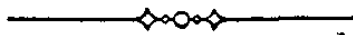
He did not return until the 27th March, 1876, On his remarking that it was about two months since he had been there last, J. B—— replied, “It is just three months and one week.” “How do you remember that day so well?” said McN——. “Ah,” he answered; “I will remember that day to all eternity. After you left, I took up the ‘*Glad Tidings*’ and began to read the first article, ‘The five go together’ (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). When I had read it I put it up on the shelf, but soon took it down again; and how many times I read it that day I cannot tell you, for it wouldn't leave me alone, nor would I leave it alone. Night came and I went to bed, but could not sleep. But just at twelve o'clock it all broke into my soul like a flood of sunshine. ‘I have it!’ I shouted, and

awoke my wife to tell her, confessing and preaching Christ to her; I then awoke my father and and mother, and told them, too, how God had saved my soul, for I was so full of it, that if there had been no one in the house, I must have gone out to awaken and tell my neighbours."

Truly it was the work of God the Holy Ghost. J. B— shortly afterwards became ill, and rapidly sank, going to be with the Lord in August; but to the very last he bore a bright testimony to his Saviour. Many of his relations coming to see him in his illness heard the gospel from his lips, which he could indeed speak out of the abundance of his heart.

Dear reader, the time is short. The Lord is at hand. The door will be shut. Is it still all darkness, gloom and uncertainty with you? Oh, I beseech of you, rest not until you can say with your whole heart, "I have it!"

You may have it now. "He that *believeth* on the Son HATH everlasting life." H. P. A. G.



FOUR ASPECTS OF THE LAMB.

LET us look at four different aspects of the Lord Jesus Christ under His title of "*Lamb*." Turn first of all to John i. 35-42. John the Baptist says, "Behold the Lamb of God." Now, a

FOUR ASPECTS OF THE LAMB.

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man's ways declare what the man is, and as a lamb is the symbol of meekness, gentleness, and lowliness, so the blessed Lord Jesus was characterised by these qualities. Listen to His own words: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am *meek* and *lowly in heart*: and ye shall find rest to your souls." A meek man is a self-denying man,—one who never stands up for his own rights, even supposing he had any. We read the man Moses was meek above all men which were upon the face of the earth, and yet Moses was but a contrast to the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God. Moses "spake unadvisedly with his mouth," but the Lord could challenge His enemies with the question, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" There was no guile found in His mouth. He was more meek than Moses.

THE WALK OF THE LAMB.

A review of the path of the Lord Jesus is most refreshing to the heart: to trace His pathway, and notice all His acts and ways, draws forth the heart in praise and worship; and it was the *walk* of the Lord that drew forth from the Baptist the exclamation, "Behold the Lamb of God." He "looked on Jesus as he walked." His soul was constrained to own Him as such by the moral beauty and more than human

dignity of His walk. Thus the Lord's ways told out who He was. He was the Lamb of God His life proclaimed His divinity. In ministry, to hold forth the *person* of the Lord Jesus always brings a blessing with it.

We have Him first as dwelling with the Father from all eternity. "The Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." Then, in view of the work of redemption, we can hear the voice of the blessed Servant of God and man saying, whilst still in the council-chamber of heaven, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God;" and then, becoming incarnate He did not despise the Virgin's womb, nor the manger at Bethlehem, nor the circumstances of shame and suffering incidental to His path of self-renouncing love; and, yet a babe, He is recognised by aged Simeon in the memorable words, "Mine eyes have seen *thy salvation*."

Again we see Jesus, at twelve years of age, in the presence of the ancients, "hearing them, and asking them questions." Years elapse, and we find Him baptised of John in Jordan, and a voice from heaven saying to Him, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." And lastly, we have His wonderful testimony of three years and a half, in which He continually went about doing good. He became a man that He might reveal the Father. Now, the effect of John's testimony was that two of

his own disciples heard him speak, and followed Jesus : a certain result from such ministry.

THE WORK OF THE LAMB.

We have the second aspect in verses 29-34 of the same chapter. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It is the same introduction so far, only another element is brought in—that of sin-bearer. He was God's Lamb, the Lamb provided by God in order to meet God's claims. You will never understand and really enjoy the Gospel until you see the source of it to be in the heart of God. Hence we read, that "God so loved the world." You may think of your sins or demerit, if you will, as bringing Him, but it was God who gave Him. The love is on God's side, and He gave His Son. It was not the death of Christ that procured the love of God, but just the reverse.

Now sacrifice attaches to the word lamb in Scripture, and the Lamb of God became the sin-bearer. The Lord Jesus bore the sins of believers, and He was also "made sin" for them ; but here we read of the "sin of the world"—a wider thought than either the sins or sin of believers. The death of Christ reaches farther in its effects than the salvation of believers. Thus we read, in Col. i. 19, 20, "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, to reconcile

all things unto himself; whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death." Here all *things* in heaven and on earth are to be reconciled by the blood of the cross, whilst believers are already reconciled through the same blessed means. So, in Heb. ix. 23, "the things in the heavens must be purified." This helps to explain the expression, "sin of the world." The work to accomplish this has been done, only we wait for power to make it good. In the millennium, righteousness will *reign*; but in the new heaven and the new earth it will *dwell*. And in them we shall see the full results of the cross—the reconciliation of all things, and the everlasting expulsion of sin from those new scenes and that new creation where "all things are of God."

Meanwhile, through the work of the Lamb of God, the forgiveness of sins is preached, and whosoever, by grace, believes in Him is justified from all things; and not only so, but is enjoined to reckon himself dead to sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

THE WORSHIP OF THE LAMB.

Now let us turn to Rev. v. 11, 12, where we shall find the third aspect of the Lamb: "And I

beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

This is a different scene. It is not a Lamb on the altar, but a Lamb worshipped by the hosts of heaven, yet the same Lamb. Oh! how refreshing the sight. Once the object of scorn and hatred, He is now the centre of universal adoration!

Once they bowed the knee before Him in mockery and proud contempt, now they fall before Him in adoring worship. Once when on Calvary's cross "sitting down they watched him there," now concentric circles of living creatures, elders, and myriad hosts of angels prostrate themselves before the enthroned Lamb of God.

“ Four and twenty elders rise
 From their princely station,
 Shout His glorious victories,
 Sing His glad salvation.
 Cast their crowns before the throne,
 Cry in reverential tone—
 Holy, holy, holy One,
 Glory be to God alone.

"Hark, these thrilling symphonies
 Seem within to seize us ;
 Add we to their holy lays—
 Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.
 Sweetest note in seraph's song,
 Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
 Sweetest anthem ever known—
 Jesus, Jesus, reigns alone."

They say with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and glory, and blessing." He was in weakness here, but He exercises power there. He was poor here, had not where to lay His head, but there He has riches. Here He was defamed, there He receives honour, and glory, and blessing. What a change for the Lamb? From the cross of shame to the throne of glory ; and of a truth He deserves such exaltation."

Some may not know what worship is. Do you think it is merely going on your knees and saying your prayers, or coming to hear the Gospel preached? To worship is to render what is worthy, but in prayer you ask for the supply of need, and in hearing you come for instruction. In worship the soul gives to God that of which He is worthy. Many Christians are more like beggars than worshippers. We may have our needs ; but have we not more mercies than necessities? Worship is the enjoyment of God's company, delight in His love, giving back to

FOUR ASPECTS OF THE LAMB.

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Him what He has first given me. If we only lived more fully in this consciousness that our cup is flowing over, as in Psalm xxiii., we would beg less and worship more. The Father knows our need, but He seeks our worship. Dear fellow Christians may our hearts flow over with streams of gratitude.

THE WRATH OF THE LAMB.

The fourth aspect is in Rev. vi. 12-17. It is not the *walk*, nor the *work*, nor the *worship*, but the *wrath* of the Lamb that we find here. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the *wrath of the Lamb.*" What? the wrath of the Lamb? Yes, a paradox, but an awful fact; a seeming contradiction, but a terrible truth! Ye who despise Him, tremble! That hand which you nailed to the cross shall wield the sceptre. That brow which you tore by the crown of thorns shall wear the diadem of glory. He who was led as a Lamb to the slaughter shall sit as a Judge on the throne.

Meekness is not weakness, gentleness is not feebleness, lowliness is not impotence, and, He,

who in the days of His flesh, displayed the grace of the Lamb, will exhibit then the omnipotence of the Judge of all; and woe to the wicked in that day! Futile will be their call to the mountains, vain their cry to the rocks—the mountains will not fall and the rocks will not hide—but the fearful vision of the Lamb's righteous wrath must be beheld by all. "Every eye shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." There is not an unconverted man who shall not see Jesus Christ some day! If you look to Him now you will find Him a Saviour, when you see Him then you will find Him a Judge. If you come to Him now you will find mercy: if you stand before Him then you will be driven away to "drink of the wine of the wrath of God . . . in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

J. W. S.

WILL YOU TRUST HIM ?

It was a bleak damp afternoon, and I had just taken my work and sat down comfortably beside the fire, promising myself a nice quiet time, when something said to me, "Go and see E——," a young man who lived in one of the cottages, and

who had been for several weeks evidently dying. However, I did not feel in the least inclined to move, still less to get ready, and go out. So I argued to myself, he is not likely to be any worse since I saw him, and I can go on Monday; besides, the last time I have been there he has been asleep, and most likely would be now too. I went on busily connecting the stitches in my knitting, and feeling quite satisfied, when again a voice seemed to say, "Go and see E——."

This time I thought, Well I must go; perhaps he is worse. And, turning to my companion, said half reluctantly, as I looked out of the window, "I have some thoughts of going to see E——." But it was in the hopes that she might prevent me, or rather agree with me that there was no immediate necessity. However, as she did not, and as the conviction deepened within me that it was of the Lord, I laid aside my work, and hastened to get ready.

Soon I was on the way, and a short walk brought me to the cottage. His mother met me at the door, and said, "Come in, Miss, if you please, E—— has never been so bad; he is a little easier now, but all the morning he has been in great agony." Going into the little home, I found the poor boy apparently asleep, propped up in bed with pillows, to make a little change in his position; his face white, pinched, and drawn, and his eyes closed. Once more

Satan whispered, "What use in coming; he is not able to speak to you; and besides, now he is sleeping, better wait for another day, and not disturb him now." But something seemed to hold me. And the poor mother went on to tell me of his sufferings, and his deep anxiety about his soul. Presently she said, "He is not sleeping now, and maybe if I go away he will speak more freely to you alone." So she quietly left the room.

Oh, how powerless one feels to do aught for a soul on the very brink of eternity. Oh, the immensity of the thought, as the vast illimitable future presents itself before one, and the untold value in God's sight of an immortal soul! O, thoughtless one, stop for a moment, and let me tell you this, You stand on the very threshold of eternity! You may not be disposed to believe me. Yet how narrow the boundary that separates from the unseen, and how short may be the moment until it is crossed! Are you satisfied, let me ask you, to cross it *as you are*? Are you prepared to meet God? for meet Him you must one day, and that either as a judge or a justifier. If as a judge you stand before Him you *can* only be condemned; but if as a justifier, then indeed you have naught to fear, for the soul that trusts in Christ is for ever justified, and stands before God in all the virtue and completeness of Christ Himself. God has accepted His

perfect sacrifice, the atonement offered by Him, and His verdict has gone forth regarding the believer, "Ye are complete in Him."

Presently stooping over the little bed, and speaking very softly, I told the dying lad that he could not be long here, and asked him was he ready to go. But he gave me no answer, and once more Satan whispered, "He is much too ill to speak, better not disturb him now." But I still bent over him, and said, "Oh E——, you have heard often of the Lord's love, and you know what He has done, don't you?" Slowly the white parched lips moved as he said,

"Yes, Miss."

"And are you going to be with Him?" I asked.

"I hope so."

"O E——!" I said, "you have no time left to hope. You must know for certain, and you must know *at once*. Either He has done *all* for you or He has done nothing. And you know that He has done all, and done it perfectly; and that He has not left you anything to do but to trust Him. And you will soon be where none, not even He can help you. And now I want you to tell me, will you *trust* Him?"

A look of deep thought passed over his face, but he gave me no answer. Presently I said again—

"E—— do you think He is worth trusting?"

I had not to wait for an answer this time, for he said at once, quite firmly, and looking up at me, as if surprised at my question.

“ Oh, yes, Miss.”

“ Well then,” I said, “ you know what He has done; you know what He can do. You have just told me that He is *worth trusting*. And now I want to ask you just one thing more. Think a moment and answer me, *Will you trust Him ?* ”

Slowly and heavily the weary head turned away, and I could see tears gather in the poor sunken eyes. I had to wait some time before I got any answer, and at last I said,

“ *Do you trust Him ?* ”

The Lord had met that soul. He had given him the portion that he needed. And now, as he turned his face to me again, and I repeated my question, for I fancied he had not heard, I felt little doubt in my mind that he spoke the truth, as slowly and firmly he said,

“ Yes.”

We had a little more chat together, though he was very weak, but quite enough to make me fully satisfied that he had indeed found that rest which the Saviour loves to give. Poor E—— ! his weary days and nights of suffering were nearly at an end, for early the next night the Lord called him home. And, oh, how thankful I felt that He had allowed me to speak to him in time. Just think for a moment of the awful con-

sequences to that poor soul, had he refused and slighted God's wondrous grace.

What is all that earth can give; what is the whole world, with all its glitter and amusements weighed in the light of eternity? Surely it is lighter than vanity. The pleasures of earth can never satisfy, not even at the time, and they only leave the soul more thirsty than ever. The portion the heart needs to satisfy it is not to be found under the sun. There are no living waters that have their source in this world; no food here that can satisfy the heart. Husks you may have if you can buy them, but the price is your soul.

Do you thirst? let me ask you. Then I would tell you of a spring where you may quench your thirst, and more—never thirst again. Oh, you say, I would like to drink at that spring. Well, blessed be God, it is free, and the invitation is to you if you thirst. "Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto *me* and drink" (John vii. 37). And again, "Who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, *shall never thirst*" (John iv. 14). Go to that fountain *as you are*. Go simply and honestly to God. You will have your thirst quenched, your soul satisfied, and then you will not need to seek your delight in the poor unsatiating pleasures that earth can alone afford.

I.

MAN'S CHARGE AND GOD'S REPLY.

“This man receiveth sinners.”—LUKE. xv. 2.

HARK! the voice of man's derision,
When the Saviour was with men,—
“Yes, this man receiveth sinners,
And He eateth, too, with them.”

List! the voice of God replying,—
“Yes, the sinner I receive,
'Tis my joy the lost, the rebel,
And the outcast, to receive.”

“Yes, *my joy.*” O wondrous tidings!
'Tis the *pleasure* of our God
To forgive, for Christ has suffered,
He has borne Jehovah's rod.

Christ has met the claims of justice,
Met it in His precious blood;
When the sinner's willing surety,
'Neath God's righteous wrath He stood.

Yes, the voice of man's derision
God endorses thus—“'Tis true”
Christ receiveth outcast sinners,—
Sinner, still He waits for *you!*

Waits, that heavenly tongues, rejoicing,
May return the happy strain,—
“He, who once was lost is welcomed—
He, once dead's alive again!”

A. M.

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

CHAP. III. THE BRIDE'S "JEWELS OF GOLD."

"And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and *jewels of gold*, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah."—GEN. xxiv. 53.

WHEN the servant comes to call Rebekah, he brings out the things that fit her for the sphere to which she is called. We have seen the value of the "jewels of silver," viz., *redemption*; now let us look at the "jewels of gold."

Gold, in Scripture, is used as a symbol of *Divine righteousness*. As such, it occurs in many of the types of the Old Testament, specially in the articles in the Tabernacle and Temple, which are symbolic of God's righteousness in government and judgment.

Take, for example, the Ark of the Covenant. "And they shall make an ark of shittim wood; two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with *pure gold*; within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make a crown of gold round about. . . . And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee" (Exod. xxv. 10, 11, 16).

Now the ark of the Covenant was the throne

where God manifested Himself in righteousness, if any could, in righteousness, draw near to Him. God who was to be approached is holy, infinitely so; and holiness is a nature which delights in purity and repels evil; hence He sits on a throne, which judges in righteousness and with authority the evil that holiness abhors. Further, the law—the testimony of what God required of man—was in the ark, but thank God it was covered by the mercy-seat. Another has well said, “Suppose an ark with no mercy-seat. The law would then be uncovered; there would be nothing to hush its thunderings, nothing to arrest the execution of its righteous sentence. Could a nation of transgressors stand before it? Could a holy and righteous God meet sinners there? Could mercy reign, or grace shine forth from such an ark? Impossible! An uncovered ark might furnish a throne of judgment, but not a seat of mercy.”

But God knew this better than we, and hence we read, “And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of *pure gold*: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, *in* the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end; even *of* the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof, and the

cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; *toward* the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark, and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee " (Exod. xxv. 17-22).

The mercy-seat thus formed the basis of the throne of God, as the cherubim (made of the same piece), which were its supporters, did its sides. Both were of gold—*pure gold*. Thus in the ark and its covering and supports, we seem to have a marvellous connection of human and Divine righteousness in the Lord Jesus. He was perfect in human obedience and love to His Father, and lived perfectly up to the responsibility of man according to God. But He also glorified God. All that God is was glorified by the Son of Man, and not only does the Son of Man go righteously into the glory of God, but by His going to the Father righteousness is proved; and we can go where He is in virtue of Him and His work for us.

The shittim wood and the tables of the law are in the ark, but all is clothed with the gold—God's own righteousness.

The cherubim, who always in Scripture are connected with the judicial power of God, or are the executors of the will of that power, are of

gold also, and the direction of their faces is important. *Inwards* towards the mercy-seat. Why? Because they could thus see that which the moral nature of God demanded should be on the mercy-seat, if man, a sinner, is to draw near to a holy God who hates and must judge sin. But what do they see on the mercy-seat? *Blood*. Yes, blood must be put upon the mercy-seat, as the witness of the work of atonement done for those who had failed in responsibility before God. The claims of His throne must and can only be met by blood—the sign of death having been undergone—and when the blood is sprinkled the cherubim gaze upon it as expressive of the satisfaction of God in that which enables Him to permit the sinner to approach to Himself.

What a comfort to see thus that God's claims in righteousness are met by the blood of atonement, and we draw nigh to a mercy-seat sure of acceptance in righteousness!

We have the same truth taught by the use of gold in the New Testament. For example, turn to the book of judgment, which the Revelation most emphatically is. There the Apostle John says: "I saw . . . in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and *girt about the paps with a GOLDEN GIRDLE.*" John had often seen Jesus, had often enjoyed sweet companionship with Him, had heard His life

and peace-giving words, had lain his head on His loving bosom, knew Him well; but now when he sees Christ, he sees Him with a garment down to His feet, and he recognises Him not. The garment down to the feet shows priestly discriminating judgment, the golden girdle Divine righteousness as displayed in Christ where He now is.

He threatens with judgment those who have departed from Him. Priestly discrimination and judgment are here brought out. It is no longer grace meeting man's need, but judgment meeting him as he is.

That the "golden girdle" signifies Divine righteousness is clear from Isaiah xi. 5, where the Spirit of God, speaking of the judicial dealings of Christ in righteousness with the earth, which usher in the millennium, says, "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

Again, the Lord says to the Church of Laodicea, "Because thou sayest I am *rich* . . . and knowest not that thou art . . . *poor* . . . I counsel thee to buy of me *gold* tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich" (Rev. iii. 17, 18). What a solemn call! And who is it to? To the professing Church, accounting itself rich without having Christ as the righteousness of the soul by faith.

Reader, are you a mere professor? or do you

really possess Christ as your righteousness before God? If the former, you had better heed the call of Christ in glory to possess yourself of true and approved righteousness by buying it of Him. You must have to do with Him in order to get it.

Now in order to stand before God, man must have a righteousness suited to God. Do you think man has any righteousness? No, yet he must be righteous to stand before a righteous God. Man may say, "I will work it out, I will fit myself for the presence of God," but when he stands before God he finds he has no righteousness; "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6). Ah, why does man not take God's word for truth, and seeing that he can have no righteousness of his own, accept what God has provided and so freely gives?

"There is none righteous, no, not one," is written against man once and again by God (Psa. xiv.; Psa. liii.; Rom. iii). Spite of this, many serious souls drop into the snare laid by Satan, and, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. x. 3). Dear reader, are you one of this class? If so, may God use this paper to show you the utter folly of your course.

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

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Now the essence of the Gospel is this, that when man is utterly helpless and guilty, and can furnish no righteousness suited to God, so as to be able to stand before Him, then God comes out, and by the work of the Cross—the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus—confers on every one who believes in Jesus Divine righteousness, which enables the soul to stand before God in unclouded peace. When man has no righteousness for God, then God has righteousness for man.

This is the burden of Romans iii., to which I would direct my reader. Should you think that in order to stand before God there must be *works* on your part, how does verse 20 dispel such an illusion, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the *knowledge* of sin,” not the blotting of it out. The law can recognise, detect, and measure the sin, and then can only condemn the sinner, so that it is clear the law can afford no help, and confer no righteousness. Whence, then, is it found, if not in man’s own efforts to keep the law? The answer is plain. “But now the righteousness of God, without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, *unto all and upon all them that believe*: for there is no difference; for *all have sinned*, and come short of the

glory of God" (verses 21, 23). All have sinned, all come short of yielding what was due to God, and then, all being manifestly without righteousness, God manifests His righteousness *to all*, and confers it *upon all that believe* (not who work).

The *aspect* of this manifested righteousness is unto *all*, *i.e.* it is universal; its *application* is to *all that believe*. Here is a limit, "all them that *believe*." But why this limitation? Because "righteousness" is not by "works" now, but by *faith* on our side, even as it is of *grace* on God's part, as it is written, "Being justified freely *by his grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (or mercy-seat) through *faith* in his blood, to declare . . . at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 24-26). The righteousness of God is declared to be this, that He is just in justifying the one who believes in Jesus. This is no new doctrine, for "Abraham *believed* God, and it (his faith) was counted to him for righteousness;" and at a later day, David also (Psa. xxxii.) "describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. iv. 3, 6, 7).

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

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Now the point of all this is, that it is God's grace and not man's good behaviour which secures these blessings to the poor guilty one. Did you ever ponder these words of the Spirit of God, dear self-righteousness worker? "Now to him that *worketh* is the reward not reckoned of *grace*, but of *debt*. But to him that *worketh not*, but *believeth* in him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for *righteousness*" (Rom. iv. 4, 5). If I work for you at £1 per week, it is only right and fair you should pay when the work is done; this is *debt*; but if, when the work I should have done I fail to do, and then you come and give me £5, that would be *grace*. Just so does God act. Unable ourselves to do anything but sin, Christ has come in grace, and on the cross borne sins, and been made sin. The judgment due by God to sin has been sustained by Jesus, and He has glorified God about sin.

The proof of this is clear, for God "raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 24, 25). Then what now is this justifying righteousness of God? Simply, WHAT IS DUE TO CHRIST. Our due, and the due of sin, Christ took and sustained on the cross. The judgment that was due to us fell on Him. The moment He bare "the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28), God in righteousness forsook Him, hence His cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou for-

saken me?" What is the answer to this cry? God raises Him from the dead, and then in righteousness accepts and connects with Christ every one who has faith in Him.

To make it plain. Christ took *my place* in death and judgment on the cross, and now I get *Christ's place* before God, by faith in His blood. Is this right? Clearly so; it is due to Christ that if He took my portion to extricate me from it, I should share His portion, if, in grace, He be willing to share it with me. God, therefore, against whom I have sinned, is "just" in now justifying me, because Jesus has been delivered and condemned for my sin, and then raised by God in proof of His satisfaction and delight in Him and His work of redemption for me. I might go further, and say He would be unjust to Christ to condemn me for those very sins for which He condemned His Son. Nay, He is righteous, "faithful and just," as St. John puts it, and shows His righteousness by justifying every soul that clings in faith to His beloved Son. He judges sin, and justifies the sinner who believes in Jesus. Thus is God's righteousness declared.

How beautifully harmonious is every part of this wondrous way of possessing a righteousness suited to God, needed by man, provided by God, and possessed by the believer!

A threefold cord of righteousness now binds the believer to God, and the scripture says,

“A threefold cord is not quickly broken.” The various strands of this golden cord of righteousness are: (1) *Grace*; (2) *Blood*; (3) *Faith*.

1. God's GRACE is the SOURCE of justification.

“*Being justified* freely by his *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. iii. 24).

2. Christ's BLOOD is the MEANS of justification.

“Much more then, *being now* (not hoping to be by-and-by) *justified* by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Rom. v. 9).

3. The soul's FAITH is the PRINCIPLE of justification.

“Therefore *being justified* by *faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1).

Now if these be the true sayings of God, where have you room for “works”? Nowhere, at least in Romans. Some one will say, What about St. James? Does he not say, “Ye see then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith *only*”? Yes, he says this, and it is most needed. But do not for a moment think that Paul and James clash. The truth is this. In Romans you are justified *before God* BY FAITH, and that only; in James you are justified *before men* BY WORKS. God can see faith, men cannot, but they can see works. God must see both, and surely will see works where faith exists.

But there is more than this. Not only is the

believer justified *from* all offences by faith in the Lord Jesus, but "they which receive abundance of grace, and of the *gift of righteousness*, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 17). The "*gift of righteousness*" is to be "received," you notice, not earned, as many suppose. When received by faith, the possessor is assured he shall "reign in life." This sweetly accords with the expression "justification of life," which flings a flood of light upon the present standing of the believer. "So then as it was by one offence towards all men to condemnation, so by one righteousness towards all men for *justification of life*. For as indeed by the disobedience of the one man the many have been constituted sinners; so also by the obedience of the one many will be constituted righteous" (Rom. v. 18, 19, New. Trans.) In verse 18 we have the *aspect* of Adam's path and Christ's given us in contrast. Adam's involves "condemnation," Christ's "justification of life." In verse 19, you have the *effects*. Adam's disobedience constituted all his family "sinners." Christ's obedience constitutes all who are His, and we are His by faith in His blood, "righteous."

Then the moment I am linked with Christ by faith I see (1) that I am through His work justified from all the offences and sins of my old life as a child of Adam, and (2) that I am the possessor of a new life called in Romans vi. 23,

“eternal life,” and that I have “justification of life,” and hence shall “reign in life,” being constituted “righteous” by God Himself, in virtue of my association with Him who died and rose again, and is now at God’s right hand in glory.

Christ is my subsisting righteousness before God, as says the Spirit in 1 Cor. i. 30, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is *made* unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and *redemption*.”

We also read in 2 Cor. v., “He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

The truth therefore is, that Christ is the believer’s righteousness before God, and the believer is also made the witness as well as the subject of His righteousness, inasmuch as he is brought into the same place of nearness to God, in life and glory, as Christ Himself (viewed of course as the man who died and rose again). The believer and Christ are viewed as one, and as Christ is the righteous One, all His are viewed as possessors of a righteousness in Him, which is suited to the glory of God where Christ now is. On the cross Christ identified Himself with us in our sin, shame, guilt, and death. By His atoning death all we had done and been was for ever swept away from before God. Rising from the dead, the head of a new family, He associates with Himself in life, standing, and place before

God in glory, all who trust Him, and whom therefore He calls His "brethren."

In conclusion I would only now ask you, beloved reader, have you yet accepted the "jewels of gold," the Gospel messenger brings to you? Have you yet received the "gift of righteousness"? If not, I would urge you to delay taking so important a gift no longer. Come to Jesus as you are. Receive Him, and in receiving Him you will receive all and far more than I have written of, for all that God can give you in blessing is wrapped up in the person of Christ, and once you receive Him you receive all. May you be able to see what another saw and wrote, viz. :—

"The risen Christ had ended
 Righteousness of *law* ;
 God's righteousness was something
 Quite distinct, I saw.
 That MAN above—whose dying
 Closed the things of old—
 WAS HEAD OF GOD'S CREATION,
 Channel of the *gold*.

That MAN was in the glory,
 I in Him up there ;
 Before His God and Father,
 I was *thus* brought near.
 The Place I found was opened,
 Where was wealth untold—
 The MAN beginning all things,
 In Himself the *gold*.

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.

I once was lost, a sinner
Under Satan sold,
And now I'm lost in glory,
In the source of *gold*.
'Tis when God's Christ in glory,
We at last behold,
We learn, as with Rebekah,
He begins with *GOLD*."

W. T. P. W.

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.

IN January, 1874, dear reader, I awoke to the fact that I was going on very badly, and I said to myself, "This sort of thing will not do, I must take the pledge." From this you will gather what was my besetting sin. But the one thing that kept me from taking the pledge was, that I knew I should break it very soon after I had taken it, and then I thought I should look so foolish, besides, to break the pledge would be so ungentlemanly. But it never occurred to me how I was sinning against God. You see, God was not in my thoughts at all, and that is why I thought of trying man's way of keeping his fellow-creature from sin.

I was at that time out in Australia, up country, and it was on the 28th of January, when riding to the township with the letters for England, that I awoke to the fact that I was not only ruining myself in health and strength, but that I was sinning

against God, and that I had to answer to God for my sins. Then came an awful time for me! I knew what a sinner I had been, and I thought that God was going to cut me off in my sins. I had never till this time realised, firstly, that there was a God; secondly, that I was a sinner; thirdly, that I the sinner was alone, with God's eye on me. I tried to remember texts in the Bible. I could not. I tried to remember prayers from the Prayer-Book, not one came into mind, and every moment I was afraid that it would be too late, and God would cut me off suddenly.

It is a remarkable thing that the thought of taking the pledge never entered my mind then, as Adam, when he had sinned, put a fig-leaf apron on of his own making, but when he heard the voice of God in the garden, he forgot his fig-leaf apron, and tried to hide himself from His presence. In the same way it was a terrible thing for me riding along a solitary road alone with God's eye on me, and knowing I could not hide from Him. I reached the township at last, and got through the business I had to do, hardly knowing what I did, I was so wretched. Was it any wonder that a friend stopped me and said, "Why R—, how awfully ill you look!" Was it not enough to make me look ill, knowing that I had twenty-five years of sin to answer for to a holy God, believing as I did that he was going to make me answer for them then?

I started back from the township, and I so well remember the terror I had of the lonely ride back of eighteen miles. So frightened was I, that I bought a new pair of spurs, for I felt I could not get my horse on quick enough, for however fast I went, I was still a sinner alone with God ; but I remembered I had a Bible in my box, as yet unopened the two years I had been out in Australia, and I thought at all events I will get some comfort from that, so I never drew rein till I got to the home station. Directly I got there I went straight to my room, and the whole of that night was I down on my knees, trying to pray, or reading parts of Scripture, but no light nor comfort broke in upon me.

The next day I was really ill from trouble and grief, and the twenty-five years of unforgiven sin weighed so heavily upon me, that I went and unburdened my heart to one who, by her life, I knew possessed something I had not, and I thought she had the forgiveness of sins I was seeking, and would be able to tell me the way to get it too. I shall never forget her astonishment when she heard that the one who had outstripped all others on the station in vice, had been down on his knees all night trying to pray, and that what made him look so worn and ill was because he had twenty-five years of sin to answer for to God, and he did not know how they were to be forgiven.

All I seemed to carry away of what she said to me was, "Read the Gospel of John, Mr. R——." So I set to work, and next evening I got to the fifth chapter, and I read in the twenty-fourth verse, "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." Why, said I, I am reading His word now, and I do believe that God sent Jesus into the world to die on the cross, so in that case if the Bible is true (and I know it is), I have everlasting life, and I shall not come into condemnation for those twenty-five years of sin. So down I went on my knees, and told God I did believe, praying Him to help my unbelief. Then I felt as if a load had been lifted off me, and I well remember while I was working the next day that I simply sang to myself, "I have everlasting life, I shall not come into condemnation."

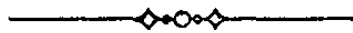
God had showed me that there is no condemnation for him that is in Christ Jesus. Was not that enough to make a man's heart sing for joy, who had been two nights groaning under twenty-five years' unforgiven sin? But this is not all. God has shown—wonderful though this is—not only is there no condemnation for him that is in Christ Jesus, but, dear reader, in that same eighth chapter of Romans He has shown

“GOD SPEAKETH ONCE, YEA TWICE.” 75

me there is no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and that same God against whom I sinned for twenty-five years, I can now call Abba, Father.

Dear reader, how many years of sin have you to answer for? May the Lord in His love make you as miserable as He made me, for I know that then it will not be long before He shows you, as He showed me, that “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.”

E. P. R.



“GOD SPEAKETH ONCE, YEA TWICE, YET
MAN PERCEIVETH IT NOT.”

JOB xxxiii. 16.

ABOUT two months ago I was asked to visit an elderly woman in W——, who was in a dying condition, and who was known to have been for many years a great drunkard. I went to her house and found her in much pain, bodily and mental, but still quite capable of understanding everything that was said to her. The nurse had told me that her mistress was quite aware that death might seize her at any moment, so I felt my way clear at once.

On talking with the sick woman I found from

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her youth she had, as she said, had nothing but hard work, Sunday and everyday of the week alike, shop always open, and work and care always fully to occupy her mind and time.

I reviewed her past life, and showed her how, for many long years, she had been sinning against God and rejecting Christ. She admitted she was a sinner, but had not, as far as she knew, done any one any particular harm, but had always paid her way steadily through the world. She listened attentively while I told her of God's great love in sending His only begotten Son into this world to die for sinners, and that the Lord Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost; and that by taking her place before God as a lost, guilty, hell-deserving sinner, and by faith in the Person and the precious blood of Christ, she would have eternal life. After speaking with her, and prayer, I placed in her hands the little tract (in form of a book), "None cast out." She promised to read it. I then left the house.

For a period of five weeks I constantly visited this poor woman (two sisters in the Lord also frequently visited her); but I always found, after the most solemn appeals to her, she was deaf to everything, her own cares and trials being the one thought with her. I told her Satan was occupying her time with these cares, that he might drag her soul down into the lake of

fire. Her reply was, "Cares she had, and she must attend to them, for no one ever had such troubles as she had."

Once I was told she had said she had peace. On visiting her the day after I had heard this, I asked her what were her grounds for peace? She replied: "I have barely any pain now, and am much more comfortable." So Satan was quieting her soul in this way. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess. v. 3).

Once, on visiting her with my brother, she said the Almighty had told her at night that she was not to be afraid, as He would soon take her to heaven; but at this time I fear she was under the influence of an opiate or brandy.

The evening before her death I went to see her, and I observed there were two or three strangers in the room; the dying woman saw me and put out her hand to me, and thanked me for my visits; but she spoke these awful words: "I am afraid it is too late." I told her of the love of God, and of the precious blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin; but I fear she was in such pain she hardly heard what I said. On my speaking thus, a woman in the room said something about my making nothing of works, and then said something about baptism into the Church being salvation. I denied this, and the woman left the room, went downstairs

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in anger, speaking loudly to the nurse, and then went out of the house. I then went out of the room, followed by the daughter of the dying woman, and I learnt that the people in the room were Roman Catholics, one being a sister of the dying woman.

The next morning, we looked in just to speak a word of comfort to the poor daughter. Death had entered the scene, and the soul had gone—where? We were invited into the room, and had scarcely taken a stand, when the nurse said, in a loud triumphal tone, "She had all the rights of the Church, and died in perfect peace." The daughter assured us she knew nothing of this—that she had only been out once during the evening, for about one hour, to bring the doctor; but I afterwards heard that it was during her absence "extreme unction" was said to have been administered to the dying woman.

And now, dear reader, I would call your attention to the heading of this story—"God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not." In this case God had spoken three separate times to this woman,—for she had lost and buried three husbands. But how is it with you, reader? God is speaking plainly and loudly to you—"Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets" (Eccles. xii. 5). Are you ready to meet your God, or are you thinking of putting it off to some other day, when you may

be taken ill, and will have time to think about it? Take care, you may never have a death bed, but may be cut off in a moment; or sickness may come, and pain, and so rack your poor frame, that there will be no time and no power to think. The writer of this can tell you of a time he suffered acute pain for four days and nights, and could not have listened to God's message of salvation, had he then wished to; but he knew he had a Saviour, a living Saviour in the glory, and so his soul was in perfect peace.

“Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”
J. D.



“ON WHAT WOULD YOU REST YOUR
SOUL, IF YOU WERE DYING?”

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST.”—Matt. xi. 28.

“One Priest alone can pardon me,
And bid me go in peace;
Can speak those words “Absolve te,”
And bid these heart throbs cease.”

A FEW months ago, in all the beauty and glow of summer, a poor Roman Catholic lay dying in the ward of a large city hospital. Disease had worn out his bodily frame, and the weakness of death now oppressed him. But his mind was

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clear, indeed clearer than it had ever been in the vigour of life and health, for now there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and though there was not one near to tell him so, he felt the tremendous reality of an undying soul entering an unending eternity, and passing, consciously unsaved, into the presence of a holy God.

Like the poor leper of old, L—— was ready to cry "Unclean, unclean;" and shown by the Holy Spirit his lost and ruined condition, his one thought now was, "What must I do to be saved?"

Reader, what would be *your* thoughts were you in the same condition as L——, had you, like him, but a few hours to live? Do you think his fears unreasoning and unmeaning? Do you expect, did you pass into the presence of a holy God in your unconverted state, to find it *heaven* to you? Hear, then, what *God* says on the subject, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." These are not the words of any mere human being, they are the words of the Lord Himself, and He means what He says: you may have often *heard* them before, *think* of them now.

But to return to poor L——. The same Holy Spirit, who can use the feeblest and most inadequate instrument to reveal Divine truth to the soul, was about, through untoward means indeed, by the revelation of the full and com-

plete work of Christ, to answer the cry and meet the need of this poor dying sinner.

Hoping for rest and relief, L—— anxiously asked a priest to be sent for, and was at once attended by one. The man heard L——’s confession, heard his story of sin and misery so far as it could be related; for the deepest human sense of sin must necessarily be superficial after all. It is only as we in some measure learn what it cost God to forgive sin, even the death of His beloved *Son*, the One who is equal with Himself, that we learn what *God* thinks of sin. The Cross is His full estimation of it. *There* I see not only my sins forgiven, but my sinful nature which committed them, put an end to. It is only, as the Holy Spirit enables us to see who the One who suffered there was—the very brightness of God’s glory, and never more so than when He suffered—what He left, the glory He had with the Father before the world was, what He went into when He said, “I sink into deep mire where there is no standing; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me;” it is only when we in any measure take in all this, that we can at all see what sin, and therefore what salvation, really is in God’s sight.

God is just indeed, but now He can righteously become the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. This He showed when He raised Christ from the dead. The perfection and completion

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of the redemption He accomplished was thus fully shown. It was impossible that He, the righteous One, could be holden by death. But the Father's entire expression of satisfaction in the atoning work of the Cross, is seen by His highly exalting Christ and placing Him at His own right hand in heaven, where he has "for ever sat down," having by one offering perfected for ever all who, in simple faith, come unto God by Him. So that if I now seek to add my works to what Christ has done, to help in my salvation by anything of my own doing, I thereby deliberately challenge God's holiness in accepting Christ's work as all-sufficient, and therefore declaring Himself completely satisfied therewith. The awfulness of the position I thus place myself in, eternity alone will disclose.

However, the priest, when L—— had finished his story, pronounced him fully absolved,* and then proceeded to administer the extreme unction of the Church of Rome.

Every rite and ceremony by which she seeks to soothe the conscience of the dying was duly gone through ; and then, having no more to do, the priest rose to leave. But the poor dying man called him back,—“Oh, give me, tell me something that will save my soul !” The priest looked astonished. “My son, the Church has fully provided for all your need.”

* “Absolve te” are the words used on this occasion by the Roman Catholic priests.

“ But I am dying ! *I am dying !* Tell me, in pity tell me, *what* would you rest your own soul on if you were in my state ? ”

The priest paused for a moment, and then, drawing a small crucifix from beneath his clothes, he said, as he held it before the dying man,—

“ I should rest my soul on the work of the One who died for me on that cross.”

“ Oh, tell me that again, tell it to me once more ! ” said poor L——.

“ I say, I should rest my soul for salvation on the One who died there,” replied the priest.

“ That is enough for me ; you have told me enough,” and lifting up his hands for an instant in the attitude of worship, L—— closed his eyes, lay back on the pillow, and died.

Does the reader of this true incident trust, look to, or in any way turn for peace of soul now, for hope in a dying hour, to any outward rite or ceremony of any Church whatever ? Let him know, as surely as he holds this paper in his hands, such a hope and such a trust will utterly fail him “ in the hour of death and in the day of judgment.” Though the sinner’s conscience may be quieted, and in some measure satisfied, as, alas ! it often is, God is not satisfied, and He will not be mocked. The only refuge that will prove unfailing in the end, is the one of God’s own providing. The wages of sin most surely is death, wages which must be paid,

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either by the Saviour or the sinner. If not by the Saviour who died for me, then by me in a death which is undying. God has no other alternative, no other way to deliver me from going down to the pit than by the adequate price He has found in the ransom paid by Christ. See, then, the dread consequences of neglecting this great salvation, of standing in unsaved responsibility before the judgment-seat of Christ.

How will you grapple with eternity without Christ? Be wise, then, oh sinner, to-day! Come to Christ as you are, where you are; you will get more than a welcome from Him. If you really wish to come to Christ, know that He wishes it far more than you ever could, so that it cannot be long before you meet.

He knows there is in your heart a need, a craving, a want of rest, that can only be filled and satisfied by God Himself, and He is ready, longing to-day to give you all you need. See how precious your soul is in His sight, when all that Christ did was done in order to save you. God had no other object. It is thus He glorifies His Son, and shows out His own great love in a way that, but for your need, never could have been known. Behold, then, "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," even Him who has said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest," and "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." R. B.

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

CHAP. IV. THE BRIDE'S "RAIMENT."

"And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and *raiment*, and gave them to Rebekah."—GEN. xxiv. 53.

WE have looked at the "jewels of silver" and "jewels of gold;" now, I would desire to direct your attention to the "raiment." But let me first say it is of no use hearing the Gospel unless it produces an effect upon you, unless it shows you what you are, and what God is, and what He has done for you. Unless it turns you to the Lord for salvation, the effect of your hearing the Gospel is but to add the weight of heavy responsibility to your already sin-burdened soul.

God is calling you in this hour of His grace to association with Christ in glory; He is offering you a place with Christ. Christ could not have a place down here because of the sin and wickedness of man, so God gives us a place with Christ in glory. He offers you a part or portion with Christ. Eliezer travelled from Canaan to Padan-Aram for a bride for Isaac; Christ is in glory, and the Holy Ghost came down from heaven at Pentecost, and from that time till now his constant effort has been, and is, to lead souls to yield themselves to Christ. There ever have

been, and will be, hindrances and difficulties in the way; for Satan is ever busy in trying to keep you out of the blessings God has for you—the great blessing of being “One with Christ.” But what breaks down all opposition of Satan and the human heart is that God wants to bless you. Do you believe that God really wants, and is waiting to bless you?

Reader, do you possess that which fits you and gives you a true title to be in the presence of God? have you the bright hope before you of this glory with Christ? Before you can stand in His presence you must have on suited raiment; the courtly Robe of Heaven must be yours—and that is Christ. God has provided it for you, and I, as the ambassador of God, now offer you in His Name

CHRIST, THE RAIMENT.

Oh, sinners, and all ye workers *for* salvation, better far barter your own self-made clothing, which is useless before God, and accept what He in His grace and mercy has provided for you; provided for you without money and without price. Your own raiment, in the way, I mean, of good works, almsgiving, or morality, may do well enough to clothe you in the sight of your fellow-sinners; but they are no covering in the sight of a God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and, sinner, you must be clad suitably for God or be eternally lost.

There is a great difference between working *for* salvation and working *from* salvation; the first is your own futile attempts to clothe yourself; the latter is working because God has already clothed you and made you fit for his service.

The first covering or raiment we read of in Scripture is the fig-leaf "aprons" of Adam and Eve; and what avail were they when the guilty ones heard the voice of God, saying, "Where art thou?" They knew they were naked, and they tried to hide themselves from God. The miserable knowledge obtained by their sin had but taught them they were now unfit for the presence of God. You, whose life has been one long pathway of sin—sins of so deep a dye that you blush at their remembrance—mark, it was *one* sin only that made Adam unfit to stand before God. *One* sin drove the guilty ones from the Garden of Eden; *one* sin brought death into the world: what then about your numberless sins?

Can you brave the presence of a sin-hating God in nothing but your nakedness and burden of guilt? Adam and Eve hid themselves, for they could not stand in His presence in their nakedness. But oh, the love of God's heart! No sooner was clothing needed than He in mercy and love provided it. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. iii. 21). How different is their clothing now. Instead of an "apron" in

which God has not put one stitch—the whole thing being paltry human effort—each is arrayed in a “coat” in which man has not put one stitch, for the Lord God made and conferred the suited garment. What grace, and what a lesson to workers for salvation now! And, sinner, Adam’s need was not greater then, than yours is at this present moment; and God is as willing now to clothe you as He was to clothe Adam and Eve.

But do you *know* your need? Oh, what can cover the nakedness of your guilty sin-stained soul? I do not address you as a *poor* sinner, but as a *guilty* sinner in need of clothing in order to fit you to stand before a sin-hating God. Doing your best will not do: it but discloses the sense of your guilt and need by arraying yourself in what you think will suit God; but it will not do. Your own clothing is filthy rags in the sight of God: you are but trying to hide behind your works, as Adam tried to hide himself from God behind the trees of the garden. But you, like he, shall be drawn from your hiding-place and obliged to own yourself to be naked and undone before God; obliged to own your own clothing to be valueless.

The Apostle Paul’s wonderful comment on this is found in 2 Cor. v. 1-3: “For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For

in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven (if so be that being clothed we shall not be found *naked*).”

This last clause is very solemn. The Apostle had fears that some in Corinth might be found like Adam — *naked* — when they were clothed, *i.e.*, when in resurrection. Though resurrection should bring soul and body together again, so that he called the person clothed, nevertheless he fears they may be found *naked*—in other words, Christless — not having that covering for the whole man which fits it for the presence of God. How awful to be a mere professor of Christ here — to have on a lovely garb of morality, so-called good works, and religiousness, so as to pass current as one of Christ’s people; to die, that is to be unclothed; to rise again, alas! not in the first but the second resurrection, that is, to be clothed, and then find yourself in the holy blaze of the great white throne a *naked sinner*, never having been washed from your sins in the blood of Christ, nor had Him as your clothing before God!

Reader, are you clothed? have you Christ as your raiment? or do you think you will be accepted as you are?

Look at Matt. xxii. 11: “And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how

camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." We have here a warning, as well as the truth of the end of this dispensation, for it is the guests here, not the bride; but the warning is for all who have not on raiment. "How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" The King gave him an opportunity of telling the reason why he had no wedding garment on; but what is the result? what the consequence of this meeting between the King and his guest? The man was *speechless*. How camest thou in thus? Was there no provision made for the guests? Was there no raiment for thee? Yes, there was the robing chamber, and there were garments provided, as is the custom in the East, but the man neglected the provision made, and the result was the command, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness." Oh! soul, will you be warned ere it be too late? God would fit you for His presence; Christ is the garment, the royal raiment He has provided for you, therefore, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

The man here described did not want a robe; he may have been one of the "good" mentioned in verse 10; his life may have been a blameless

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one; he may have been a dutiful son, or a kind husband and father, a useful member of society, one of whom his country was proud; then what need had he of a robe? the King would surely acknowledge him as he was; his deeds were sufficient to recommend him to his Sovereign, and so he passes in; but what is it to find? Ah! what indeed? His unworthiness; and that there is nothing left to be done but to bind him and cast him forth.

Professor of Christianity, have you been converted? have you on the garment that fits you to stand before God? If you were to die this night, would you be naked in the presence of God? I beseech you to ask yourself the solemn question, and to rest not till you have truthfully answered it. Have I been born again? have I fled to Jesus? have I found Him? have I Him as my covering, my raiment? Can you say? *Yes.* If not, Oh! precious soul beware; be warned: thou hast detailed before thee in these verses an event in thine own history, the moment when before God thou must stand, and find the clothing of morality to be of no avail. You find you are not in Christ, therefore you are still in your sins; you hear the question asked you, "Friend, how camest *thou* in hither?" and thou, *thou* shalt be speechless. Oh! what a moment when thou discoverest the true state of thy precious but *eternally lost* soul. No excuse hast

thou to offer; thou shalt be speechless. No extenuation can be offered by thee. It is too late; thou standest before the King, then forced to be a Judge, and the awful silence is broken by the command, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Oh! be warned. What is God's command now? It is "*Clothe him;*" clothe him with the raiment I have provided for his need; but if you reject His provision, then it will be "*Bind him.*" What a contrast! Clothe him with Christ, put upon him the "best robe;" and "Bind him" with the cords of his sin, and "cast him into outer darkness."

Oh! ye unsaved souls, wake up to the reality of your perilous position. Why does the spirit so often warn you? why does He so often bring your own case, as it were, before you? Why? why? Is it not because God always *warns* before He judges; is it not that He gives the unsaved soul often the opportunity of escape, though, alas! he heeds it not? Yes, He is a God of mercy *now*, though one day He will be a God of judgment to those who scorn and reject His proffered mercy. God warns, but man goes on, and on, and on, and heeds it not. We have but to look around us in order to see the truth of this.

What are those agonized accents from yonder

bed of death? It is an unsaved soul finding out with its latest breath that he has scorned the offer of salvation, that he has left unheeded all the warnings of a precious God, till it is *too late!*

Oh, what must it be to be swept into eternity without one ray of hope! Care ye to die thus?

Come to Jesus; "Come, for all things are now ready." The silver is for thee, the gold for thee, the raiment for thee. "Put ye on Christ." Eliezer brought raiment to Rebekah and she received the gift—I bring you Christ, will you receive Him?

In Luke xv. we again find mention of raiment: "Bring forth the *best robe* and put it on him." Had it been left to man to choose the raiment, he might have been content to robe himself with the garments that holy angels wear; but God gives more befitting raiment to the bride of the Spotless Lamb of God. She shall be arrayed in the *best*—the glorious robe of the "King of kings."

You know the beautiful story of the prodigal son here given; but have you observed, it was not till "he began to be in want," that he thought of his father's home, and the joy and abundance there. *Want* is the discovery the soul makes when in the far country, away from the father's house. But the last thing man does is to turn to God for help; he will try all other

expedients first, ere he goes to the only source of help and succour.

The prodigal, like too many in the present day, goes and joins himself to a citizen of that country. And who is that citizen? Satan! And oh, how successful he is in providing for the wants, the lusts of sinners! He does his utmost to keep you away from the Father's house of plenty; and how often he is successful, too! He gilds over the husks to make them fair to the eye; but when the sinner eats of them he finds out they are bitter to the taste, they are unsatisfying, they are but husks; and yet such is the morbidness of his appetite, he fain would fill his belly with them.

The prodigal is brought to a sense of his need before he says, "I will arise and go to my Father." Ah! he has found out that he is helpless and in need of food and raiment, and he comes just as he is; in his rags and poverty he comes, and is he refused? *No! He is first welcomed, and then clad.*

Many try to clothe themselves before they go to God; they have found out their need of God, but they think that before going to Him they must better themselves; but man must come just as he is, and be beholden to God for all. Come as you are; it is thus God delights to receive you.

"I have sinned," said the prodigal. Have you

known the moment when you found that you have sinned, found that you were undone, and lost, and naked? when you have gone down before God with the words? "Father, I have sinned." I call this the grandest moment of a sinner's experience on earth when he gets before God, and finds out—*what?* That the One whom he has offended and sinned against, and whom he thought was against him, is *for* him, is waiting in grace to receive him, is on his side.

"I have sinned." It must be individual confession; it will not do to rest satisfied with, "We have sinned." No; you must get alone with God, and forgetting all else in the deep penitence of your soul, own to Him, "I have sinned." Sooner or later the awakened soul passes through this searching conscience-work, this conviction of sin, ere it is clothed and is at peace. This precedes the clothing in the case of the prodigal before us.

"I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Ah! this is the man God clothes. I urge you to consider your own individual case; it is of paramount importance, this humbling yourself before God. The ploughshare of conviction must go deep down in the soil—the deeper the furrow the surer is the seed to be safe, and the brighter the prospect of a harvest of golden grain. What is the result of the prodigal's confession? It is the command to "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." Oh, what love!

“Bring forth the *best* robe.” Prodigal, will you have Christ? He is the *Best Robe*. “Put it on him.” He was not even asked to put it on himself, it was put on him; all was done for him, he did nothing but receive his Father’s gift of love. And your case is the same: God has done all; He provides the raiment, and, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” The first Adam, who was unfit for the presence of God, has ended his history in the death of Christ and in the second Adam the believer is gloriously complete.

The claims of God have all been met, and after the darkness of Calvary, the bright rainbow of God’s acceptance shines forth to man; the corn of wheat fell into the ground so that in resurrection He might be enabled to say, “I go to my Father, and to *your* Father.” What blessedness it is to be “found in Christ,” “accepted in the Beloved”! Again, I say unto to you, “Put ye on Christ;” stand in that which God gives you, and have peace; throw away the fig-leaves, and God will clothe you with Christ. Precious raiment! Sinner, come to God as thou art, and hear Him say to thee, “Take away the filthy garments from him . . . Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment” (Zech. iii. 4).

It has been said there are two steps to be taken, “Out of self into Christ, and out of Christ

into glory;" but it seems to me there is but one step needed. Will you take it? It is, "Out of self into Christ," to abide there for ever in all the fulness of His perfection.

What a place! To stand before God "accepted in the Beloved," the One who is the joy of God's heart! What have you done to merit this? *Nothing*; but Christ has done all. "That ye have *put off*, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts . . . and that ye have *put on* the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 22-24), is the truth of the new position in Christ. "Put off" and "Put on." It is the blessed substitution of Christ for self, the result of that work when, "He who knew no sin was made sin for us."

If you are wise you will not slight, but gladly receive the instruction of the Lord Jesus, who says, "I counsel thee to buy of me . . . white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear" (Rev. iii. 18).

See how He wants to clothe you with that which alone can make you suitable to God. "White raiment!" How different from the repulsive "filthy rags" of "our righteousness." You would not admit one clothed in "filthy rags" to your house and table, and will God? No. Then away with all that springs from or

savours of self, and array yourself in all the perfection of Christ, and His work for sinners.

The Raiment, then, that is offered to you, is Christ, and having Him you have redemption, and righteousness, and peace. Christ is all, and I have that which fits me to be His Bride when I possess the jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and the raiment. It is Christ, Christ, Christ; all Christ, Christ from first to last, Christ for time, and Christ for eternity; "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Once, again, I ask, "Wilt thou go?"—go across the desert to Him? Oh! the joy of knowing that God has forgotten my sins, and given me liberty to forget myself, and let my thoughts be all given to my glorious Bridegroom. "Wilt thou go?" Would that I could hear your say, "I will go." God can hear you say it wherever you are; Oh! give Him the joy of listening to thy whispered, "*I will go.*"

Decide for Christ; you have heard all about Him, who is the silver, and the gold, and the raiment. He has been offered to you freely, and shown to be the only way you can be acceptable to God, and fitted to be the Bride of Jesus. Will you accept the gifts? will you have Christ?

"Wilt thou go?" is God's challenge to your heart. Can you refuse? will you not come to Jesus?

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

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God presents Christ to you now as an object of faith. Rebekah did not see Isaac until the journey across the desert was accomplished, but he came to meet her when the desert sand was left behind; he came to meet her when she had reached the green fields of Canaan.

“I shall see Him in His beauty,
He Himself His Bride will meet;
I shall be with Him for ever,
In companionship complete.”

Oh, Christless soul! can you risk spending a joyless, hopeless, loveless eternity, without Jesus! I charge you by the joys of heaven, to which God invites you, and by the horrors of hell, of which He warns you, “Be ye reconciled to God”—“Put on Christ.”

You have but to decide, and honestly say from your heart, “I will go,” and He will receive you and welcome you, and fill your heart with joy and love. Oh, come to Jesus! accept the gifts offered to you in God’s well-beloved Son; accept the silver, the gold, and the raiment, and know that thou art fit to be the Bride of that Son, “to whom the Father hath given all things.” Let yours be the joyful words: “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her *jewels*” (Isa. lxi. 10). W. T. P. W.

“ QUITE SURE.”

“ QUITE SURE.”

I LATELY knocked at the door of a cottage in Ireland, and it was opened by a tidily-dressed woman, who evidently could not expect to be much longer in this world, for her grey hair and general appearance told of old age, and showed that the moment could not be very far distant when she would have to exchange time for eternity, and begin a new life, either of endless bliss or endless woe. I asked her, after a few words of greeting, how old she was? “ Upward of three-score and ten,” she answered. “ Then,” I said, “ you are very near either heaven or hell, and getting nearer every day. Which is it?” “ Oh, heaven,” she answered, without a moment’s delay. “ Are you sure of that?” I said. “ Oh, quite sure,” she said, with a happy smile. “ And what makes you so sure?” I asked. “ *Christ has made it sure for me,*” was the unhesitating reply.

I needed not to ask any more. She meant what she said, and knew that her soul’s salvation rested on that sure foundation—the finished work of a risen and glorified Saviour; and He had made it sure for her by going down into the death and judgment she deserved, and bearing all the penalty Himself. Not a word about herself. She did not say, as so many do, “ I have

"QUITE SURE."

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done the best I can, and hope God will have mercy on me." No, she rested simply on what Christ had done, and that was enough—enough for God, and enough for her; enough to meet every claim of a holy God, enough to meet every need of a lost sinner.

She was saved, and knew it.

And now, reader, let me ask you one question. Can you say what this dear old woman said? Is your future as bright as hers was? She had little enough in this world; but her future was as bright and as sure as a glorified Saviour could make it. The light of the knowledge of a Saviour-God had shone into her heart, and, be her present what it might, her future was clear and bright. Is yours?

The question is, Are you saved or not?

If you had to close your eyes on this world, on what would they open in another? In one moment the whole scene changes, and it is either departing to be with Christ, as it was to the poor thief on the cross, whose only hope was in the One the world had cast out; or departing to be in misery till you have to appear before the great white throne of Revelation xx. 11, to be judged and then banished for ever to the lake of fire. It is recorded of the rich man in the sixteenth of Luke, that "he died and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." That was the next thing. He had had all the

heart could wish for in this world; purple, and fine linen, and sumptuous fare; there was the outward expression of his wealth to others, and the inward gratification of himself by it. Nothing is said about his character, whether he was good or bad, moral or immoral; all that we are told of him is that practically he lived for himself in this world, and spent eternity in torment.

Oh, dear reader, think for one moment, I beseech you, what an eternity of torment must be.

"No rest day or night," nothing but torment for ever and ever. What a prospect. And yet if you are unsaved it is the only prospect before you.

Look for a moment at the other side of the picture, as I have given it in the little incident recorded in the beginning of this paper. One who had nothing in this world to boast of, had before her the certainty (not the hope only) of eternal glory with the Saviour who had died for her, and had said, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19); her every hope was resting in that sure foundation, the finished work of Christ; and her simple faith was in that Word which "endureth for ever" (1 Peter i. 25). Well might she be bright and happy with such a future as that before her.

And that may be yours, dear reader, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; not, as many think, a thing to be hoped for, struggled for, prayed

for all your life; but a *present possession*, consciously enjoyed, for "He that hath the Son, *hath life*"—and, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye *have* eternal life" (1 John v. 12, 13). That is what God says in His Word; and what all who believe Him know to be true.

There is One in God's presence, who more than 1800 years ago, hung upon a shameful cross for poor lost ruined sinners—crucified and slain by the very ones He came to save; and to Him faith looks for salvation, and finds its answer in the wondrous fact, that the very same One who cried on that cross "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," is now the brightest object in all the brightness of the glory of God. Oh the blessed reality of having, and knowing that I have, a Saviour in glory; and of rejoicing in the bright hope of seeing Him, and being for ever with Him! For Jesus *will* have with Himself in that glory every one that has been washed in His precious blood, every one that believes in Him. Not one will be left behind of those who are His, bought at such a price, on that bright morning when He will call them up, dead and living saints, to meet Him in the air, and to be "for ever with the Lord."

Is that your hope, dear reader? Or are all

your prospects for this world only? What is the end of it all as far as this world is concerned? “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away” (1 Peter i. 24). Yes, the brightest flower fades and dies; the brightest hopes and prospects that the world can give are gone for ever when death lays his ruthless hand upon you, and then — ETERNITY.

Which is it with you, as you read this? Christ or the world? Do you hesitate? What, will you barter away an eternity of glory for a few years of pleasure? the golden reality of a glory made good and sure by His precious blood (and yours by faith in that blood), for the wretched varnish and tinsel of this world's pleasure? “Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?” is the pleading of a Saviour-God to you to-day. *To-day* mark you, not to-morrow. *To-day* eternal life may be yours by faith in Christ Jesus. *To-morrow* and the hand of death may be on you, and your opportunity gone for ever.

A young friend of mine, a bright young Christian, recently fell asleep in Jesus. He was not seventeen years old, and his sufferings were great during the last few days of his illness. He knew to whom he was going, and a few hours before he passed away his father said to him, “It is all peace and joy, dear F., is it not?” “Oh,” he

replied, "it has been peace and joy all along, but now it's *overflowing*." Think of that! overflowing peace and joy in the midst of suffering, and with the certainty of death close at hand. A scene such as that makes the possession of Christ a wonderful reality.

One meets with numbers of unsaved people who are not "afraid to die," as they say; and one expects to find such, for the Word of God says of the wicked, "There are no bands in their death." Their consciences are hardened because they do not believe that after death comes judgment. But you never heard of one who even pretended to peace and joy at the prospect of death, still less to "overflowing" peace and joy. Nothing but the knowledge of a Saviour-God, and of His love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit can give that. You never heard of an infidel "longing to go," as many and many a child of God has longed. How could they when they don't know where they are going, and have no hope beyond this poor world of sin and death? But to the child of God, the sinner washed in the blood of Jesus, all is indeed peace and joy, for he is going to be with the Saviour who loved him and gave Himself for him. As my dear old friend said, "Christ has made it sure."

Once more, dear reader, I ask you,—Is your future bright should death come upon you? Is

your soul saved? Don't cast aside this little paper as if it were a matter of no importance; but before you lay your head on your pillow to-night ask yourself if the great question of eternity is a settled one for you. And if all is yet dark before you, remember that the door will soon be shut, and the question will be settled then, and you lost for ever. The *long-suffering* of God is truly salvation, but soon the day of long-suffering will be over, and the great day of His wrath will have come, and "Who shall be able to stand?"

To-day, as you read, God sends you a message of love and grace, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

That is the way in which God gives—*freely*. "The *gift* of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

A. P. G.

STATE AND ACTIONS.

MY DEAR READER,—Will you allow me to say an earnest word to you about your *state* and your *actions*. The Psalmist, speaking by the Spirit, says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psa. li. 5); and Paul, speaking by the same Holy Spirit,

says, "And were by nature children of wrath" (Ephes. ii. 3). These verses prove beyond doubt that *we are all born lost*: from the queen upon her throne to the meanest peasant in his hut, from the philosopher to the clown, from the millionaire to the penniless pauper, from the upper ten thousand of Belgravia to the dregs of society at Blackwall. Yes, whether it be the monarch in his palace, the monk in his cloister, or the mendicant in the streets, "there is no difference" (Rom. iii. 22); *all are lost*. We have not to go to hell to be lost; WE ARE BORN LOST. God in His mercy give you each to *see it, own it, and to accept His remedy!* "For the Son of Man is come to *seek and to save that which was lost*" (Luke ix. 10).

"*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all*" (Isaiah liii. 6).

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was *lost*, and is found. And they began to be merry" (Luke xv. 24). "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are *lost*. In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). These verses show our state.

And now a word about your sinful acts.

Perhaps you think that only great sinners go to hell. Will you allow me to ask how many sins Adam committed before God drove him out of Paradise? One! only one! And if God was so holy that He could not have Adam in the earthly Paradise with *one* sin, do you think He will let you into the heavenly Paradise if you have committed one sin? I do not charge you with being a great sinner, but I know you have been guilty of one sin at least, for God says, "*All* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

Now, as sure as God is holy, *one* sin, not washed away in the blood of Jesus, will keep you out of heaven just as much as one million of sins. It required the death and bloodshedding of the Lord Jesus to put away one sin, just as much as to put away one million of sins, and "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin" (1 John i. 7). Tears, prayers, and good works will not put away sins; there is no blood in these things. Nothing you have done, or are doing, or ever will be able to do, will avail before God to put away your sins. "Faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25) will alone put you in immediate and everlasting possession of the forgiveness of all your sins. Now what will you do? Will you trust Him who came "to seek and to save the lost," and have "faith in His blood" for the full remission of your

sins? Or will you go on refusing the love of God, rejecting the Christ of God, resisting the Spirit of God, and spurning the precious blood of Jesus the Son of God? Remember, if you die in your sins you will be put into your coffin in them, you will be buried and raised in them, you will stand before the great white throne in them, and you will then have them fastened upon you, and have them as your everlasting companions in the lake of fire.

“Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).
 “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts xvi.).

May the salvation of God be yours, dear reader,
 prays yours affectionately in the Lord,

H. M. H.



FRAGMENT.

“If Christ fill the heart, it will not merely be that I am happy, because I am saved, but the thought of Him to whom I am going will fill my soul with joy. It is true that I am going to heaven, but the thought that makes heaven a heaven to my soul is, that Christ Himself is there; there is someone to go to; the person I have loved on earth I am going to be with in heaven.”

J. N. D.

THE HEART OF MAN.

WHAT IT IS.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”—Jeremiah xvii. 9, 10.

WHAT COMES OUT OF IT.

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”—Mark vii. 21–23.

WHAT DOES NOT ENTER INTO IT.

“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.”—1 Cor. ii. 9.

THE HEART OF GOD.

WHAT IT IS.

“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”—Luke xv. 20-24.

WHAT COMES OUT OF IT.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have life eternal.”—John iii. 16.

WHAT DOES NOT ENTER INTO IT.

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”—Num. xxiii. 19.

“NOT TILL THEN.”

“NOT TILL THEN.”

When you own your sin and guilt—
Vain the hopes which you have built;
When you see your depth of shame—
Nought to offer, nought to claim,
 Then, and not till then, you'll know
 What the grace God can bestow.

When you see you nought can do
To avert the wrath so due;
That “to do” is but “to sin”
And God's purpose hindering,
 Then, and not till then, you'll know
 What the grace God can bestow.

When your eye alone can view,
Jesus on the Cross for you,
Meeting there the wrath of God,
Giving there His own life's blood,
 Then, and not till then, you'll know
 What the grace God can bestow.

Then, ah then! God's peerless grace,
You with joyous soul shall trace.
Saved and happy! saved and free!
Blest for all eternity!
 Eased then of your heavy load,
 Oh, how deep your joy in God!

A. M.

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE.

CHAP. V. THE BRIDE'S DECISION.

“And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah : he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night ; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten ; after that she shall go. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way ; send me away that I may go to my master. And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man ? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, 'Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man : and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi ; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide : and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us ? And the servant had said, It is my master : therefore she took a vail, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife ; and he loved her : and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.”

—GEN. xxiv. 53-67.

WE have, in previous pages, been looking at this chapter, and seeing how simply and sweetly the Gospel is therein foreshadowed and illustrated; and now, in referring to it once more, I avow, most distinctly, my object is not to unfold the Gospel in its doctrinal view, but to get your soul, my reader, if possible, brought to a distinct point before Christ.

The Lord help me to pen, and you to peruse, this paper, as if, indeed, it were the last occasion on which I could appeal to you, or you have the opportunity of receiving Christ.

I find, then, here one question: the person most interested gets one simple question put to her, to which she must make, on her own responsibility, one answer, Yes, or, No.

The narrative is very simple, the type equally beautiful, the application heart-winning. The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ offers to give you eternal glory in association with His Son. Consequent upon the death, resurrection, and ascension of His Son—which are the proofs of God's love on the one hand, in giving that Son to die, and His righteousness on the other, in raising and glorifying Him, as man, in token of His delight and satisfaction in the work he has accomplished for sinners—there has come from heaven a divine messenger, the herald of a divine message, and it falls now on your ear. It is this: God wants to have you for His Son.

He does not come and press upon you that you want His Son; that possibly may not be the case consciously, for many do not care to have Christ, as they are not aware of their lost and needy condition as sinners. When people really want anything they cast about till they get it, but if they are indifferent they are passive.

It is perfectly true you want a Saviour; but salvation is not the thought there. God here proposes to you to share the glories of His beloved Son. Do you not see to what glories and dignities you are invited? Instead of being left to die in your sins, and then pass unpardoned and unblessed into outer darkness, to be the miserable companion of the devil and his angels (Matt. xxv. 41), God wants you to enter into relationship with Christ now, by faith in His name, and then be the sharer of His joys through the endless cycles of eternity's blissful day.

This is the message Eliezer brings. He comes from Canaan, where Isaac abides. The father sends his servant to the far-off land to get one, *if he could*, to cross the desert to be the Bride of the unseen and unknown Bridegroom. Three things are necessary if you are going to be a sharer of the glory of Christ: redemption, righteousness, and raiment; but "jewels of silver," "jewels of gold," and "raiment," the very articles which typify these three things, the servant brings out and offers to Rebekah. Silver

is the type of redemption; the only way the soul can draw near to God is on the ground of redemption. I need righteousness, and gold is the symbol of divine righteousness. "Raiment" speaks for itself, and these three things I must have.

Christ is your raiment, if you will have Him as such, and all else.

I address you as a messenger from God. "Bold ground," you say. Yes, but no more bold than blessed. In the name of my Master I come, and want to win you for Christ. I want to win you for Christ as you read this paper. O unsaved man, unsaved woman! my message is this, I want you for Christ. God wants you for Christ.

"Oh, but I am such a sinner!" True, that is quite true. "I cannot, as I am, draw near to God." False. The veil is rent, the blood is shed and sprinkled before God, the new and living way exists, and you are bidden to come to God just as you are.

Nevertheless, mark, Eliezer does not say, "Wilt thou go?" before he gives Rebekah the jewels and the raiment. If it be the question of what will fit me for the Father's house, could anything be better than what He sends? The Gospel tells you that Christ came into the world, and it tells you, too, what He has done. The law tells me what I ought to do, and smites me because I have not done it. Law tells me of

myself; the Gospel tells me what Christ is, and what He has done.

Are you going to have Christ? You have often heard about Jesus, but are you on your way to Him? I want this to be the moment of your betrothal.

What I want now is *decision*. Redemption is accomplished, the blood has been shed, and the claims of God have all been met by the cross. That which the sinner needs has been wrought out for him by Jesus; and now it is for you to accept the Gospel message, for you in the truthful integrity of your soul to say, "Come what may I am going to be Christ's." You may have some time to wait ere you see the Lord Jesus face to face; the desert may be long in crossing, but one sight of Him will more than make up for all the toil or trouble of the way.

Rebekah hears the message one day and starts the next. Many have put off coming to Christ for ten days and have spent them in hell. I beseech you to come now to Jesus.

Notice here how that arch-enemy of present blessing—procrastination—appears.

The servant "rose" and said, "Send me away unto my master." Her relations reply, "Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go." They want the moment of decision deferred, and you want that too, don't you? "Some day," you say,

“but not just now.” You want to defer it. This is the plausible voice of the devil. If you are not turned to the Lord, your back is towards Him; you are still in your sins, and they will bring you to judgment. Ten days are most insidious. Felix was a man of *ten days*. “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.” Ah, poor Felix, when will his convenient season come? He never had a more convenient season. Oh, turn now to Jesus! Oh, ye halters, who are not yet decided for Christ, take Felix as a warning!

Perhaps you think you will turn to the Lord when you reach your death-bed. Delusive hope, for you may never have one. I heard lately of a procrastinator whose constant reply to earnest Christian friends, when they spoke to him of his soul's salvation, and urged him to come to Christ, was, “I am sure that God is so merciful, that if I turn to Him, even on a death-bed, He will hear my prayer and save me, so I shall wait till then.” Though repeatedly warned, this was his refuge, and so on he went, till he came, not to his death-bed, but, as was his wont, into the hunting-field. While the hounds were in full cry after the quarry, his horse leapt a hedge, on the further side of which were lying some sheep. Disturbed and frightened by the sudden apparition of the horse, the timid creatures fled in all directions. Their scampering off alarmed the

usually sure-footed steed, who fell, flinging his rider. Three words burst from the lips of the falling man—not “God have mercy,” but, addressing the sheep, “Devil take ye!” They were his last words, for he broke his neck and died on the spot. Reader, be sure of it, procrastination is the thief of souls, as well as of time, and I quite agree with Rowland Hill, who termed it “The recruiting officer of hell.”

God may never give you the opportunity of repentance on a death-bed. Now is the only time you can be sure of finding Christ.

Sinner, I warn you, these are facts, stern facts. “But what do you want me to do?” you may reply. I want you to yield yourself to Christ just now. I want you to make sure of eternity, and not put off, even until to-morrow (which never comes), the momentous matter of getting really hold of the salvation of God.

Ye young ones, I appeal to you. It is vain to say, “Let me die the death of the righteous.” If you are going to die the death of the righteous you must live the life of the righteous. It is vain to suppose you can get Christ when you like: you must get Him when you may, and that is just now.

“And her mother and her brother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go” (ver. 55). Such was the procrastinating speech of that day, and

how solemnly is it echoed by many a soul now-a-days? Do you say, "I will decide for Christ in a few days at the least: at most, ten"? Ten days hence! Oh no! It must be *now* if you want to be with Christ in glory; if you want to be with that rapturous throng around the Saviour; if you want to join the chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb."

What does God say? *Now*. Jesus will have you *now*. I earnestly implore you not to delay. I lay no claim to being a prophet when I say you may never have another gospel message and another day of grace in which to be saved. Really, my dear reader, you can have no idea of the joy of being Christ's, or you would not delay a single hour in turning to Him, receiving the pardon of your sins, the salvation of your soul, and the sweet heart-thrilling assurance that He is yours and you are His. Do you know that Jesus loves you and wants you, wants to claim you as His? "Jesus . . . having loved his own which were in the world, loved them unto the end." Oh, to be His own loved one—His *very own*! Nothing changes that love of His. Jesus wants to have you numbered among His own, *His very own*.

Will you yield? Let not Satan deceive you with *A few days hence, ten days*. *Now* is the time.

Well, what is the servant's answer to be? "Send me away, for I have failed." Oh! say,

must I go and tell my Lord I have failed, failed to win your heart for Him? Shall it be so? Oh no, no; give me the joy of saying to my Lord, "This heart is Thine."

What was Rebekah's answer when her relations said to her, "Wilt thou go with this man?" She said, "*I will go.*" No one else can decide for you. You have a soul, its eternal welfare depends on your answer. You have a soul to be saved or lost. Oh, will you let anyone, anything, come in between the Lord and your soul? Decide, decide *now*.

Jesus wants you, Jesus is waiting for you. Oh, let nothing hinder you from coming to Him. "We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth," was the word then; it is *you* that are concerned now. Wilt thou go? dear soul, wilt thou go? Oh! say, "I will go." Yes! have Christ, be Christ's. Shall He be thine? What say you? "Wilt thou go?" The Holy Ghost puts the question to you, it is not my question. God's question is, "Wilt thou go?" Wilt thou go to meet Christ and be His? Give me thine answer; oh, let there be no more delays. How can you tell you will have time to decide to-morrow? To-morrow is God's, not yours. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Let there be no more procrastination. God lingers over you; again and again He lets you hear these words, "Wilt thou go?"

“Wilt thou go?” “I will go,” says faith, “I will go,” says the decided heart, “I will go,” says the earnest one.

“I will go;” this is the calm, quiet resolution of the soul that wakes up to see the glory that is offered, and the grace that offers it.

What is the absolute alternative if Christ is not received? The dreary darkness of an eternal night, in which the only light is that shed by the lurid flame that is never quenched, the only companions sinners and devils as wretched as yourself, and the only occupation vain regrets over the folly and unbelief that have landed you in a spot beyond the reach of the hand of God Himself.

All depends on yielding yourself, or not, to Jesus. If the language of your soul is “I will go,” you will thank God for all eternity.

Would you like *all* to be saved but yourself? Would you like all to be included and you excluded from that blessed number who surround the Lord Jesus in unfading glory? Surely not. Then halt no longer, but give a decided answer to the query which again I put—nay, which God in His sovereign grace once more puts to thee.

Soul “wilt thou go?” Thou canst hardly say *no*, when to remain is to be eternally lost. What is thine answer? “Ten days hence.” Beware, the clemency of God will not last for ever. Ten days hence and the door of heaven may be closed for ever against thee, and in vain shall

thy piteous cry be, "Open unto me." But, thank God, there is yet another answer thou canst give, "I will go." Let it be thine.

Rebekah had never seen Isaac when she decided to go to him, but she believed the report that Eliezer gave. And think you not that as they journeyed across the desert many a question was asked concerning the one to whom she was going, and would not her heart grow warmer and warmer towards him as she heard his praise? And shall it not be so with you? The Holy Ghost, we are told, "Will take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto you." Oh, listen to Him, let no trumpet-sound of earth deaden His voice. He would tell you of God's well-beloved Son. Oh, learn of Him, of all His gentleness, love, and grace, and of His glory too, and as each beauty bursts upon your admiring gaze, know that He may be thine, and if thine, then shall the jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and the raiment become more precious to thee because they are *His* gifts.

Did Rebekah stop the camels to pick up the agates of the desert? I trow not; and wilt thou linger by the way to gather the withering pleasures of a death-doomed world? Oh, no! Haste thee on to the joy, the satisfying and endless joy that is to be possessed only at thine Isaac's side. Be unfettered, be but a sojourner and pilgrim here; heaven is thy home, speed thee on to it. And what shall the meeting be

when thou shalt see Him face to face? Wonderful as was the story ye listed to by the way, yet your astonished soul in wonder shall exclaim, "The half had not been told."

There are three things the Lord has done for us. He loved us, He gave Himself for us, and He has washed us from our sins. Why has He done these? "That he might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blame." What a glorious bride shall the Church be in that day when "the marriage of the Lamb has come!"

Rebekah goes, she commits herself to the guardianship of Eliezer, and at eventide she sees Isaac coming; and what is that but a simple type of the meeting with our Lord? Isaac was comforted when he received his bride; and have we not read of Him, "Who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame"? His joy will be full when He has His bride in glory with Him. And is that blessed hour near? The last step of the journey may be indeed most near; this night it may be that, "He that shall come will come." He is coming. Three times in Rev. xxii. He says, "I come quickly." Are you ready? "Wilt thou go?" "I will go," is the only answer suited to such a call of grace.

And now, in conclusion, I would say, let all know you are Christ's. Confess Christ. Own Him.

W. T. P. W.

THE DYING FRENCHMAN; OR, "COME,
JESUS, INTO MY HEART."

It was in the autumn of the year 1859 that I was privileged to witness for the first time in my life the saving power of the grace of God in the conversion of a sinner.

I knew many Christians—was, in fact, brought up among children of God. My parents were both earnest followers of the Lord, so that I had the advantage of seeing before me, day by day, what the life and conversation of saints should be.

Still, with all this, I had never, so far as I can remember, seen one whom I had known when living in the world and without God, turned right round and brought to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. I had often heard of conversions, and knew that *I* must myself be converted if ever I was to go to heaven; but how I or anyone else was to be converted was a matter of which I was profoundly ignorant. Not ignorant from want of instruction, nor from not knowing, even from childhood, the *theory* of the Gospel; but, like thousands of other persons, my ignorance lay in this, that I *thought* I believed everything; that is, I did not doubt the truth of what is declared in the Scriptures, but how believing that Jesus died for sinners, or

even for me, would save my soul, was something I never could see, or rather *feel*.

Awakened through God's mercy, at about the age of twelve years, to a sense of my sinfulness before God and my need of a Saviour, I passed a few years of my life with a good deal of inward strife; for the world on one hand, and Christ on the other, were both bidders for my poor worthless heart.

Such was pretty much my state at the time I have named, when my French tutor, who had for six years been my instructor, and to whom I was much attached, took ill of a disease from which it was not possible he could recover.

My father and mother had often spoken of his soul, and longed for his blessing; but there seemed a barrier in the way. The poor Frenchman had been brought up a Roman Catholic, but, like too many of his fellow-countrymen, had lapsed into utter carelessness as to God, and even into infidelity. He never went to church, chapel, or meeting-house, and his pet thought of what was good was to hate every priest and all priestcraft. It is true that on one occasion he accompanied me and my brother to hear the famous Pasteur M——— preach a sermon in French, and that on another occasion he came with us to hear a young man deliver a special Gospel address to young men. But beyond these two solitary instances, I never knew my

poor friend to go to hear the Word of God anywhere.

One day, while my parents were still wondering how this soul could best be reached by the sound of the Gospel, some friends came to say we ought certainly to get some one to call and see Monsieur I——, as he was dying, and he ought not to be allowed to die like a heathen.

Accordingly, the next day my father suggested that I should ask Monsieur I—— if he would like to see a friend of ours, a devoted servant of Christ, who had spent many years in France in the Lord's work. He had just come to town, and the Frenchman had often heard the name of Mr. D—— in our house. I rather objected to doing this, on the ground that I did not make any profession of religion, but afterwards consented.

I went, therefore, that morning to see the sick man, taking with me some little comforts for the body, such as he required, but hardly knowing how I was to broach the subject of Mr. D——'s visit.

As soon, however, as I went into his room, I found the way was already plain for me. The poor fellow was unhappy in a way I had never seen him before. As soon as he saw me he said, "I am a miserable man; I wish I was dead, but I am afraid to die. I am a burden to you, and I am a burden to myself and to everybody.

I wish I was dead. *If I were as holy as that young man* (meaning the one we had heard preach some months before), I should not be afraid to die."

I felt for the poor fellow, and gave him such comfort as I could, telling him to cheer up, and take a more hopeful view of his case; that perhaps, after all, he would pull through, and be himself again.

"By the by," I added, "our friend Mr. D—— is here at present; you have often heard of him. He speaks French like a native; perhaps you would like him to call upon you and cheer you up a little?"

To this the sick man, with all the natural grace and politeness for which his nation is so famed, not only assented, but even seemed most thankful for the suggestion. After a little more conversation I left him.

My next step was to call upon Mr. D——, and ask him if he would be willing to come with me in the afternoon to see the man whose case I described to him. He very readily consented to accompany me, so about four o'clock we proceeded to the house of the dying Frenchman.

The introduction over, Mr. D—— was very soon seated by the bedside of the patient, talking to him of his native land, and various places in it which they both knew. It was a pleasant conversation to the sick man; and it was very

easy to see Mr. D—— had quite gained his confidence.

Presently the conversation changed. Mr. D—— turned to the subject of the dying man's state before God, and immediately met with a hearty response. There was an eagerness about the way in which he seemed to grasp at every word spoken (as a drowning man would catch at a straw), which I, in my ignorance, supposed arose from politeness on the part of Monsieur I—— who must needs assent to all that was said.

In the course of their conversation (which I cannot detail as I should wish), Mr. D—— spoke of Christ as the sole and *all-sufficient* Saviour.

“Ah,” said the Frenchman, “if I only knew Him, if I only had Him.”

“Well,” replied Mr. D——, “He is beside you. He is here. He is knocking at the door of your heart, wanting to come in. He says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.’”

The moment the dear fellow heard these precious words he sat up in the bed, and with both hands pulling his night-shirt open, and baring his breast, he looked up, and said with the most intense earnestness, “Oh, I am open, I am open: come, Jesus, into *my* heart!”

A little more conversation followed, and we

took our leave. As soon as we were outside the house, Mr. D—— took my arm, and said, “Do you know, F——, I believe that man is converted!”

CONVERTED! I thought. I—— converted! It seemed more than I could credit.

I said nothing, but thoughts passed rapidly through my mind:—“Could this marvellous change, by which a guilty sinner is made meet for the glory of God, take place in so short a time, and in so very simple a way? Was it possible that if I—— died now, he would go to heaven to be with Christ? Was every question settled between him and God? Was he really ready to go, while I, with so many more advantages, was still unsaved?”

“Ah well!” I thought, “time will tell, and time will prove all.”

And so it did.

Monsieur I—— lived for some weeks after his first interview with Mr. D——.

The change in him, in his spirit and in his hopes, was something indescribable. His Roman Catholic wife again and again said, after his death, “Well, whatever that gentleman you brought said to my husband, it enabled him to die very resignedly, and made him very happy.”

But it was *much more* than mere *resignation*. That is a poor, cold word that does not at all

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express the longing of the soul who desires to depart and be with Christ. Monsieur I—— was *saved*. He knew it; he knew his Saviour, too, and his whole heart's craving was to be with Him. He wanted to *see* the blessed One who had plucked him as a brand from the burning. Several times he said to me, when I had brought him little bodily comforts, "Ah, I don't want these things now. They only help to keep me here, and I would rather go to be with Jesus."

Ere long he was called home to enter into the inner chamber, the Father's house, to be "for ever with the Lord." Happy and perfectly peaceful he was unto the last.

And now, beloved reader, what about *you*? Have you opened your heart to the blessed Saviour who stands knocking and seeking an entrance? Many and many a time has He knocked, and long has He waited. He has knocked every time you have heard the Gospel; He has knocked by sickness, it may be, or by the removal, through death, of a beloved one from your side. He has knocked in a thousand ways and at a thousand times; and yet have you never, as the dying Frenchman did, opened your heart to let Him in?

You *mean* to do so, no doubt; you intend to open to Him *some day*. You perhaps think the grace that has waited so long will still wait *your* convenience. You think of a future day,

9.*

another time, a convenient season. But oh! how you slight the love of Him who knocks, and how you imperil your own soul, by listening to the devil's gospel—"TO-MORROW!"

An American poet has put into our language, from another tongue, the following touching lines, which only too truly tell the way in which the grace and kindness of the Saviour are so often treated :—

“ Lord, what am I, that with unceasing care,
Thou didst seek after me—that Thou didst wait,
Wet with unhealthy dews, before my gate,
And pass the gloomy nights of winter there?
Oh strange delusion!—that I did not greet
Thy blest approach, and Oh! to Heaven how lost,
If my ingratitude's unkindly frost
Has chilled the bleeding wounds upon Thy feet!
How oft my guardian angel gently cried,
' Soul, from thy casement look, and thou shalt see
How He persists to knock and wait for thee.'
And, Oh! how often to that voice of sorrow,
' To-morrow will open,' I replied.
And when the morrow came, I answered still, ' To-morrow.' ”

Before I close this paper I would call the reader's attention to another knocking—not the Saviour's knocking at the hard and impenitent heart of the sinner, but a *great knocking*—the knocking of *many* at a *closed door* which cannot again be opened, even though they are importunate and plead their works.

Hear the words. They are from the lips of Christ (Luke xiii. 24, 25): “ Strive to enter in at the straight gate: for MANY, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, AND SHALL NOT BE ABLE.” Why

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is this? How awful to think that some shall seek to enter in, and yet shall not be able! What can it mean?

The next verse explains it. It is very simple, but very dreadful. They have put off until it is TOO LATE. The Saviour had knocked at *their* door, but they did not open. He called, but they did not answer, and now He has risen up and *shut-to* the door.

Ah, poor silly souls, you are now "without" and HE is within. Eternally separated!

"Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now!"

May the Lord mercifully give you so to learn your need of Him, that you may no longer delay opening your heart in simple faith to Him who so graciously deigns to knock, and seeks to be its guest!

F. C.



FOR CHRIST OR AGAINST HIM, WHICH?

WILL you grant me your attention for a few moments while, with God's help, I put before you some truths, which, though distinctly written in God's Word, are so little read or heeded, that more than once lately I have been met with expressions of the most astonished incredulity in quoting verses containing such truths. And should my statements seem strange to you also, and thereby should you be inclined to doubt their

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veracity, I beg you to open a Bible and there prove that they are not *my* thoughts and opinions, but the truths of God, and that He has said, "*The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*" (John xii. 48). And lest you should think I prophecy evil only, and write in condemnation of others to the exclusion of myself, I would have you understand that I, who write, was, only five summers back, deep in the world's enjoyments, treading blind-fold the road to destruction, but that now, through the Lord's mercy, and without a single atom of merit to myself, I have a passport for heaven, and am as certain of an eternity of glory as you shall be, if you will but hear me out, and allow a gracious God to have His way with you—to clear you from every speck of sin and give you a title to eternal salvation, from which neither things present nor things to come shall be able to separate you.

And may I ask, first of all, Are you like most people, making the best of this world, one of the crowd that mechanically follows the tide of pleasure and fashion? "Why, of course, I'm not a hermit," you say. Then you admit you are on good terms with the world, that you are "in society." So I bring forward my first truth—and yet not mine, but God's—you are "*an enemy of God.*"

"Oh, how can you say such a dreadful

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thing?" you exclaim. It is not I, reader, but God, the living God, who says it. Hear His own Word, "The friendship of the world is *enmity* with God" (James iv. 4). And again, "Love not the world, neither the things in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is *not* in Him" (1 John ii. 15). I know this will startle, perhaps it will offend you, but it is truth that comes from One who judges righteous judgment, and on whose verdict hangs our eternal destiny, and when He speaks, who shall answer?

"But," you say, "I have never done anything very wrong; I am not worse than others." Ah, to imagine, because the multitude sides with you, you are out of danger, is a fatal mistake. "My thoughts are *not as your thoughts*, saith the Lord." So He has written, and may He write on your memory with an eternal pen, "*Broad* is the way that leadeth to destruction, and *many* there be that go in thereat" (Matt. vii. 13). And "There is a way that *seemeth right* unto a man, but the *end thereof are the ways of death*" (Pro. xiv. 12; xvi. 25), and when, for its vital importance, God *twice* utters the same warning note, surely we owe to ourselves our own destruction, if we take no heed.

"But I go to church, I say my prayers, and sometimes even take the Lord's Supper." And such replies bring before me others, who, in a

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coming day, shall knock at the then *closed* door of mercy and say, "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, . . . but he shall say, I tell you, *I know you not* whence ye are; *depart from me* all ye workers of iniquity." (Luke xiii. 26, 27.) You may do all these things and yet be taking sides against God, for if you are mixing this with the world's pleasures, you are on its part, and "whosoever will be a friend," a supporter or applauder, "of the world is the *enemy of God*" (James iv. 4). You *cannot* serve two masters, and if you are following the dictates of him who leads captive so subtly (and remember he comes now, not in his serpent form, but as an angel of light, 2 Cor. xi. 14), then you *cannot* serve God, and you cannot be on His side who was "not of the world" (John xvii. 14), and He says, "He that is not *for me*, is *against me*." Oh, stop, and think, reader, where you are, *against Christ* and "*the enemy of God*." May He awaken you to your position!

I know your heart will rise up in anger as you read, for it seems hard to be under God's judgment when, perhaps, you have never done *one* evil thing in *man's* account; but remember it is with *God*, not man, we have to do, and He judges not by the outward appearance, but by the heart, and listen where, with Him, sins begins, "The *thought of foolishness* is sin" (Pro. xxiv. 9). And this root of sin is "bound" in our very

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innermost being, and if this foolishness only stands against us, which of us but is hopelessly guilty? Yes, reader, you and I, by nature and by practice, are indeed under sin, under condemnation; "condemned already" (John iii. 18) is the sentence of Him who can in no wise clear the guilty children of wrath, "having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12).

You see our very nature is corrupt, for "the carnal mind" (*i.e.* the mind of our nature, the unconverted mind) "is *enmity* against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be*" (Rom. viii. 7). "We have all gone out of the way," "we are all as an unclean thing," and our very "*righteousnesses* are as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6) before Him in whose sight the heavens are not clean; yes, *every* mouth is stopped, we are without excuse, "the whole world is guilty before God" (Rom. iii. 19). Lost sheep, indeed, are we, wandering on the dreary mountains in the "far country," with only broken cisterns and husks, the unsatisfying husks of the world's pleasures, to nourish souls made in the image of God. Oh, if men would only understand that *Christ* alone can fill the void, the unsatisfied *something* that in every unforgiven soul is hidden deep down in his heart; and He says, "If any man thirst let him come *unto me* and drink:" and "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall

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give him *shall never thirst.*" Nothing else can satisfy, while *He* can

"Draw, and win, and *fill completely,*
Till the cup *o'erflow* the brim."

"But why is the world an evil thing?" you ask. Because it is a vast system, *built up to exclude God*, where men are made happy *without Him*, where all practically says to Him, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." It was on this principle that Cain—the first worldly man acted—he "*went out from the presence of the Lord,*" and builded a city. He sought to make himself happy outside His presence, to forget Him; and soon we hear of man's seeking out many inventions, and, with the aid of music's pleasures no doubt, so lulling the voice of his unpurged conscience, that he began to forget that he had turned his face from God; and now his followers (those whose pleasures are planned outside His presence, who move daily in scenes where the mention of His name is an intrusion), ask, astonished, "Where's the harm of going into the world?"

There is not harm *only*, there is danger, and that for eternity, for such are *dead towards God*, for "she that liveth in pleasure is *dead* while she liveth" (1 Tim. v. 5). Christless souls are led captive by Satan, who, because of his extensive reign is called "the god of this world," "the

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prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Ephes. ii. 2); and are *lost*, for it is written, "if our gospel be hid, it is hid *to them that are lost*, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4).

Dear pleasure-seeker, you are risking an eternity *outside the Lord's presence*, for, if you will not have Him in life, do you not know you *cannot* have Him in death? But God so loved you that He sent His Son to save you, to turn you from the power of Satan—that power which draws you into the world—unto God. He knows you are in Satan's snare, "taken captive of him at his will," so Jesus came "to preach *deliverance to the captives*," and if you only let Him draw you with His bands of love, if you only see His marvellous plan of redemption, He will save you, for He came "not to judge the world but to *save the world*," to die, the Just One *in the place of the unjust* that he might bring us to God.

He will give you *another* nature, that second birth, without which God declares no man can enter His kingdom (John ii. 3-5), and it will give you new desires, new pleasures, so that you will turn *of your own choosing* from what before entranced you, will count it all *loss* for the excellency of knowing Him and tasting

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His love; and, believe me, it *passes* knowledge; it is so matchless, so immeasurable, that the heart is too small to hold it—it runs over. Oh, reader, only test it, for it is a reality, a *true living thing* that makes up ten thousand times for all earthly joys, and can give you, even here, to taste such rapture as has not entered into the heart of man, but which “God hath prepared for them that love Him.” Oh, just tell Him you know you are far from Him, that is all He wants—a bowing to His verdict—and He will save you, and there will be joy over you in heaven (Luke xv. 7), and you will be His for ever, “whom not having seen we love, in whom though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable” (1 Pet. i. 8).

But if you *will not* hear His voice to-day, if you *will* harden your heart, hear His sentence when He takes up His *strange* work—judgment: “*Because I called and ye refused, I stretched out my hand and no man regarded, but ye have set at nought all my counsel and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh . . . When distress and anguish cometh upon you,*” (Prov. i. 24, &c.)

Oh, will you not trust Him? He *stands at the door and knocks*, and “*now* is the day of salvation.”

A. DE C.

“I AM GOING HOME.”

It is a wonderful thing to find that God's salvation is—

“Salvation without money,
Salvation without price,
Salvation without labour,
Believing doth suffice.”

More, it is salvation now—this moment ; yes, reader, you may have it *now*. I would have it, were I in your place, without any further delay, and be recorded in God's book as saved. Just look at your watch a moment. Do you note the time ? Well, now means just this identical moment, so you can have no difficulty in grasping the meaning of that precious word, “Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). There is no folly like that of putting off the salvation of the soul.

But if it, then, be true that by believing in Jesus there is for you—

“Salvation now—this moment ;
Then why, oh ! why delay ?
You may not see to-morrow ;
Now is salvation's day.”

No ! you may not see to-morrow—to-morrow may be too late !

As I was about to finish my day's work one

Saturday, not long ago, I rang the bell of a house where one had long been ill. The door was opened by a relative, whom I scarcely recognised, as it was nearly dark. I said, "How is A——?"

"Oh! have you not heard? she is gone."

"What, dead?"

"Yes, dead!"

Gone! she was gone from earth for ever. Was she old? No. Middle-aged? No. Young? Yes; not quite twenty-one years of age. I had seen her three days before, and I expected to have seen her again in life; but I did not.

Perhaps, my reader, you would like to know how she died? It was a long illness; consumption the fatal malady that cut short her days. She knew perfectly well that she could not recover, but thought some little time would elapse ere the "golden cord" would be loosed. That morning, however, as her watchful relative was giving her some needed assistance, which brought her to the bedside of the feeble girl, there happened that which had not been before. Without any warning a large blood-vessel in the lung gave way, and the life-blood poured forth. Lifting her eyes towards heaven, she said very calmly, "Auntie, I am going home! I am going HOME!" and passed away to be with Jesus.

Reader, could you die like that? Her whole

face brightened up; no fear was pictured thereon. She could say, quietly, calmly, "I am going home;" and the next moment found herself there. Sinner, you could not say that. You, who are on the broad road, could you call hell a home? Describe not the eternal abode of the lost, that region of speechless woe, by such a charming, sacred name. Oh, unsaved man! unsaved woman! have salvation! have it now! Flee to Jesus as you read this, for "*Now is salvation's day!*" and He has said He will not cast you out if you come to Him.

Many a time this dying girl grasped my hand as I was leaving her after a medical visit, and said, "Doctor, will it be long?" I could not tell her how long; consumption is often a lingering disease. The last time I saw her before her death she said to me, as we parted, "Doctor, it will not be long, will it before I am with Jesus?" These were her last words to me, full of peace and assurance of a present and eternal salvation. She longed to be with Jesus.

Dear unsaved one, open your heart to Him! Just where you are, open your heart and let Jesus enter in! He will fill your heart. Be converted now. Decide for Christ, I pray you. Turn to the Lord while you may. "*Now is salvation's day.*" Just now—*now*. If you want to be saved, it must be now.

How shall I get salvation? Do I hear you

ask this? You have nothing to do, and nothing to be, except to be and own what you are, an utterly lost sinner. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Come to Him in your sins, just where you are and as you are, this very moment, and Jesus will save you.

What will He do?

Come and see!

Oh, but I am such a sinner; He must, He will put me from Him.

No! He will put your sins away, but you He will receive. The prodigal came as he was, and was kissed while in his want and misery. Then he got the best robe which fitted him for the Father's house. Just so the sinner must come to Jesus by faith, without seeking in the slightest degree to fit himself for Christ. Your fitness for Christ is that you are a lost sinner, and need a Saviour; and, on the other hand, He is a Saviour looking ever about for the sinner whose heart He can reach and touch, in order that He may save him. Come as you are to Him, and He will save you on the spot.

Always remember this, that Christ does not *help* sinners; He *saves* them. When I talk of some one *helping* me, I imply that I have a little strength; when I say another *saved* me, I mean that my own power was gone utterly, and I were lost without recovery but for the act of another. Now this is just the Gospel in a nutshell. As

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says the Apostle, "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time *Christ died for the ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6). How simple and how blessed! When "without strength" (not trying to show I had a little, by good works and reforming my life) and "ungodly," *i.e.*, not having a single thing to commend me to God—then Christ died for me, and by His death I am cleansed from my sin and guilt, and made fit for the presence of God.

Reader, may God grant to you repentance unto life, faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, a daily walk that tells louder than words that your heart is Christ's; and, should you be called to die suddenly, to be able to say, "I am going home."
W. T. P. W.



THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST.

I know the value of that blood,
Its power to cleanse from sin :—
I've been beneath its crimson flood,
And now God says, I'm clean.

To find one spot would be to prove
That blood of no avail,
Begone the thought! for God now rests
In that within the veil.

In what God sees my soul now rests,
And boldly enters in;
My Saviour's there, then I am blest,
Made free, made free from sin!

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"But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end eternal life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans vi. 22. R. B.

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NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 20, 21.

THE subject I desire to dwell upon this evening is in the last two or three lines of this profound and wonderful chapter: it is contained in that one sentence, "The ministry of reconciliation."

The very expression, as you will at once see, is full of most blessed consolation for every exercised heart—the very form in which it is put, the very title of the ministry, all tell out the same thing; and this is the ministry which has characterized the whole period since our Lord Jesus Christ was upon earth.

He Himself was, I need not say, the expression of it; but from the moment of His resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the whole of that period until He comes again—a noment unknown to all but the Father—is

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characterized and marked by this **ministry**. That period has already, under the long-suffering of our God, stretched itself out marvellously; as Peter says in replying to scoffers, giving as a reason for the delay a powerful motive, and one which comes home with extraordinary power to every unconverted soul, “The long-suffering of our God is salvation, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

We must take these words in their full unqualified sense; we are not to allow such words to be cut down in order to fit into the narrow, meagre, poverty-stricken theological systems of men. These words are pregnant with spiritual meaning and power; there is what I may term a flash of spiritual light and life in them, and all that is sure to be tampered with when men try to square and fit them into their systems. In all their glow, fulness, meaning, and power, we must take these words, “The Lord is long-suffering, not willing that *any* should perish.”

He does not say any of the elect; though every well-instructed Christian knows that every one who is saved is the subject of God's electing grace. He is not willing that *any* should perish, and so if there is one, old or young, that has not been brought savingly to Christ, this passage comes down with all its weight, power, point, and application to you. So far as you are concerned,

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our Lord is waiting on you, holding back His glory, not willing that you should perish, but that you should come to repentance at once.

Now, in considering this great subject, we shall present it under the following heads, namely, first, the basis upon which the ministry of reconciliation rests, secondly, the terms in which it is couched, and thirdly, the objects towards whom it is exercised.

But, first of all I shall notice one expression at the beginning of the chapter. The inspired apostle says—"We know." Now, it is of all importance that your souls should know what is the ground of certainty for you at a moment like the present, when everything is shaking. The most cursory observer must see how men's minds are being shaken, how old institutions are crumbling before the popular voice; the most hallowed and revered institutions, according to men's thoughts, are being swept away by the rising tide of human opinion.

Every one who rises to address men on eternal things is bound to warn his hearers against superstition on the one hand and infidelity on the other. Superstition admits that God has spoken, but denies that you and I can understand what He says without the intervention of what is called the church or the clergy, which is the same as saying that God's revelation is of no use at all. If God cannot make me

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understand what He has spoken, if I must have recourse to some human authority, then, of course, virtually I have lost the value of a divine revelation. But it is your privilege, not to say your bounden duty and solemn responsibility, to know that God has spoken, and spoken to you ; that He has given you a revelation of His mind, and that, apart from all human authority, if you were compelled to live in the prairie or the bush, isolated from your fellow-men, you have in His Word a link of such fulness, power, and divine perfection, that no power of earth or hell can ever break it.

And so the language with which this magnificent Scripture opens contains the expression of simple Christian certainty. It opens with the statement, “ We know ; ” that is the expression of *common* certainty ; it is not the especial portion of apostles, or some very advanced and holy people ; it is no matter of attainment, though of course we all long for attainment in divine things. But mark, it is one of the most subtle and mischievous devices of the enemy of your souls, one of the most deadly schemes of the devil, to make this certainty of which I speak rest upon a basis of attainment in any shape or form.

I grant you that the more we attain the clearer do things become ; the nearer I get to Christ the more I learn of the Word, but that in no wise touches the statement I have already

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made. Christian certainty rests on this, a basis which now is brought nigh to you—and what is it? God's Word, His own simple testimony, something outside of you: consequently the apostle says, "We know."

The other influence to which I refer is infidelity, rationalism, or scepticism; it is increasing everywhere, and will still increase. I am fully persuaded that first superstition and then infidelity will override the whole of Christendom. What is infidelity? To deny that God has spoken at all, that is its one grand point: the only remedy for your hearts against superstition on the one hand, and infidelity on the other, is a profound faith in Holy Scripture. Take God's Word; we have the positive certainty that, come what may, all is settled for us.

Having said this much on that sentence, I shall proceed to unfold briefly the three points.

In the first place, note the important distinction between reconciliation and atonement. They are often confounded, and our excellent English translation has in some instances confounded them, and so helped on confusion in men's minds: they are nevertheless two distinct things.

In the following passages the two words are confounded. Rom. v. 11.—"And not only so, but we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the *atonement*." The word here should be *reconciliation*.

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Heb. ii. 17.—“To make *reconciliation* for the sins of the people.” Here it should be *atonement*.

What is the difference between them? First of all, let it be clearly settled that they are not the same. Atonement is the basis on which reconciliation takes place; without the atonement there could be no reconciliation: it is the exclusive basis. You cannot be too clear as to this; the only basis of this ministry is the atoning death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Every single thing about our blessed Lord—His whole life, all that He did, said, and was—every single movement of His blessed life, is fraught with deepest interest to us, as it was ever emitting a fragrant odour to the throne of God; it is the delight of the Holy Ghost to throw Him out into contrast with all that ever were before or beside Him. It is certainly no thought of ours to detract from the value of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and His life sufferings. Three things were secured by His life here on earth: God was perfectly glorified: again and again the heavens opened to express God's delight in that blessed One. Secondly, He left us an example that we should follow His steps; and thirdly, He perfectly tested man as he never had been tested before; so much so that He could say at the end, “If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin.”

But where was He made sin for us? In the

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manger? in His baptism? in His life? in Gethsemane? Where? On the cross only. This we must maintain with all possible authority and decision: we cannot submit to have this discussed by anyone; it was there alone that God made Him to be sin for us.

I do not believe that there is in the whole of Scripture a fuller statement than this; it contains wrapped up in its ample folds the foundation of this ministry. Oh, what a striking word! Mark it again: "He made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." In this all-important Scripture there are three parties. Draw near, I beseech you, for a moment and gaze upon the three; God, Christ, and sin. And tell me this: Have you learnt thoroughly what you are in God's sight? have you, my beloved friends, under the convicting light and action of the Holy Ghost—have you as in the presence of God Himself, learnt this? In the light of His presence, where the truth penetrates to the very centre of your moral being, where God lays bare those roots that lie far beyond human ken, and have struck themselves deep into the soil of the human heart, have you, I say, been brought to this point?

Now, tell me honestly, can you say sincerely that that third party represents you: others

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may talk as they like, but I am sin from head to foot; all sin—the root, branches, blossoms, leaves, and everything? It is true, of course; but can you say it? I appeal to your hearts; how can you do otherwise? I ask, honestly and seriously, can you say that? The only question is, will you find it out now, in the presence of this ministry of reconciliation. This is the question, and one which I feel bound to urge upon you with all the energy I possess. It is not within the compass of human power, nor of all the vehemence that ever was put forth, to produce a single divine emotion in the soul, yet I am equally persuaded that it is my bounden duty not to leave a stone unturned, nor an argument unused, to reach the door of the heart; and anyone who does not feel this, who does not know what it is to have sat and wept over impenitent souls, is not fit to be a preacher.

If you can say, by the convicting power of the Holy Ghost, I am that third party, it is the very best thing you ever said yet. What, then, is the precious truth that shines like a gem, with heavenly lustre, on the very forefront of this ministry? God has made Christ to be that thing which you are. What a reality! It is no mere question of dabbling on the surface; it is not what you find in modern evangelical teaching—namely, that Christ paid your debts. Ah! He has done much more than that; what I want

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you to see is, that the atoning death of Christ did a great deal more for you than blot out your debts. Of course He did that, for the less must be included in the greater; He not only blotted out your guilt, but He put to death that which committed the sin. There is no such expression in Scripture as "the forgiveness of *sin*:" you find forgiveness of *sins*; but God has judged sin, and put it away by the sacrifice of His Son.

There is another point to which I wish to direct your attention: it is what people say about Christ having reconciled the Father to us; and I should not notice it, beloved friends, were it not essential to a right understanding of the whole subject before us. I do not think that anyone will understand the nature, the genius, the character, the glory, of this ministry of reconciliation, who has his mind tinged with the false notion to which I am referring; and further, I do not believe that any heart can have a right sense of what God is, what His heart is, whose mind is tinged by that error.

God is never spoken of in Scripture as being reconciled to us; it is utterly false and a falsification of the divine character, to say that He needs to be reconciled to us. I could take you through every verse in the New Testament in which the word reconciliation occurs, and I could show you that it is always men or things that are reconciled to God. Turn to Col. i. 20.

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which is full of sweetness : “ Having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile,” What? God? the Father? never!—“ by him to reconcile *all things* to himself ”—all things—“ by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And *you*, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind, by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”

That is a simple and noble passage ; I give it you as a sample of those passages in the New Testament where this subject is unfolded. One Scripture can *never* contradict another ; if you come to an apparent discrepancy, put it down to your own ignorance. It is we that have to be reconciled, because when you speak of being reconciled, it is always with regard to one who has gone out of his normal or proper relationship.

Now God has not stepped out of that condition towards us ; His heart is the same, full of mercy and tenderness. Our hearts are full of enmity and rebellion, and so we need to be reconciled. What does God do? He is seen coming in His own boundless love, unfathomable grace, rich infinite mercy ; He is seen coming out to beseech sinners to be reconciled to Him. Only think of it ; He is beseeching sinners in this ministry of reconciliation and righteousness and love, which brings out the whole character of God. He is seen with outstretched arms, beseeching you to be friends. He is not asking

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you to give the best of this and that, nor yet to do this, that and the other; that is law; that is Moses; that is the ministry of death and condemnation. On the contrary—the glorious contrary—God has given His Son, and His outstretched arms and open heart beseech the vilest sinner to be friends with Him.

We should never have believed it if it had not been revealed. It is wonderful, and now all this, touching and charming as it is, would be nothing if we did not understand the ground of it. God does it on this ground, that He has taken you up, and all that you are and have done, and He has made Christ to be that. He has transferred to Christ all that you were, all that you have done; He has laid it all upon Him. It seems to me to be the most forcible, striking, commanding way in which it could be put. He has taken that spotless One, that holy One; He has given that One who was His ineffable delight from all eternity; He has taken Him for you and for me—for you, I say: get hold of it; He has treated Him as you deserved; He has laid upon Him all that you should have borne—the wrath and judgment due to you he has passed upon Him; He has made Him to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

In Him as He now is, risen from the dead, the believer stands, made the righteousness of

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God in Him. If this sinks down into your hearts no power of men, devils, superstition or infidelity can ever shake you ; you can never be moved if you get hold of this. I entreat you to let this sink down into your hearts. Take your stand beside the cross, gaze on that sacrifice ; what do you see ? You see God at the cross, dealing with all that you were and all that you have done. Behold that blessed Christ now crowned with glory ; He is the measure of your acceptance before God, and of the standing which you have in Him. That is the place you are brought to.

Get hold of this : I look upon it as a matter of divine and eternal importance that every exercised soul should get hold of it : according to this ministry, Christ represented you on the cross. Oh, what a thought ! What a truth ! All that I was, my sins, my guilt ; all that God had against me ; the whole thing was made an end of in the cross of Christ. God and sin met on the cross ; what was the issue ? That sin was borne away, that the tide of love might roll over you. Nothing short of this is the Gospel ; and then to be told that Christ came to reconcile the Father to us, that he came to reconcile God to us—it is a misrepresentation, a fallacy, and a falsification of God's character. “God so *loved* the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever

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believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

I must now notice the terms, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them," but imputing righteousness. These are the terms, and you are the object.

I would close with an earnest appeal to every soul here that is not reconciled, and allow me to appeal to you thus. There is a moment rapidly approaching when this ministry will close for ever, when the ambassadors will be called in and their beseeching voice never be heard again. There is no shadow of hope for those who have heard of and rejected Christ — no hope for Christendom when the Master has risen up and shut-to the door. Christ is now seated, the door is open, and He is crying to you; *then* He will have risen up, the door will be shut, and you will be crying to Him. Oh, what a moment! Oh! every one of you here to-night, I beseech you think of this: there is a moment rapidly approaching—every throb of your pulse brings you nearer to it—when the Master of the house will rise; this very night Christ might come.

Does He know you, and do you know Him? He will disregard the plea of Christendom—"We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." How awful will be His response. "Verily I say unto

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you, I never knew you; depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." What then? Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Dear unsaved sinner, a boundless eternity is before you: you are rushing through the narrow archway of time, and the ocean of eternity is before you. Will you lay down your head to-night on a Christless pillow? Oh! will the Master rise and you be outside? You will then remember this very night. You are besought to be reconciled: if you refuse, the day will come when He will say to you, "Because when I called, ye refused; I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded it; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

Once more let me intreat you to bow your head at once under this ministry of reconciliation, and a river of peace shall flow into your soul—a river of unbroken, divine, eternal repose.

C. H. M.

 "THE ONLY TRUE GOD."

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—
JOHN xvii. 3.

SOME years since, a man in the south of Scotland told me that before he was converted he always fancied God *was frowning upon him.*

Now this *wicked* thought about God is very general amongst the fallen children of Adam, and believing that truth is sufficient to meet all error (just as light dispels darkness), I desire to draw your earnest attention to the inspired Word, wherein we shall find the true character of God revealed.

Turn to 1 John iv. 8, and let me ask you, dear reader, not only to read, but to mark, learn, and inwardly digest those three most precious words, “ God is love.” Yes, “ God is (not was) love.” How precious !

“ His nature and His name are love.”

Now, does it appear from this that He is “ frowning,” or, as “ the *wicked* servant ” imagined in Luke xix. 21, that He is “ an austere man ” ? Far be the thought, for “ God is rich in mercy ” and “ *great in love* ” (Eph. ii. 4).

Well, this point having been settled, a question of much moment presents itself. Who are the objects of this *great love* ? Let the Scriptures answer. “ God so loved *the world* ” (John iii. 16). Yes, “ the world ; ” which embraces the Gentiles as well as the Jews—takes in all and leaves out none. Then what about my reader ? Oh, friend ! appropriate this love of God by taking your stand on the word “ world.”

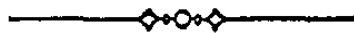
“ God in mercy sent His Son
To a *world* by sin undone ;
Jesus Christ was crucified,
’Twas for *sinner*s Jesus died.”

But then, again, whilst it is blessedly and undeniably true that “God is love,” and that *His heart is towards* sinners (the gift of the Son of His love being the fullest expression of this), it is well to get deep down into the soul the fact that there is another side of God’s nature or character, and one that is too commonly lost sight of, namely, “God is light.” Yes. “He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity.” *All sin is perfectly abhorrent to Him.* When Adam and Eve committed ONE sin, He could not pass it over, and so drove them out of His earthly paradise; and concerning His heavenly home, it says, “There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie” (Rev. xxi. 27). Well, then, might the seraphim veil their faces and cry, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;” and well might Isaiah say, “Woe is me, for I am undone,” when he saw in a vision the Lord, and what was going on in His *holy* presence; and well might my dear reader, if an unforgiven sinner, bow down before his God in true repentance about the many sins he has committed against Him. For, do not forget, “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all;” and if you refuse to have to do with Him now, whilst on His “throne of grace,” you *must* face Him when He steps on to the “great white throne” of judgment, and then,

appalling thought! be "cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15).

I do pray you, dear fellow-traveller to eternity, "Be ye reconciled to God;" now, at once, without a moment's delay. Christ, whom *He gave in the love of His heart*, has done a work ("it is finished"), which has met all the claims of His nature and holiness. Sin has been dealt with, Christ's blood shed, the vail rent which shut God in (and man out), and now He is revealed as "the Saviour-God," "a *just* God and a Saviour," able to be "*just*, and the justifier of him *who believeth in Jesus.*"

Dear reader, do you know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, *whom he hath sent*"? If not, I do beseech you, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee." H. T.



HEARING, NOT WORKING.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isa. lv. 8), so that we gather from the word of the Lord, not only here, but in numerous places, that man's thoughts are all wrong with regard to the things of God.

As soon as sinners become anxious about their souls, their first thought is, Now I must be *good*,

and then I may *hope* to be saved. *Works* is the first thought. But how contrary to what God says! And, surely, it is not what the sinner *thinks*, but what God *says*. “*Hear* and your soul shall live” (Isa. lv. 3). That is the avenue to the sinner’s soul; and mark, it is not simply the teaching of the Old Testament, but of the New also. The Lord Jesus Himself said, “Verily I say unto you, the hour is coming and *now is*, when the dead shall *hear* the voice of the son of God; and they that *hear* shall live” (John. v. 25). “Faith cometh by *hearing* (not *working*), and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. x. 17). Thus we find the sinner is told to *hear*, not to *work*, and hearing, his soul shall live.

Now, sinner, let me ask you, What are you about; *working*, or *listening*—which?

But, says the sinner, there must be works; we must do something; we can’t be saved if we don’t try for it, surely.

Of course there must be works; but whose works? Christ’s, or yours?

If you would only cease your doings, and sit still and listen, then you would *hear* about His work—a work accomplished eighteen hundred years ago at Calvary’s cross; a work which met all the righteous claims of a holy God against the sinner, and glorified that God so perfectly that He has raised and glorified the One who did that work, and decreed that “*every knee*

shall bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is Lord" (Phil. ii. 10, 11). So that those who refuse to hear His voice and receive *life* from Him shall hear His voice, and come out of their graves to receive *judgment* from Him (John v. 25, 28, 29).

Oh, what a blessed, finished work is the work of the Son of God! And now that God has got Him in the heavens—the *proof* that it is done—He asks not for the poor sinner's paltry works, but sets him down to listen, while He tells him of the Person and work of His Son, and then bids him exercise *faith* in Him. Yes; God wants the sinner's *faith*, not his *works*. But before he can exercise faith he has to *hear*; then, when he hears, faith comes, and he lives.

How blessed to hear that the work that saves thy soul, dear sinner, *is finished*. And if it is, then, what art thou working for? Give it up, and *believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ and His work, and thou shalt be saved.

But, says the sinner again, I do from my heart believe on Him. I am sure I do.

Then here is God's word for you: "He that believeth on the son HATH everlasting life" (John iii. 36). Now, note, it is not you may *hope* to get it, but God says HATH it.

Do you *hear* what He says?

Yes, I do. And believe in Jesus? Yes, truly.

Then there are only two things you can do.

A WILLING VICTIM.

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First, go to your knees, and thank Him you have it, because He says so. Secondly, go on your way rejoicing. Love Christ, and seek to show others that salvation does not come by their *working*, but that *faith* does come by their *hearing*. And the Lord grant that many may *hear*, and their souls shall live. W. E.



A WILLING VICTIM.

JOHN xviii. 12, 13.

When they had "bound" they "led" Thee, Lord,
 But ah! they knew Thee not,
 When thus, with lantern and with sword
 They sought that hallowed spot.

Thy holy soul had faced that hour
 In solitude and prayer;
 Thy Father's will the unseen power
 That took Thee captive there.

Bound in the willing bonds of love
 The Servant of our need,
 No fear Thy steadfast heart could move,
 Though love to death must lead.

We follow Thee with wondering eyes,
 And every step adore;
 But on the mount of sacrifice
 We gaze and wonder more.

Thou Lamb of God! we love to bow
 In worship at Thy feet:
 Jesus, the King of glory Thou,
 Thy saving Name how sweet.

ANON.

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GOD, THAT CANNOT LIE, PROMISED.

A SHORT time ago a Christian gentleman was called to attend the death-bed of a relative. The dying man was one who had ever evinced kindness and affectionate regard towards him, though utterly indifferent as to all thoughts of Christianity; he was, alas! like Gallio, who “cared for none of these things,” and a neglecter of God’s great salvation. But now that death was at hand, and that he knew he must soon receive that summons which it would be impossible to disregard—the summons which would usher him, all unprepared as he was, into the presence of God—all was changed, for he felt he was not ready to die. So he hailed his friend’s arrival with great joy, and eagerly inquired of him what he must do to be saved.

Faithfully did that friend unfold to him God’s wondrous, blessed plan of salvation. There was no need to press upon him his own helpless and lost condition, for he had already judged *himself* a sinner before the Lord, and owned God’s righteous judgment on his sin—in a word, he knew himself to be lost, and God’s time for blessing had come; but many things obscured his vision and hindered him seeing the glorious flood of light ready to stream into his soul. He knew he was a sinner and must have a Saviour, and he knew, too, that God was able and willing

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to save ; but there was a link missing, for he could not say that He had saved *him*. And as he heard again and again of God's wondrous love, he could only see his own unworthiness, and felt *he* must be *too* vile. In vain his friend assured him that God had said, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin ;" in vain he read to him text after text.

For days he knew no rest, refusing to believe that God intended it for such as he, until, his friend happening to say, "In hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised" (Titus i. 2). He started up in bed, saying, "Oh tell me, tell me, is that in the Bible ?" He was assured that it was, but insisted on having it found. The Bible was soon brought, and the blessed words pointed out. Then he lay back, muttering to himself, "*God, that cannot lie, promised ;*" he now appeared quite satisfied, and again and again referred to it with quite an air of triumph.

Very soon afterwards the Lord called him away, but he never again doubted God's simple message. He believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and was saved.

Dear reader, have you taken God at His word ? If not, do so now. Remember, God cannot lie, and He has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 20). Have you sinned ? let me ask you ; if so, there's no help for it, you must die. This dying man had

sinned ; but One had died in his stead, and God accepted that death for him, and will, too, for you, if you trust Him, for He has said so, and He “ cannot lie ” (John iii. 14-18). I.

A MARVEL OF GRACE.

“ You will be interested in hearing that one of the hymns in Vol. ii., “ God’s Glad Tidings ”—“ Arise, He calleth thee,” has been blessed to a poor mad creature in this village. I have often seen her just when she was quiet, but could never get a word out of her when I spoke of Jesus—only sullen silence. Last Thursday this volume was lent her, and her keeper, a most ignorant woman, knelt down by her bedside and read some of the hymns to her, this one among them. It was *really* made a blessing to her ; and twice that I have seen her since she has borne good testimony to the change ; especially once, when she met me with a happy smile, saying, “ God has been so good to me—that book, that book, ‘He calleth thee!’ And He called me, and He’s given me *sweet peace*—yes, *sweet peace*, in my heart—I feel it there. I’m *very bad*, my brain affected, I try to bite everybody, I bite myself, they have to tie me very tight ; but I’m happy when I’m well ; it’s only the last few days I’ve felt this peace.”

The last time I went to see her she was dreadful—tied to the bedpost (I could not go up to her) ; and her voice was awful as I heard it downstairs—like a beast’s voice, if you can imagine one speaking—but I feel sure she is the Lord’s, and will be with Him when He takes her.” E. R.

THE RELIGIOUS LADY.

In a quiet country town in a fertile part of the West of England resided an elderly lady, a widow, who lived comfortably on her means, was known to every person in the neighbourhood, and universally respected. She was accustomed to dress neatly, and might generally be seen every morning walking about in a black-silk cloak, on the inside of which was a very large pocket, made expressly for the purpose for which she required it. She was kind and generous to a degree, so that her life seemed taken up with thoughtful care for the benefit of her fellow-creatures, and in ministering to their necessities. She was acquainted with most, if not all, of the well-to-do people of the town, and her habit was frequently to call on them, and thankfully accept of anything they had to contribute for the benefit of the poor she knew. These offerings she carried off in the large pocket inside the cloak: and it was her delight to make good soup, jelly, or other articles of food, for the sick and needy, as also to help them with clothing.

She went on in this way for many years, and became not only well known, but had the reputation of being "a very good old lady." She advanced to the age of three score years and ten, and still, though her sight grew dim, she perseveringly pursued the same course. Nor

was she indifferent to religious duties, as people say. Far from it. She was as much admired for her diligence in religious exercises as for her benevolent activities. The parish church was seldom open without this aged lady being one of the congregation; serious, too, in her manner, so that, among the thousands in that town, perhaps no one was considered to have a better religious reputation than Mrs. P. This course she continued diligently year after year.

When about seventy-three years of age, she heard that a medical practitioner, residing about four miles from the town, was coming to preach on a certain evening in a room almost exactly opposite her house, and she had a great desire to hear him; a lady friend was also willing to accompany her.

The subject to which the preacher called attention was the Lord's question to Peter in Matt. xvi., "Whom do ye say that I am?" After perhaps referring to the pointed, personal way in which our Lord addressed souls, he endeavoured to show from Scripture God's own testimony to the eternal Godhead and perfect manhood of His beloved Son, that such as really own Him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," are pronounced to be "blessed," and to such, the Father (not flesh and blood) hath revealed His Son. No doubt he went on to speak of the finished work of Jesus on the cross, but

the prominent point in the discourse was the *person* of the Son. There seemed nothing unusual in the meeting, beyond a large and attentive audience. But when they were separating the old lady stepped forward, and asked the preacher to call on her the next time he came into town.

When he called, this aged lady almost immediately said, "I see now that I have always been a Unitarian until the other evening at the preaching. I believed in God, but I never knew His Son till the other evening, and now I am quite a different person. I see now that He has saved me, and I am so happy." I replied, "You have always had the character of being a very religious person, zealous in going to church, doing good," etc. "I know it," said she, "but I had not got salvation. I was doing all these things in order to obtain salvation, but never could succeed. But now I know that God sent His only begotten Son, and that He has saved me."

Such was the substance of the narrative. And I remember well she added, "I tell you, sir, that I have been thinking, as I have comfortable means, and as you do not seem to have friends in the town, that if you will use my parlour for yourself or friends, whenever you wish to converse with any, or to have them to dinner or tea, I shall be very happy."

This last expression of hers seemed such a confirmation of the reality of her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that the preacher could only praise God and take courage. It forcibly reminded him of Lydia's conversion, whose heart the Lord opened, and who said to the apostle, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." It is also remarkable that as Lydia's conversion was the beginning of the work of the Lord in Philippi, so the conversion of this old lady was followed by the conversion of many others in that town.

It need scarcely be added that the preacher recognized this door of hospitality as opened by the Lord, and for years after this the old lady was rejoiced to have the privilege of receiving many of the Lord's dear children into her house, and of using her substance in various ways in the Lord's service, and thus showing that she had passed from death unto life by her love to the brethren.

There is one feature in this narrative to which the writer would call special attention. It is the air of respectability and usefulness with which souls may move religiously on the broad road which leads to everlasting destruction. Such cases, we fear, are by no means uncommon. People of this stamp certainly look better outwardly than the immoral and profane, and yet, perhaps, are more thoroughly deceived by the

great adversary of souls. To “do good,” “be useful,” “try to get better,” “act with sincerity,” “practise ways of benevolence and sympathy,” are expressions often pressed on the unconverted, with the delusive hope of helping their salvation. Such ways, like those of the Pharisees, are certainly beneficial in a social point of view, and we all prefer to have such well-behaved neighbours; but to put these things in any degree as stepping stones, or means of eternal salvation, is not only in direct opposition to God’s word, but sets aside the only Saviour whom God has sent, and who declared “no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.”

Scripture declares that “by the deeds of the law (or the best doings that man could bring) no flesh shall be justified in His sight;” how blind, then, must those be who are endeavouring to do what God says cannot be accomplished? The common sentiments that “God only requires men to do their best,” “to act up to their conscience,” and the like, are only pure inventions, and quite contrary to His revealed will in the Scriptures. All such presumptuous ideas are levelled immediately by one verse of divine truth, and “the Scripture cannot be broken.” Look for instance, at John iii. 36, “He that *believeth on the Son* hath everlasting life, and he that *believeth not the Son*, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Again, in

Romans iv. 5, it is written. "To him that *worketh not*, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." When the jailor was in distress, and cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" did the apostle tell him to *do* this and that? No, he told him that salvation was by believing, and therefore not by doing, and said, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*"

Are you, dear reader, trusting to your doings to recommend you to God, or to help in any measure your salvation? May it please God to shine into your heart, and so convict you of your utterly lost and unclean condition as to compel you to look out of yourself for a Saviour, and to find out your want of the accomplished work of the Son of God, who "came into the world (not to help, but) to save sinners." And when others are turning away from the Saviour, and you are asked if you will not also go away, your reply then will be, like Peter's, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And *we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God*" (John vi. 67, 68).

H. H. S.



MAN'S DOUBT AND GOD'S DECLARATION.

“Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?”—JONAH iii. 9.

“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.

“YET forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” Such was the startling announcement from God which Jonah delivered to this proud, prosperous, and magnificent city. It comes floating down the stream of time, and falls upon our ears with solemn emphasis in these last closing days.

This world is ripening for judgment as swiftly and surely as that city of old was. God's sentence, too, has been passed upon it, and, sooner or later, it will be executed. Meanwhile He “now commandeth (not merely *one* city) but ALL men EVERYWHERE to repent, because he hath APPOINTED A DAY *in the which he will judge the world* in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained” (Acts xvii. 31). Well might the prophets of old cry as they looked forward to that day, “Let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand” (Joel ii. 2). “The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and hasteth greatly: . . . the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of

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darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. . . . Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath " (Zeph. i. 14).

Dear unsaved reader, have these solemn prophecies no word of warning for you? You are in and of this world over which these terrible judgments are hanging. Long ago its sentence was pronounced by Him whose lips were " full of grace and truth," and all that delays its execution is the grace and long-suffering of God, who is " not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." But some day this long-suffering will come to an end; some day the sweet invitations of His love will cease. And we cannot tell *how soon*. There is no limit of time given which would ensure your safety for a certain period—no " forty days " promised, as of old to the Ninevites, enabling you to calculate with certainty when judgment will fall. No; all is vague, all is indefinite as to *time*: " That day and that hour knoweth no man." There is a fearful uncertainty about it! We are told that it is coming, but we are not told *when*. Not the less surely it *will come*, and that, too, when least looked for and expected: " When they shall say peace and safety, *then* sudden destruction cometh . . . and they shall not escape " (1 Thess. v. 3).

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The prophets of old could say it was "near." Later on the apostles could speak of it as being "at hand;" of their days being "last days;" and of the Judge standing before the door. If so, truly we may speak of being *upon its very verge*. Yet a moment and, the Church being caught up out of this scene, God's unrestrained wrath will burst with startling suddenness upon this careless, scoffing world! Yet a moment, and its merry scenes of revelry shall be broken in upon by the flashing blaze of the glory of God! Some day, when people are going about their ordinary affairs; when you, it may be, are enjoying the excitement of the race-course or hunting-field, or idling away your time upon some fashionable promenade, your steps will be arrested, your heart will grow chill, the foolish jest upon your lips will die away, the laugh will be silenced—for, "as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be;" for "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. i.) Oh, think of the terror of that day! Your riches will avail you nothing then; your rank, your fame, your philosophy, will be powerless to shield you from the descend-

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ing storm. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man" will "hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and say to the rocks and mountains, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the *wrath of the Lamb*. For the great day of his wrath is come: and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. vi. 15-17.)

Oh! perhaps you say, I shall not be alive then. Ah, but you cannot tell. The end is at hand, and if the Lord came to-night for His people (and He may), you who know Him not will surely see all these things, and feel them, too, in your terrified souls, if death meanwhile has not launched them into eternity. Oh, can you bear to face such a future? Will you risk such a fate? And all for a few more days—or years at furthest—of fancied pleasure in this world.

"Dreamer? who slumberest on a mast that rocks above the
 deep,
 Will nothing but the judgment blast awake thee from thy
 sleep?
 Wake, sleeper, wake! arise and pray, and make salvation
 sure.
 How long shall slighted mercy stay, or patient love endure?
 Far out along the gloomy waste a storm is gathering high,
 The Lord of harvest reaps in haste; wilt thou stand heed-
 less by?
 The trembling heavens begin to bow; poor dreaming world
 and blind
 Sinner, arise! and hide thee now, for *judgment is behind.*"

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“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown !” This one brief message, delivered by a solitary man, was all the warning the Ninevites received ; while time after time, from platform and pulpit, from Bible and book, you have been warned, entreated, and urged to “flee from the wrath to come.” Look at the conduct of these Ninevites when these tidings reached them, and contrast your own with it. Did they treat it with the indifference and scorn you are treating God's message to-day ? Did they say, Oh, there are forty days to run yet, we need not repent so soon, to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.

Ah, no ; mark their reality and earnestness as “they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even unto the least.” Listen to the mournful lowing of the cattle denied their daily pasture. Harken to the wondering cry of the little children, unable to comprehend why their merry laugh should be silenced, their voices hushed, and such deep gloom spread around. And see how it all shows us their immediate and thorough repentance and humiliation. “*They believed God ;*” they accepted His verdict of their condition ; they humbled themselves to the dust before Him ; and so we read, “God saw their works that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and

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he did it not." That is to say, the effect which He desired to produce through the announcement of judgment was accomplished by their turning from evil, and humbling themselves before Him. And this is ever God's purpose in warning sinners. The announcements of His judgments are ever the preludes to the sweet invitations of His grace. Oh, reader, will you not "believe God" now? Will you not believe His Word, which so plainly tells of a day of wrath which is rapidly approaching? and, while yet there is time, flee for safety and shelter to the open arms of a waiting Saviour?

But there are three little words in this instructive Scripture, which, we would do well to see, affording us a wonderful insight into the natural heart, which in all ages and all circumstances distrusts and misunderstands the heart of God. "*Who can tell?*" is the anxious inquiry which burst from the lips of these affrighted Ninevites, "if God will turn." They "believed" His power and bowed under His mighty hand, but they knew nothing at all about His heart—that heart which in deepest tenderness and love at that very moment was yearning over the unconscious children who could not "discern between their right hand and their left," and also the suffering animals.

"Who can tell?" was their anxious cry. There was doubt, fear, and uncertainty in it. It was in

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their hearts to say, as one of a later day did, "If thou *wilt* thou canst." They knew His power to spare, but they *doubted His will* to do so. But then, as now, His grace rose above their distrust of His love, and His actions, if not His words, breathed out that doubt-rebuking answer, "I WILL."

Beloved reader, is it so with you? Do you doubt—not His ability, but His *will* to save? Is the inmost question of your troubled heart at times, just this, "*Who can tell if God will save?*" Well, on the authority of God's Word, it is the glory of our hearts to be able to say with holy confidence, *We can tell*. Standing as we do, in the full blaze of God's love, as manifested at Calvary, it is the joy of our hearts, who have in some measure tasted it, to be able to say, we can tell that "He desireth not the death of a sinner." We can tell that "He is not willing that any should perish." We can tell that He "*so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life!*"

This is the undeniable proof of God's love to the world. It cannot be gainsaid. It stands as an historical fact in the annals of time. "God so loved the world that he gave his Son!" Oh, will you not believe this "great love wherewith he loved us"? Will you not accept it, and let your world-wearied heart

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at last find rest in the enjoyment of it? It is no empty assertion He makes. He has given the greatest proof that He could in that "He spared not his only begotten Son, but delivered him up for us all." He has done all that love could do; He has given all that love could give, and now He sounds forth this grand declaration to refute man's doubt: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." "Having yet, therefore, ONE SON, *his well-beloved*, he sent him, also, last unto them" (Mark xii. 6).

One has well said, speaking of the freeness of salvation, "It costs us, nothing, but it cost God His Son!" Oh, think of this! Think of God giving His Son to come down to this ruined, sin-stained earth, to manifest the love and tenderness which was in His heart towards its inhabitants! But more, think of His giving Him to close His earthly path of sorrow on the cross of shame, and to bear "in his own body," on that cross, the judgment of sin!—the judgment due to *you*, my reader, and to me.

Those who have known the soul agony of anticipated separation from one dearer than life, can enter somewhat into the feelings of Abraham's heart that long three days' journey, as step by step, he walked with Isaac to the mount of sacrifice. But no human heart can ever fathom what it must have cost God to give

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His Son—His “well-beloved”—a sacrifice for sin! To see Him who in the by-past eternity was “daily his delight rejoicing always before him” taken and “by wicked hands crucified and slain.” To see Him mocked and scourged and spit upon. To hear the mad, wild cry of hatred which rang out upon the silent air, “Away with him! crucify him! crucify him!” And to hear that Son, in the sore trouble of His soul, pray, “Father save me from this hour!” though at once the subject spirit responded, “Yet for this cause came I unto this hour.” Or, again, from the deep gloom of Gethsemane His voice going up, “Oh, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me,” or later on, amid the dark horrors of Calvary, that cry of unparalleled anguish, “My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?”

“Earth shuddered as He died—
 God's well-beloved Son;
 The darkness sought His woes to hide:
 His work is done.”

But have you ever thought what it must have cost God to hear and see all this; and yet to know, if He would save the world, if He would save sinners, He could not save His Son? While as yet He had not suffered, all our Lord could say was, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John xv. 13). But that wondrous

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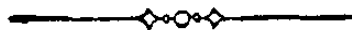
work accomplished, the Spirit of God can now tell us a more marvellous thing, for "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet *sinner*s [rebels, enemies] Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8), and now—

"The river of His grace,
Through righteousness supplied,
Is flowing o'er the barren place
Where Jesus died!"

Tell me can you doubt this love in the face of such a manifestation of it? Can you still reject it; still refuse it? Or will you not rather yield to it now, believe it now, and ere you lay aside this paper know the joy which the prodigal of old did, in feeling the warmth of the Father's kiss upon your cheek, and the weight of His love upon your neck?

Then, should the Lord come to-night for His people, you, instead of being left behind for judgment, will be caught up with them, to share the brightness of His home, as well as for ever to enjoy the love of that heart which has given costly a proof of its affections.

A. S. O.



BROKEN BONES MADE TO REJOICE.

“Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.”—PSA. li. 8.

HENRY F—— was a billiard-marker in the —— hotel at a noted watering-place of favourite resort in the West of England. Himself an excellent player, he often engaged with the frequenters of the “table,” and it was nothing unusual to find the exciting interest of the play prolonged to an advanced hour, especially during the “season,” with its influx of visitors, many of whom vainly seek happiness in such-like pursuits. But one night in the autumn of 186—— the game went on beyond the ordinary limit, and, after repeated successes and reverses, he retired as unsatisfied as at the commencement, for the so-called pleasures of the world yield no satisfaction. Wearied with excitement, he lay later than usual the next morning. Not caring for breakfast he arranged with a companion to take a stroll to the shore. It was a stormy morning, the wind blowing a perfect hurricane, and the object of their walk was to watch the effect of the storm on the vessels near that rock-bound coast. As they were leaving the hotel, being desired not to go without having breakfast, his friend yielded, but Henry, with that strange determination which so often precedes the most dreadful casualties, went alone, little

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thinking a calamity that seemed scarcely better than death awaited him, and within an hour he would be carried back helpless and all but lifeless.

The havoc made by the storm was not confined to the sea. Many have cause to remember that day, loss of life and damage to property being considerable on land, beside which many of our brave sailors, having reached old England's shores, found graves beneath the foaming waters just in sight of home. At the moment F—— was passing a large building in course of erection, the roof of an adjacent workshop was raised by a terrific gust, and in another moment he was buried beneath it. To extricate what seemed in all human probability the lifeless corpse was at once proceeded with, and great was the relief of those assembled to find life was not extinct; but so crushed was the poor body that it could only be identified by the clothes. He was now conveyed to the hotel which he had left but a short time since. The surgeon in attendance gave his opinion that he would only survive a few hours; but God willed otherwise. He "who killeth and maketh alive" said "Live," and in a few days he was removed to the hospital in a neighbouring town, where his friends resided, as it was thought well for him to have the advice of the doctors there. Here he learnt that if he lived he would be a helpless cripple. What a blow for one just in the flower of his youth!

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Having been an inmate some months, and getting no better, he wished to be removed to his home. He was brought to the little room where we first saw him, at the age of nineteen, and laid upon his bed, from which he never rose.

We were at once struck with his open and intelligent countenance, as few could fail to be, although now pale and thin from suffering. The lower part of his body being paralyzed from the shock to the spine, he lay thoroughly helpless. We now became intensely interested in him, believing the Lord had claimed him for Himself by such a merciful preservation from death. We trusted it had led him to think of his need as a sinner, but discovered he was perfectly indifferent as to his real state, his one thought being the possibility of recovery. He had not realized that God had purposes of love towards him; although He had "broken his bones," His desire was to save the soul. As yet he knew not the hand that seemed to be laid so heavily upon him; he only felt the weight of the stroke, and knew not the love that sent it. Narrow indeed was the range of his sight, for his eyes were not yet opened to behold Him who afterwards so filled the vision of his soul that his chamber was like a Paradise. He listened attentively as we told him of the love of God in giving "His only begotten Son, that

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whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

After visiting him for about twelve months, without apparent result, and being made to feel how utterly powerless we were, one night the Lord spoke to him during a thunder-storm, giving him to see himself in his true condition, and to cry out, “Woe is me, for I am undone.” Then, as is ever the case with those who take sides with God against themselves, he saw that another had undertaken all for him, had stepped into his place and borne the penalty which was due to him. All had been met on the cross by the Lord Jesus—God’s requirements and his need, nothing compromised. God was satisfied about the question of sin, yea, glorified, and thus He could be the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. How simple, how blessed for the sinner; but remember, reader, what it was to Jesus, He who was the delight of the Father, upon whom the heavens opened to signify God’s pleasure in Him, but when He was on the cross God’s face was hidden from him on account of sin: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Is it nothing to you to hear that cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Then it was He was met by God as the God of judgment, that He might meet us as the God of peace.

“Yea, all the billows passed o’er Him,
Our sins, *they* bore Him down.”

Dear Henry F—— knew now that it was because the blessed Lord Jesus was bearing *his* sins that He was forsaken of God; He saw that God had been satisfied, proof of it being that He raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory; and he was satisfied too. Now came the time of “joy and gladness.” Truly, he was made to “rejoice”—“And they began to be merry” (Luke xv. 24). Oh, the divine merriment over a prodigal returned, the lost one found, the dead alive again! What joy the Father has! And this is what is depicted in chap. xv. of Luke, the Father’s joy; not the prodigal’s, not the piece of silver’s, not the joy of the sheep in being found, but “Rejoice with *me*, for *I* have found my sheep which was lost.”

It was sweet to mark how rapidly he grew in divine things: before his conversion he could only read imperfectly and with difficulty, but he said the Lord helped him. He used and valued the word of God; it was his constant study and delight. It may be truly said of dear Henry that his was a life of suffering, but he glorified God in it. Often have we gone to give a word of cheer, and found ourselves receiving instead of giving, as he was always bright and happy in the Lord. The last few weeks of his sojourn here were marked by intense suffering; but he

was sustained most graciously and kept in perfect peace, at our last interview expressing himself as perfectly assured the Lord's way was best, but desiring to depart and be with Christ, which he knew was far better. When the Lord was pleased to take him, how blessed the change—
 “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

Dear reader, will you come to Jesus? Will you be brought to God thus *now*, or choose you rather to be summoned before the “great white throne,” only to hear the sentence of your eternal doom? We warn you of your danger, and intreat you to delay no longer. The subject of this sketch is another proof of the uncertainty of everything down here. “*Now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.” *To-day* God is beseeching you to be reconciled to Him. How marvellous!—God beseeching, yet you refusing. This must have an end soon; the Lord Jesus is coming to call home His own to Himself, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17).

Then the door of mercy will be closed eternally.

Reader, will it shut you inside, or outside? Inside, to dwell for ever in that home of heavenly glory — the Father's house — or outside, for judgment, which?

W. H. S.

FOR ANXIOUS ONES.

“And the angel answered, and said unto the women, Fear not YE: for I know that YE seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”—MATT. xxviii. 5.

THERE are many precious souls who really love Christ and are trusting Him for salvation, yet they are never really happy. Now it is such that I have specially on my heart at the present moment, and would for their sakes write this paper. For I feel deeply what a dishonour this state is to the name and the work of Christ; and I would ask every Christian who reads this paper to consider well, how it is that there are these souls at our very doors, who are going about in a wretched state—one day happy, the next day miserable—a practical denial of the fact that there is joy and liberty in knowing Christ; and to consider how it is that we have visited such cases, and have been so little in prayer, and so little guided in our words by the Spirit, that we have not been able to give them just that word which, with His power, would set them free at once; for it surely cannot be of the Lord that

souls should go on for months, and even years, in this state. Ought we not to be humbled by such thoughts?

As to details, there are scarce two doubters alike; certain features mark them all. Generally, all say they have a true and sincere desire to be happy in the Lord; all say they know they are lost; all say they are sometimes really happy, and then doubts and fears come in and ruin their happiness; they listen with gladness to the Gospel, and perhaps greatly enjoy the beginning of the preaching, and then suddenly, as the preacher is pressing the truth that they must know that they are lost and ruined, there comes in the doubt, "Ah, that is just where I am wrong! I never have realized that lost state in all its depth; and so what he is saying as to the blood washing whiter than snow all those who own their lost state cannot be for me;" and so they go away again, as sorrowful as ever, because they don't see that it is not at all a question of realizing that truth, but of believing it and owning it.

Satan leads these souls in one way or another to look in upon themselves, instead of looking out at Christ; but I would pray any anxious one to consider the beauty of the Scripture heading this article. Here are these dear women in doubt, distress, and despair, not knowing whether their Lord, who was precious to them, was still

in the sepulchre: an earthquake had taken place, and an angel sits at the mouth of the sepulchre; and for fear of him, the keepers shake and become as dead men.

Hardened sinner, what a terrible warning to you; these brave soldiers, where is their bravery now? In the face of the earthquake, in the face of the angel, all their bravery vanishes; so will all your falsely assumed bravery vanish in that day when you shall hear His voice in judgment, who says, "Yet *once more* I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. xii. 26). Where will you find yourself in that day? Far, far better that you should lay aside all your assumed bravery, and take your place now, at once, to-day, as a lost one, at the feet of a Saviour who loves to receive and welcome the lost.

The angel addresses no word of comfort to the keepers, but how different the word of comfort he gives to the women! "Fear not *ye*," he says, as it were in marked distinction to the fear shown by the keepers. And why were they not to fear? The reason is plain: "for I know that *ye* seek Jesus." This was the point. God looks at the *heart*, and He knew the difference between the hearts of the keepers and the hearts of those anxious seekers, and so the angel could tell them, with the greatest simplicity, "Don't fear." So would I say to you, dear anxious soul; for if you from the heart are one who seeks Jesus,

there is a blessed truth for you to enter into, and that is that *He* is seeking *you*; and when He seeks, He seeks *until* He *finds*. (See Luke xv. 4.) If you are anxious as to your really being saved, much more is He anxious that you should enter into all the joys of that salvation, purchased at the cost of His precious blood.

Take comfort, then, from this, and since He says to you to-day, "Fear not," believe His word, and rest in it. That Saviour whom you seek has been to the cross, and now is *risen* triumphant over the grave. That is the truth which marks the present time and God's present dealings with souls. If you want peace, you must see the blessed truth contained in these words, "He is not here: he is risen. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." You must enter into the fact that Jesus, who once died for sinners, is now risen from the tomb, God's claims of holiness and justice having been so fully met, that He could raise that Saviour out of the tomb and set Him at His own right hand. God has thus been perfectly satisfied. The question now is, Are you satisfied too? Mark, it is not in any way a question of feelings. What feelings of yours can alter this grand fact? The question is, Do you believe that fact, and can you accept the gracious invitation of the angel, when, as if to quell *every* doubt in your soul, he says, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay"?

Go back in thought over the whole scene of Calvary's cross—the blood-shedding, the cry of anguish, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” the placing His body in the tomb, the stone rolled in front of the sepulchre, the watch set, the angel descending from heaven and rolling away the stone, God having come in power and raised Him from the dead.

Now, what does all this mean, unless it be that He who bruised that Saviour on the tree (for “it pleased Jehovah to bruise him” in our stead, and for our sakes) wishes now to show His perfect satisfaction with Him, and in order that you may fully enjoy the liberty of His *great* salvation, gives you a loving invitation to inspect the empty tomb of that Saviour, and thus for ever to put an end to all your doubts and fears?

Oh, take this word home to yourself: “Come, see the place where the Lord lay.” Look at Jesus, now risen from the dead, and raised to the right hand of God; and when Satan comes with distressing doubts, instead of looking inside at feelings of your own, look straight out at Christ, the accepted One, in glory; Christ, the One who went down into death for you, and who is now risen. Instead of troubling yourself as to frames and feelings, accept at once the invitation here given by the angel, “COME, SEE the place where the Lord lay,” and, like these dear women, you will then be able to go and tell forth these

glad tidings to others with fear and great joy.— Not fear as to your acceptance with God. Oh no; how could there be that fear now? The fear in this passage is one that goes with *great joy*, and you never can have great joy if you are doubting in any way your acceptance with God. This is the fear which all the Lord's people ought to have—the fear of offending this God of love, of grieving Him; and it is coupled with the great joy which ought surely also to characterize the Lord's people.

And now a word more to any fully delivered soul. The question I would put to you is, How far does this word, "He is not here," act upon you in your walk? *He is not here.* Do you miss that loving Saviour, who hung on the cross for you, and who now lives to plead for you? Do you really miss Him? Test your heart with this question; for it is in proportion as you miss Him down here that you will be seeking His interests, and not your own, and will be looking out for His return, so fulfilling the desire of His heart who said, "Ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord."
A. F. R.



**“IN THE MIDST OF DEATH I AM
IN LIFE.”**

THIS is the very opposite to the common saying, “In the midst of life we are in death,” but for all that perfectly, blessedly true for everyone who has “set to his seal that God is true;” and this is what faith does.

Faith is just believing simply what God says, not so much believing in God as taking Him at His word; as it is put in the Epistle to the Romans: “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (iv. 3).

And again, in the fifth chapter of St. John's Gospel and twenty-fourth verse, the Lord Jesus said, “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.” Dear reader, “believest thou this?”

The blessedness of being “in life,” because “in Christ” (and He is our life), specially where a precious soul is called away from time into eternity, as men say, suddenly, has been prominently brought before one of late in a case which came under the writer's notice.

F. H. T.— was born at Greenwich in the year 1852. He early lost his father, who was the master of a small coasting vessel. Soon after he was ten years old he was apprenticed to the

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fishing, and sailed out of Harwich in different smacks on their cruizes for cod and other fish. When about sixteen he left this work and entered the Royal Navy.

Like many more, and perhaps like yourself, my reader, from quite a child something used to tell him it was not all right between his soul and God, and he would make all sorts of good resolutions. Do you know what these kind of things are? To be broken nearly as soon as made. Still he heeded not these inward admonitions, neither the loving words of his Christian mother, and threw off all restraint, becoming thoroughly reckless, as he himself owned, in word and deed. In this condition of soul he joined Her Majesty's ship B—— some four years since, and proceeded in her to the North American station. Not long after his arrival there, a letter reached him telling of the falling asleep of his mother, whom he knew to have been a believer in the Lord Jesus; one who knew her sins had all been forgiven, and that she had eternal life in Christ.

This loss not only aroused natural sorrow at the death of a loved parent, but touched T——'s conscience, and made him think, and ask himself what would have been his present and eternal condition had he been taken away instead of his dear old Christian mother; and he became anxious about his soul, being led to see something of his lost and ruined condition as a sinner before the Holy God.

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About the same time his turn came to perform the duty of showing visitors over one of the finest ironclads in Her Majesty's service, as she lay in harbour. One day, after guiding a party from shore over the ship, as they were leaving the side, one of them, a lady, gave T—— a small pocket Testament, and asked him to read it, which he promised to do, but soon forgot both Testament and promise for many days. At length he took up the book, and turning over the leaves his eye rested upon the passage, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” He was arrested, and former convictions deepened, the concern and anxiety about his soul's salvation returned, and now he tried in real earnestness to set things right, and thus to ease his troubled conscience in all sorts of ways. I need not detail them; for I am sure many who read this have gone through, or may be going through, this process, or, as the sailors say, are “on the same tack”—what is called, “Making one's peace with God,” which was never yet made but by one man; and that one the Son of God. I mean, peace with the holy God, not that false peace which precious souls try to satisfy their poor hearts with, and which reminds one of that passage in the book of the prophet Ezekiel, where it speaks of saying, “Peace, and there was no peace,” and “daubing with untempered mortar.”

Oh, what a lot of this kind of stuff there is,

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and only to crack, and chip, and peel off when the guilty soul stands before the great white throne, and all his or her nakedness is exposed. Alas, alas! too late then to obtain that covering which would stand the fire of God's righteous judgment, or satisfy His holy eye. No, dear unsaved reader; peace with God has been made eighteen hundred years ago, when the blessed Lord hung between the two thieves on Calvary's cross, as the word puts it, "having made peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20).

Well, dear T—— tried this, and got laughed at for his pains; gave that up, and for a time became careless. But still the fact of his lost condition *would* keep coming up before him, and that passage in the lady's Testament speaking of impending judgment *would* haunt him and make him very uncomfortable.

On board this same ship were three or four Christian seamen. I don't mean professors, but you know what I allude to—those sort of people who *know* they *are* saved, and like whom you long to be, specially when the thought of death, and "after this the judgment," stares you in the face, though you may now join in the laugh and the chaff against them, calling them "blue lights," or "new lights," or "psalm singers," and such like. To one of these T—— was led to open his mind a little, and this man of God gave him a tract to read. In it was this verse,

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from the First Epistle of John, v. 13: “These things have I written unto you who believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW that ye have eternal life.”

Have you, my reader, ever looked into this precious passage quietly? What magnificent simplicity, and yet what marvellous force, in those two words, “BELIEVE”—“KNOW”! It is riveting on the other side, if one may be allowed the simile, that word in John’s Gospel, the last verse of the twentieth chapter: “But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” And now take the passage just before quoted, and what do we find in the two? Truth written, that you might believe it and HAVE life; and then more truth written to you who *do believe*, that you may KNOW that you HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. Look at these two passages well, and may God rivet them home to your soul. T—— had scarcely read and pondered that verse when joy filled his soul, and he knew because he believed. In the first burst of his ecstasy he ran up on deck to the sailor who gave him the tract, shouting, “I have found it! I have got it!” to the surprise of his shipmates, who wanted to know what he had found—what he had got. He told them he had got Christ—the forgiveness of his sins.

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Of course, he was again well laughed at, but he could afford it now, for it was not his doings or aught of himself, which only produces weariness of the flesh, but what Another had done for him, which, when believed and known, produces rest and peace.

From this time he was gently led on and on in the things of God, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, being much helped by one whom God was pleased to use for this purpose, one we will call W——, a postman in H——, Nova Scotia, whose acquaintance T—— formed one day while on shore, by seeing this dear man with a bundle of tracts as well as his bag of letters, ready to distribute the truth of God as well as the Post Office letters, and who placed a room at T——'s disposal whenever he could get leave to come ashore; love and kindness which many besides the subject of this paper have had to thank God for.

The time came for T—— to return to England to be paid off, and go on leave; during which he was married to a young Christian he had become engaged to ere he left this country, both being then careless as to their souls' salvation; but about the 14th of February, 1874, while expecting what people call a "valentine" from her absent lover, she received a long letter from T——, telling what great things God had done for his soul, and pleading most earnestly with

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her to “ come to Christ,” as he put it, and that at once. This was the arrow guided by God through the joint in her harness, and was the commencement of a real work in her soul; so that by the time T—— came home, she knew what he knew, because she had believed what he had believed—God’s word.

Leave over, T—— was ordered to join H.M.S. C——, the coast-guard ship, in H—— harbour, his young and newly-married wife looking to join him shortly. On his arrival in H——, he found out a few believers in the Lord Jesus, meeting simply in His name, and by his bright and happy testimony was used to cheer them on their way. On Lord’s day, February 4th, 1877, he was present at the morning meeting, and in the evening preached in the little school-room, pressing upon his hearers God’s salvation, and that His word is, “ *Now* is the accepted time!” remarking, that perhaps there were some there who would never hear his voice again.

On the following Tuesday afternoon he was at target practice at the mouth of the harbour, in the steam launch, with a field-piece in the bows; one, two, and three rounds were fired, the hits and misses marked. When it came to T——’s turn to point and fire the gun, he did so; the eyes of most were fixed on the target to see if the shot had taken effect; but only for a mo-

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ment, as something on board called their horrified attention. The gun, after being discharged, had jumped clean out of the chocks, struck dear T—— on the chest, knocked him into the stoke-hole, and jammed his head against the boiler. All was over, as far as down here was concerned. T—— was what man calls a lifeless corpse, but his spirit was released, "absent from the body, present with the Lord." Sudden death, sudden glory! Yes, indeed, how true for him! In the midst of death he was *in* life.

Sorrowfully the launch was put back to the ship, and T——'s body lifted on board. The Testament which the lady had given him some three or four years ago, and which had been used to deepen the conviction of sin in his soul, he always carried about him; and inside his blue serge there it was found—all bedaubed with his life's blood; this was tenderly wiped off by one of his shipmates to give to his widow, who had been telegraphed for, but the marks could not be wholly got off; and the book now is in her possession, doubly valuable to her as the truth of God which had often cheered and checked her husband in his Christian course.

You may imagine the solemnizing effect it had on all on board. I myself overheard one officer say, the day the body was interred, and I was waiting to see it brought on shore, "It was a

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miracle it was not I, as I fired the preceding round;” but God knew what He was about, and, as his widow said, in the midst of her grief, when taken on board to view the body of her husband, “ Well, after all, better he than many another in the ship, for I KNOW HE WAS READY;” and sobs stopped her further utterance. This, too, touched the hearts of those within earshot. Oh! may this voice reach many a conscience! and, dear believer, as you read this, will you look up to God to carry home the testimony T—— left behind him to many, at present, thoughtless sailors? After the funeral, a servant of Christ had the opportunity of preaching the gospel at the open grave. What a pulpit! and in the evening, the same little room dear T—— spoke in on the previous Lord’s day was crowded; also on the succeeding Sunday night, when the love of God and work of Christ were set forth, and precious souls urged to BELIEVE, and then they would know they had ETERNAL life.

And now, dear reader, this has not been written to make much of the earthen vessel, not to praise up dear T——, but to speak well of T——’s God and Saviour, and I look to Him to use this simple statement—and, of course, only a very partial one—of His dealings with the one who is now “for ever with the Lord,” to the souls of those still unsaved, who may

read this article ; that, like Samson of old, dear T—— may slay more in his death than in his life, for truly, “ he, being dead, yet speaketh.” May God Himself apply His truth to your soul, so that by simply believing His word— not mere doctrines—you will then KNOW that you will have *eternal* life ; and this life is in His Son, so that you may be able, in His presence, now to say, through His grace, “ In the midst of death I am in life.”

S. V. H.

NOW.

Three little letters form a word
Of import vast and great,
A solemn word on which may hang
Our everlasting state.

That word is now,—a little word,
Yet spoken by the Lord ;
Recurring oft, again, again,
Throughout the written word.

Now is the free accepted time,
Now is salvation's day,
Now whosoever will may come,
Now Christ's the life, the way.

Now pardon's offered full and free,
Now heaven is open wide,
Now peace is offered through the blood
Of Jesus crucified.

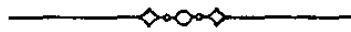
EARTH, HEAVEN, AND HELL.

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O word of import vast and great !
 Yet ah, how quickly gone !
 A breath, a moment—then, alas !
Now's blessings may have flown !

O sinner ! trifle not, I pray,
 But *now* in meekness bow ;
 The words of Christ are true indeed,
 And He will bless thee *now* !

A. M.



EARTH, HEAVEN, AND HELL.

(Read Luke xiv. 15-25, xv. 11-32, xvi. 19-31.)

IN this discourse the Lord Jesus brings before us earth, heaven, and hell—earth with its hindrances, heaven with its happiness, hell with its horrors ; and all divinely real. The hindrances are real, and you yourself, my dear unsaved reader, are the very witness that they are so ; otherwise, you would have been converted before now. You cannot say you have not been called, sought, and invited. “ Oh,” you say, “ I have been hindered.” Take my advice then : take a flying leap over the hindrances of earth, and taste the joys of heaven, lest eternity find you in the horrors of hell.

In the fourteenth chapter we have the invitation, in the fifteenth, the man who accepted the invitation, and how he was welcomed, and in the sixteenth, the man who would not accept it,

and from whose eternal future the Lord draws aside the veil. And who was this last? I believe he was the elder brother of Luke xv., the one who would not go in, though the Father came out and entreated him. Why would he not go in? Because he was too good; he would not go in with such company—he refuses to have to do with the younger brother whom grace had saved, and the brothers are sundered for all eternity.

He who will not go in when called by grace must taste the terrible truth of the sixteenth chapter—find himself *outside for ever*: and let me tell you this, my unsaved reader, you cannot find yourself in hell without having *passed the open door of heaven* to reach there. How terrible! To pass heaven's open door, with its joy and its gladness and its love, to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

In the fourteenth chapter the Lord gives us the paltry excuses of the heart of man; in the fifteenth, the irrepressible love of the heart of God; in the sixteenth, the eternal misery of the one who made the excuses. He shows us earth and its madness, heaven and its merriment, hell and its misery. You are on earth now: where will you spend eternity? "In heaven, I hope," you say. Make *sure* of it, my reader, make sure of it.

Have I put a false colouring on these chap-

ters, or what do they teach? Is it not *madness* to refuse God's grace, and slight God's mercy, though the "excuse" of chapter xiv. be polite? Does not chapter xv. show a scene of divine gladness—the joy of God over the sinner's salvation, and the sinner called to share that joy for evermore? And is not chapter xvi. the scene of man's misery—utter, eternal misery—as he is seen to fall from the lap of luxury to the pit of hell?

The Lord presents here the piteous condition of the lost soul—its cry for help, its wail. Look! What is all it dares even appeal for? There is given here the circumscribed extent of the prayer of a lost soul in hell. *One drop* of water! *One drop*; and it is denied. Why? Because the guilt of the sinner has landed him in a spot where the mercy of God cannot reach him.

Do you ask, "Is my guilt so great that it cannot be pardoned?" Not now! *Now* there is no blessing God does not offer you freely; *now*, but not *then*; then there is only left for you one thing, to mourn throughout an endless eternity your own terrible folly in rejecting the offer of God's salvation.

Now it is all mercy and no judgment; *then* it will be all judgment and no mercy. *Now* Christ offers you everything His love can give; *then* He can only judge you. If you refuse His *love* you must taste His *power*; if you pass by the

open door of heaven, and make light of the voice that bids you come in, there is nothing left but the terrible future of which Luke xvi. is the picture. The rich man dies, and, I dare say, everything that could make a death-bed easy and painless surrounded his—every luxury his money could buy; but he dies—money cannot keep off death. When death comes in, that cold, pale, grim monster, what terror will seize your soul, you that are Christless, unsaved, unpardoned, unblessed. Do not think that you are going to have a long time to prepare. You may be swept off in a moment, having no time for anything. Mark the rapidity of this scene. He dies and is buried, and in hell he lifts up his eyes. Look at the transition. Life, death, burial, hell, torments! This is the Lord's own solemn picture of the end of an unconverted man. Do you tell me it is but a picture? True; but if the *picture* is so terrible, what, oh what will the *reality* be? Can you brave it? Dare you risk this awful future, this terrible hell?

There is thirst in hell, but there is *no water*; *now*, if any man thirst, there are rivers of living water wherewith to slake his thirst—*now*, but not *then*. Oh, will you not drink now and live? Will you be there, and find even one drop denied you?

“Son, remember!” Yes, memory will go

down with you there. You must leave your money, leave your pleasures, leave everything you have prized and valued on earth behind you; but you will carry two things down with you—*your sins* and *your memory!* You may try to stifle convictions now, to cover up your sins now, to hush the voice of conscience, and it is quite possible you may succeed. It is quite possible you, who have neglected the gospel, may come to a death-bed, and conscience give you no warning word; for the wicked have “no bands in their death, but their strength is firm.” Yes, you may come to a death-bed, and have no fear to die, and yet you are *Christless, unsaved*. Why is this? Because your conscience has been stifled so long, till at last it gives you no warning cry, and mourning friends dry their eyes and say, “He died like a lamb, died like a lamb!” Alas! *died and was damned!* “Son, remember!” remember amid the flames of hell, remember those gospel preachings when you wished the preacher would have done, when you thought him mad because he would seek to warn you, seek to draw you into a place of safety.

“Son, remember” how you despised the love of God; when the portals of heaven stood wide open to receive you, how you refused to go in.

Think of reviewing a lifetime in which you did your best to damn your immortal soul, and to know you had *succeeded!* Is this true? Is

it a reality? Is it a fact, that by-and-by, in eternity, you must cast your eye back over your history, and, as the long dark night of eternity rolls on, you must remember that you refused to let God save you? Yes, it is but too true of every gospel-neglector, or gospel-rejector. Are you such, my reader?

Can you bear to picture yourself in that scene of ceaseless woe, with all your joys gone, all your pleasures gone, all your friends gone, and you having waked up to find yourself a sinner in your sins? Memory reigns supreme there. Memory brings back all your past life, your wasted opportunities, and you say, Will it go on? Will it never end? Yes, it goes on, it goes on, it will *never* end.

The Lord tells here the past, the present, and the future of a soul in hell. "*Remember*"—how that word fills up the *past*! "*Tormented*"—that is the terrible, the everlasting *present*. "*Now thou art tormented.*" "But," you say, "is there *no* escape?" Listen: "*Fixed*"—there is the *future*, "a great gulf fixed." What does that mean? That God Himself cannot then bridge it over; He then has, I may say, no power to show you mercy. Your portion is settled for ever: memory crushing you with all the scenes of your lifetime, which is for ever *past*, beyond recall; torment, sorrow unspeakable in the *present*; and for the *future* a "great gulf fixed" between you

and those eternal scenes of joy and gladness in which you too might have been, had you not refused to share them.

But, thank God, now there is pardon, now there is room, now there is a welcome in the Father's house for you, now God's invitation is going out to call you to his great supper of salvation.

God's feast is a feast of joy, a feast of salvation. He Himself provides the feast; He spreads on the table that which divinely meets the needs of the guests. But besides meeting *your need* as a sinner, God has a deeper motive. He wants to gratify His own heart by having you as a guest.

What a grand thing it is to know that God wants *me* for His guest! He wants my company. In Luke xiv. the great thought of the heart of God is, He wants to have you, wants to have you for His own. Though man has sinned and gone away from Him, His love remains the same; He comes out in the energy of His grace, and entreats you to come to Him, to be His guest. I find the kind of company, too, who accept the invitation, the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, *i.e.*, those who could bring nothing to the feast.

It is on earth the invitation comes. Earth is the waiting-room, in which the fate of the soul is decided, either on the one hand for glory or on the other for the dark, the bitter gloom of the lake of fire. Who shall decide? With *you*, my reader, lies the responsibility.

Perhaps you are saying, "I must wait a more convenient season." Take care, lest it never come. Take care, lest, like Felix, your faith may be in a convenient season which never comes. He trembled once, and you may have trembled once in your history. There are moments when God puts the gospel before a soul in such a way that it is almost constrained, almost persuaded to believe; but the soul puts it from him, does *not* decide, and the moment never recurs again.

I ask you, my reader, do you accept or do you decline God's invitation? Either you must accept it and go in, on the ground of being a lost, ruined sinner, or you must refuse, like the elder brother, who did not like this ground.

Earth has its ranks and stages, but there all are gone. If I asked Nicodemus, the moral man, How came you here in heavenly glory with Christ? "Oh," he would say, "it was the blood of Jesus!" Woman of the city, how came you here? "It was the blood of Jesus!" she replies. Paul, the blasphemer, the persecutor, how came you here? "The blood of Jesus" is again the answer that thrills through heaven; "that blessed, precious blood of Jesus!"

If I look, too, on the terribly dark side which Luke xvi. speaks to us of, it is all the same. What took the rich man to hell? His sin. Look at the category, in Revelation xxi., of those

who find themselves in the lake of fire for eternity. "The *fearful*, the unbelieving, abominable murderers," etc., etc. What brought each one there? His sin. All rank, all difference is gone then. *Sin* consigns the unbelieving sinner to *hell*, and *blood* brings the believing soul to *glory*; all else is set aside.

Where, then, will *you* be found for eternity? Will you be found among the number of those who tread that golden city with Jesus? Do you accept or refuse his invitation?

We have looked at the man who would not go in—turn now and look at the man who did go in. He says, "I will arise and go to my Father." That is decision. There comes a moment when the soul decides. Do not suppose you have to fit yourself before you come. Christ meets you where you are and as you are. Christ knows all about you, and He knows too He is the only One who can meet your need, and so He asks you to come to Him. The prodigal said, "I will go;" there was decision, and, oh, how the Lord yearns to meet a returning soul, how He loves to greet that soul, to bid it welcome, to show out all His love to you!

You may be returning with a weary heart, with a slow footstep; but I read, "the Father *ran*, and fell on his neck and kissed him." What does that kiss tell? It tells of unchanged affection. The heart of God has never changed

towards you. And what did the Father say? Why, he did not speak a word. With reverence, I might say the Father's joy was too deep for utterance.

There is no reproach, no word about the past. If you go to *hell* you must remember the past through eternity; there it is, "*Son, remember.*" If you come to God *now*, the past is all forgiven, all blotted out, no memory of it remaining, and not a word to remind you of it; for God delights to say, "Their sins and iniquities *I will remember no more*" (Heb. x. 17).

True, the prodigal was not worthy, but why did he get the kiss? Because he was worthy? Not at all, but because the Father loved him! The prodigal does not say, when he comes to his Father, "Make me a servant;" and very rightly, for if he had made a bad son, I do not think he would have made a very good servant; and another thing, if you come back to God, you have no business to tell Him what He shall say to you, and how He shall treat you, and what He shall make of you. No, no! you have just to leave Him to do as He likes; and what does He do? He folds you to His heart in the tenderest embrace of love! The Lord sees the first returning thought of the prodigal's heart, the very first; and why? Because, I believe, from the very day the prodigal left his Father's house, the Father never left His post, as it were,

of watching the road for his son's return. And oh, how He welcomes him, all unwashed as he was, in all his rags!

"Bring forth the best robe," He says to the servants; and that is my province. That is the Evangelist's work, *i.e.*, to tell you of Christ, to seek to display His attractions before you, to tell you that you have nothing to do, but that Christ has done it all for you. Christ Himself is the best robe. There is the best robe for the worst sinner.

"Put shoes on his feet," too. The law said, "Take off the sandal." Grace says, "Put shoes on," *i.e.*, "I will provide him with fitness to tread those courts above." The law says, "Take your shoes off, you are not fit." Grace says, "I will make you fit."

And then there is the merriment, the joys of heaven, and oh! who would be fool enough to put aside this, and risk what the sixteenth chapter gives? Will you not come to Jesus, hear Him say all is forgiven (and the *all*, you know, is a great deal in *your* case), and taste the gladness of heaven?

"They *began* to be merry." And we never hear that they left off; there was no end. We begin down here, but it goes on and on and on through the countless ages of eternity.

Only come to Jesus, and then you will taste the sweetness and truth of these lines—

“Every sin shall be forgiven,
Thou through grace a child shalt be
Child of God, and heir of heaven,
Yes, a mansion waits for thee,
Even thee, even thee,
Yes, a mansion waits for thee.”

W. T. P. W.

MERCY UPON ALL.

“For God hath concluded *all in unbelief* that he might have *mercy upon all*.—Rom. xi. 32.

THE Epistle to the Romans teems with deep and rich expressions of God's mercy, and the more thoroughly the sinner takes his true place as such before God, the more will he appreciate this mercy, which brings with it all that he needs for time and eternity.

In the first part of the Epistle, special care is taken to prove what man, be he Jew or Gentile, really is before God; and the first point I would seek to press upon the reader is the language of the Holy Ghost through Paul in chap. iii. 9, “We have before *proved* both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.”

Certain it is, dear friend, that if you are still unsaved this is *your* condition, “under sin.”

You may be glorying in your fancied freedom, while all the time the case is proved that all, and therefore you, are under sin. This surely is to be under its dominion, a slave to it, in short, and exposed to all its consequences. From this verse

the Apostle goes on to affirm that "there is *none righteous*," none that doeth good, none that seeketh after God, &c. Suppose, then, that such a company were arraigned before the tribunal of God, who must ever judge in righteousness, what must be his inevitable sentence? Why, every mouth is stopped, and all the world become guilty before Him (Rom. iii. 19). What witnesses would avail at such a court? You might bring forward testimonies to your morality, amiability or even righteousness, but there it is proven that you are under sin, for all are *guilty*, for all have become so; and therefore you are subject to the judgment of God.

Will you still plead not guilty, and try to escape this just sentence which is passed upon all? This surely is madness, and only proves the hardness of your heart and the deceitfulness of the sin you are under. Far better that your mouth should be stopped, as it must be sooner or later; that you should bow to the sentence of guilt passed upon all by God Himself. Nor is this all, for the verse at the head of this paper asserts that God hath concluded all in unbelief. How sweeping this is—all proved under sin, every mouth stopped, all the world become guilty, and all concluded in unbelief; and all this stated by God Himself, who knows the human heart thoroughly, and man's state by nature.

If these things be so, how urgent is your neces-

sity, dear unconverted reader, to face them now, when you may learn how to escape all the dire consequences of such a condition! Your standing before men may be all that is commendable, and this may do for a time, when you are enjoying life and health; but measure yourself in the presence of God, in the light of eternity. Bowing to His word, reason thus with yourself: If *all* are under sin, *I must* be; if *all* are *guilty*, I am necessarily so; if *all* are *concluded* in *unbelief*, I must be an *unbeliever*; and if this be so, then clearly I am exposed to the righteous judgment of God, and am just awaiting the execution of it.

Think of an earthly tribunal—the prisoner and all the witnesses on both sides are heard, the jury retire and again come forth, the judge asks their verdict, and amid the deathless silence of the court the word “guilty” is pronounced. The judge then, turning to the prisoner, tells him it is his solemn duty to pass sentence upon him, that the unanimous verdict of the jury is that he is guilty.

Shall the prisoner be unmoved? will it avail him aught to plead “not guilty,” to refuse to believe what is proved against him? The sentence is passed, he retires from the bar to his cell, there to await the execution of that sentence. True it is that such a verdict and such a sentence passed by man might be a false one, but not so with

God, who needs no jury to decide the matter, but knows all Himself.

If, then, He has proved you to be under sin and guilty, will you still refuse to believe it? Alas, too many do, and go on under the dominion of sin, thus deepening their guilt and increasing the judgment that must ere long fall upon them, "that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. ii. 12).

But, now, if all this be the background of the picture presented to us in Romans, what is the picture itself? "*That He might have mercy upon all.*" What news for guilty ones! And this standing out in bold relief, the more so that the background is so dark. If you accept the judgment, and own your guilt and unbelief, then the mercy of God comes gushing forth upon you, as upon all who will receive it. A tender-hearted judge might long to set the condemned man free, or at least to extenuate his sentence, but as a judge he cannot; he is bound to act according to the laws of the country. Ere the day of execution arrives, however, the door of the prisoner's cell is opened, an officer enters with a document in his hand, containing the *death warrant*? No; for that had been already given; but a message of mercy from her gracious majesty the Queen, with her own signature and seal attached to it. The prisoner now, perhaps,

confessing his guilt and dreading his doom, according to the verdict of the judge, receives this pardon according to the Queen's word, and, believing it, his fears remove, he rejoices with trembling, and leaves the cell a free man.

This is mercy at the expense of justice, yet still it affords us an illustration of our theme.

How shall God act, Himself the judge? Can He change the sentence? Shall He make light of the sin, or lessen the guilt? Never! How, then, can He have mercy upon all?

The cross of Christ is God's wondrous answer to this question. There, dear friend, you may see the Son of God Himself—the spotless victim, the substitute for man, bearing all the terrible judgment due to our sin, suffering, the just for the unjust, taking the place of the guilty.

There mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. Oh! learn in your very heart the meaning of that cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and, having accepted your place as under sin, guilty and unbelieving, even now believe that God's beloved Son has taken your place, and borne all the judgment that your sin demanded.

“He took the guilty culprit's place,
And suffered in his stead;
For man, O miracle of Grace!
For man the Saviour bled.”

Thus it is that God's rich mercy can gush forth from a heart of deepest love, as from a throne of unsullied holiness, and reach you in all your sins with a free pardon and a full salvation.

Yes, "mercy upon all" is our glorious theme. In righteousness now God delights to show it.

Do you now, then, accept this mercy, with all the blessings it brings in its train—*pardon, peace, salvation, eternal life*? yea, every blessing may now be yours, and all through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. God has set Him forth, a propitiation (mercy-seat), through faith in His beloved.

This is the mystery of love, this is how God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Even thus, that Jesus Himself has borne *all* the sins and been judged for all the sin, so that God can have mercy on all who simply believe in Him. The prison-door flies open, the messenger of God unfolds the pages of His own Word. There I see all my sins pourtrayed, all my sins exposed, and now believing, I learn that all the value of Christ's work and all the preciousness of His blood is put to my credit; that God is satisfied and His justice vindicated at Calvary's Cross, and in righteousness His mercy reaches me, laden with all the fruits of the victory of Jesus, and I am free.

The mercy is as true as the guilt, but you

must own the latter in order to appreciate the former. It may be my reader is awakened, conscious of guilt and unbelief, yet though the word of God tells of mercy—you hesitate to accept it; you think of your unworthiness, and of how you have despised that mercy so long. This you cannot own too deeply. Nevertheless, the same word that proves your guilt assures you of mercy, and that upon all; therefore you may claim it. You may even now rejoice as a recipient of it. Instead of waiting for the execution of the judgment, you discover that this is all past as regards your sins, and now you just wait for the glory, where you shall only learn more and more of the boundless mercy of God, that reached even you, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we believe in this mercy; then we shall learn all the unmeasured love of God, and the richness of the mercy that could save us from the eternal wrath, which we deserved, and secure for us eternal glory, giving us even now the title to be there. Surely we should more often sing

“ O God, we acknowledge
 The depth of Thy riches :
 For of Thee, and through Thee,
 And to Thee are all things ;
 How rich is Thy mercy !
 How great Thy salvation !
 We bless Thee, we praise Thee,
 Amen and amen.”

T. E. P.

“MILK WITHOUT MONEY”; OR, A LESSON WE MUST ALL LEARN.

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.”—ISAIAH lv. 1-3.

THESE lovely lines of gracious invitation to the unsatisfied, because unsaved soul, connect themselves with a little incident which befell me a year or two ago, and which I now relate in hope that thereby some Christ-seeking soul may be helped.

I was on an evangelistic tour through the north of Ireland, accompanied by a beloved fellow-labourer in the Gospel. Being announced to preach at the town of L——, on the 14th September, two routes to our destination lay open to us: a long detour by rail, or a direct drive of about twenty miles on an outside jaunting car, over some verdant mountains. Taking the wise advice of our host of the previous night—a beloved brother in the Lord—we chose the latter, and being well furnished with little Gospel books for the journey, we started. My friend sat one side of the car and I the other, and all along our journey we scattered our precious

Gospel seeds, giving them to walkers, jerking them to riders in vehicles, and now and then jumping off, as our stout nag toiled up the hills, and handing them to rustic cottagers, and sun-burned reapers in the fields of golden grain which, on all hands, waved under the balmy zephyr breezes of the loveliest day I ever saw in Erin's isle. I am thankful to say our tracts were welcomed on all hands, and one feels sure the fruit of this happy service will show up, in the day of the Lord, in the persons of some precious souls blessed through these little silent messengers.

The sun began to get very hot, and quite naturally, after two or three hours of this sort of work, we became rather thirsty. We had come on no very drinkable water, so, spying a little house where I knew there would be a cow or two, I asked our driver if he thought I could get some milk there. Receiving an affirmative answer, I ran to the door, which was open, and knocked. This brought out from the innermost apartment a sedate but pleasant-looking female, evidently, I should judge, the mistress of the primitive establishment. Looking at me, as much as to say, What do you want? but not speaking, I courteously said, "Will you be good enough to sell me some milk?"

She paused a moment, and then very firmly replied "No!" following up this decided negative

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with a pleasant smile, and "but I will *give* you some," putting as strong an emphasis on the "*give*" as she had placed on the "*no*."

So saying, she turned back to her little dairy, while I turned to my friend, who had come to my side, saying, "Now that's the Gospel, is it not? God *gives*, but he will not *sell* salvation." We had a most delicious draught of cold sweet milk, for which we most truly gave her thanks, accompanied by some little Gospel books, and a few words about God's blessed Son and His great salvation, which was as free to her, by faith, as she had made her milk to us, and then resumed our journey.

Then, and many a time since, I have pondered over this scene as a lovely illustration of God's way of dealing with souls who really want salvation. We did not know, and therefore did not count on the bounty of the one we appealed to; and so it is with man. Not knowing God, he knows not the grace and love of His heart, and, though needy, and owning it too, fancies he must bring an equivalent to God ere he can get from Him that which he needs. If you, my reader, are of this mistaken class, may God open your eyes to see His way of salvation. His grace provides it, and not your works of any kind. There are two good reasons for this. First, God is too rich to sell salvation, and second, man is too poor to buy it. Hence, you must get it as a gift, if you are to get it at all.

The quotation I have made at the head of this paper shows this truth very simply. The “thirsty” are invited. And are not you among this number? You certainly are if you have not yet found Jesus, for “your labour,” whatever its nature, “satisfieth not,” our verses say. Thirst is a craving which the suited fluid alone can satisfy. Now the thirst of an anxious soul is really for God and His Christ, though very likely it could not put it in so many words; but the Lord Jesus, who knows the heart well, says, “Whosoever drinketh of this water [the well of this world] *shall thirst again*, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” (John iv. 13, 14.) Precious words! But not more precious than true. Again, He says, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (John vii. 37), giving also this sweet assurance, “He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst . . . and him that cometh unto me I will in *no wise* cast out.” (John vi. 35-37.)

Now, dear anxious reader, are not you invited? Do not these glorious words of the Saviour encourage you to come to Him? They ought to if they do not. Listen again, “*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*” “But,” you say, “how can I be sure it means me? Perhaps I am not thirsty enough, not anxious enough

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for salvation." Very likely ; no one ever was as anxious as he should have been, considering God's view of sin, and the awful danger of the unsaved sinner. But the point is not the *measure* of your anxiety, but the fact of your being "thirsty" or willing at all. If so, hear the word of the Lord: "*I will give* unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life *freely* . . . Let him that is athirst come : and whosoever will, *let him take* the water of life *freely*" (Rev. xxi. 6 ; xxii. 17). What charming words! "*I will give . . . freely.*" That is God's side. "*Let him take . . . freely.*" That is your side. God gives ; all you have to do is to take what He gives.

"What must I bring?" say you. Nothing! Come to Jesus as you are. "He that hath no money" is the invited one. You have no equivalent for that which God dispenses, so you are bid to come and buy "without money and without price." Why "buy"? Because it supposes a person in earnest. When a person goes into a shop to "buy" an article, his very presence there shows he really wanted it, or he would not have gone to the trouble of entering the mart. Buying implies direct dealing between two parties. This is the very thing God wants. He wishes you brought into His own presence in real desire to have salvation, the water of life, Christ. You come. What then? You find all is a gift. How simple!

What earnestness is with God, when thrice in this one verse He says "Come!" I cannot refrain from quoting it again, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, *come* ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; COME ye, buy and eat; yea, COME, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." How blessedly falls that heaven-born word on the ear—come! *come!* COME! Who could refuse such grace? Come as you are. Come in your sins. Come in your guilt. Come in your distress; come in your sorrow, your want, your woe, your misery, your helplessness, your nothingness, your poverty, your hardness of heart, yea, exactly as you are, as you read these lines—only come, come to Jesus, and you will be received, blessed, forgiven, cleansed, and saved on the very spot.

More, you will be made the possessor of a new life, for, He adds here, "Incline your ear, and *come unto me*; hear, and your soul shall live." This, too, is a gift, as is all else that the soul receives from God; for it is written, "The *gift* of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

Rest assured, if you come in any way but as a simple receiver, you must be rejected, as was Cain. Did you never notice that the Lord Jesus said, "It is more blessed to *give* than to receive" (Acts xx. 35). This being so, who is to have the more blessed place, you or God? Let one speak

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who knew well this truth, “Without all contradiction, *the less* is blessed of *the better*” (Heb. vii. 7). Now, then, what do you say? I will tell you what I say: “*Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift*” (2. Cor. ix. 15).

W. T. P. W.

“READY.”

“READY TO PERISH.”

A SINNER needs a Saviour. All have sinned, and therefore all need a Saviour. No sinner can save himself; therefore needs to be saved by another. No fellow-man of Adam's race can save him, because all others are sinners too. Who then can save? Christ Jesus only. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save* sinners” (1 Tim. i. 15). “The Son of man is come to seek and to *save* that which was lost” (Luke xix. 10). “This is indeed the Christ, the *Saviour* of the world” (John iv. 42). And when is the time for a sinner to be saved? Now! (2 Cor. vi. 2).

But how many have never felt their need of this precious Saviour. Why is this? Because they have never bowed to and believed God's word as to their condition as sinners, in danger of

perishing everlastingly (Rom. iii. 23; Matt. xxv. 41). Now in Deut. xxvi. 5, we read of the language to be used by a Jew when he brought his basket of first-fruits to the priest to offer to the Lord; he was to say before the Lord his God, “A Syrian *ready to perish* was my father,” etc. He owned that he was of a race descended from one who was *ready to perish*. This describes most fitly the natural condition of all men; we belong to a race of sinners who are *ready to perish*. God is infinitely holy (Isaiah lvii. 15), and cannot suffer sin in His presence: all have sinned, and are liable at any moment to suffer the penalty of sin, *death*; and all who die in their sins perish everlastingly (Rev. xx. 15). Thus, my reader, if you are still unconverted, ~~you~~ you are a sinner *ready to perish*. Do you believe that this is indeed true? If you do, how precious to read of God, who is

“READY TO PARDON,”

“gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness” (Neh. ix. 17), “good, and *ready to forgive*” (Psalm lxxxvi. 5). Yes, poor sinner, although you are *ready to perish* on account of your sins, God is *ready to pardon, ready to forgive*, all your sins, that you should not perish, because His only begotten Son died as the sin-bearer on the cross (2 Cor. v. 21). And God is ready to pardon *now*; not at some future time,

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not when you have turned over a new leaf, not when you have wrought out a righteousness of your own, not at the day of judgment, but *now*, to-day, this moment, God is *ready to pardon you*. Are *you ready* to be pardoned? Not some of your sins, but all your sins—all your scarlet, crimson sins. God is *ready to forgive* all. “Through *this man* (Christ Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins” (Acts xiii. 38).

But you will say, “How am I to know my sins are forgiven?” By simple faith, by believing. For “by Him *all that believe* are justified from all things” (Acts xiii. 39). “Their sins and iniquities will I remember *no more*” (Heb. x. 17). The Scripture says of all who believe, “Little children, your *sins are forgiven* you for his name’s sake” (1 John ii. 12).

And not only is God ready to pardon, but He is also

“READY TO SAVE.”

Ready to save you from your sins, ready to save you from the world, ready to save you from the power of Satan, ready to save you from judgment, ready to save you from perishing, ready to save you for the glory, ready to save you for ever and for ever. Are *you ready* to be saved? “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). Note the words of Hezekiah: “For the grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee: they

that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth. The Lord was *ready to save me*" (Isaiah xxxviii. 18-20). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt *confess* with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be *saved*" (Rom. x. 8, 9). And the power of God will keep you "through faith unto *salvation ready to be revealed* in the last time" (1 Peter i. 5).

And, moreover, God does not stop here, for not only is He ready to pardon, ready to forgive, ready to save all who are ready to perish, but, as we read in the parable of the marriage of the king's son in Matt. xxii.,

"ALL THINGS ARE READY."

Yes, dear reader, *all things are ready*; fullest provision made for the need of every poor sinner. The *wedding is ready*; the invitation has gone forth to the Jews, and they have made light of it, and gone *their ways*, one to his farm, another to his merchandise. The invitation comes now to the Gentiles, comes to all, comes

to *you*; they that were bidden were not worthy; will you accept the invitation, will you come? “*All things are ready: come*” (Matt. xxii. 4-9.) Christ has died, and is risen again; the work is finished, God is glorified, and the feast is spread—a feast of “*fat things*” and “*wines on the lees*” (Isaiah xxv. 6). The *wedding is ready*; God bids *you*—will *you* come? Or will you go *your way*; will you go to the farm or the merchandise, and despise the blessed invitations of the Gospel? Think of the fearful consequences of such a course, for the same Saviour God that is *ready to save*, is also

“READY TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD,”
 “who *shall* give account to him” (1 Peter iv. 5).
 “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 5.) To make light of the glad-some message of grace is to ensure judgment, to treasure up “*wrath against the day of wrath*” (Rom. ii. 5). Grace, boundless grace, is reigning triumphant now through righteousness (Rom. v. 20-21), but soon judgment will come, “For God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts xvii. 31). “Be ye therefore *ready* also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not” (Luke xii. 40). “The wicked man

travailleth with pain all his days . . . he believeth not that he shall return out of darkness . . . he knoweth that the day of darkness is *ready at his hand*” (Job xv. 20-23).

But where will those be at that day who, as poor sinners *ready to perish*, have come now to the blessed God who is *ready to save*? Ah! no judgment for them. God judged His own Son in their stead (John v. 24; 1 Thess. v. 2-5); and before that day of judgment upon the ungodly cometh, the Saviour, the Lord Himself, the Bridegroom shall come—come for His own, come to take us to everlasting glory (1 Thess. iv. 15-18). And what will He find at that moment? Thousands who profess His name, thousands with a lamp of profession, but no oil; but thousands more who have oil in their vessels with their lamps, thousands who have truly believed, and have received the Holy Ghost, who have gone to God *ready to pardon and save*, and *are pardoned*, and *are saved* (Matt. xxv. 1-13; Rom. iv. 7-8; Ephes. ii. 5); and then, oh! wondrous moment,

“THEY THAT WERE READY WENT IN”

with Him to the marriage, and the *door was shut*. They that *were ready*, mark that, dear reader; not they that were getting ready, but they that *were ready*, went in *with Him*. With whom? With *Him*; with Christ, the Saviour, the

Lord Himself—the precious, precious Jesus; and the door was *shut*—shut close, shut fast, shut *for ever* on all who were *called* but *refused* (Prov. i. 24). In vain shall many cry then, saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us.” “*I know you not,*” will be the awful reply; “*I know you not*” (Matt. xxv. 11-12). “*I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*” (Matt. vii. 23).

And what is the conduct that becomes all who have received pardon and salvation, as we pass along down in this sinful world, sheltered by the blood of Christ, and waiting for the glory? “Put them in mind,” says the apostle (Titus iii. 1), “to be

“READY TO EVERY GOOD WORK.”

And He that saith, “Behold, I come quickly,” has also said, “And my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Rev. xxii. 12).

“Watching and *ready* may we be
As those that wait their Lord to see.”

E. H. C.

March, 1877.

THE INDIAN AND THE WORM.

A POOR old Indian, who had been by grace led to see Jesus as *his* Saviour, was one day asked what he had done to become a Christian. “*I did no-*

thing," he replied. "Well, tell us how it happened, then, that you are so changed." "Come into the woods with me and I will show you," said the poor old man. "I can't talk, but I will show you." They went with him into the woods, and the Indian busied himself in clearing a place in the ground all round a little hole in which an angle-worm burrowed. He next took some small dry sticks, and with these he made a circle about two feet from the worm-hole. Then he asked one of them to light a match and set the wood on fire. This was done, and presently there was a hot ring of fire all round the worm-hole. Soon the worm came out of the hole and seemed not to know what to do, for as it turned round it saw that the fire was on every side. The Indian now put forth his hand, but the worm would not crawl on it, and he took his hand away.

Presently, as the fire grew hotter and hotter, the poor worm crawled in every direction, and each time returned to its hole, finding no outlet, no way of escape from the flame. At last it seemed to have found out that it could not save itself, for it now remained quite still in the centre of the ring, while the fire came nearer and nearer. At the last moment, before the fire touched it, the Indian put out his hand again; and now the poor worm crawled on to it and he lifted it out of the burning circle and placed it

safely on the ground, far away from the danger. “Now,” said the Indian, “me the poor worm; me could not get out of the fire; me crawl every way, but me could not save myself.” Then, raising his eyes upwards, he said, “But the blessed Lord Jesus, He lifted poor Indian out of the fire. Poor Indian crawled into His hand, and He lifted him out of the fire and set him down in safe place.”

Poor lost sinner, come to Jesus *just as you are*. Now is the time. He in tender love is waiting to save you. Come now, for now is the *accepted time*. Jesus is soon coming to take all his saved ones to be for ever with Him. Come while yet there is time, and remember there is nothing for you to do. No,

“Nothing either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus did it, did it *all*,
Long, long ago.”

S. R.

“WHERE ART THOU?”

GENESIS iii. 9.

THIS question was addressed by the Lord to Adam after his shameful fall. Man had eaten of the tree whereof God had commanded him that he should not eat. Sin had entered and marred God's fair creation, and the man who

before, in innocence, had been happy in the presence of his Maker now seeks to hide from Him. And why? Because he finds now within himself an accusing conscience. He has lost his garments of innocence and discovers that he is naked—naked before God, and he is afraid.

Reader, have your eyes been opened to this yet—that *you* are naked before Him; that He discerns the innermost thoughts of your heart, and sees you through and through? “Where art thou?” Have you found that as a child of Adam you are at a distance from God? Sin has separated you from Him, and ere you can meet Him without fear you must know that sin is for ever put away.

But Adam did not think thus at first; so he seeks to cover himself with an apron of his own devising, and thus clothed, thinks he may be able to appear before God.

Alas! how many are to be found in this day, who, like him, are sewing together fig-leaves for the same purpose. Multitudes there are in this land alone, who think that if they live moral lives and go to church or chapel on Sundays it will be all right with them in the end. But how solemn is the truth that all such will assuredly find, sooner or later, all their own righteousness to be but as filthy rags in His sight.

Reader, in what are you clothed? Is it the spotless righteousness of God? Be assured that

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in nothing less than this will you be able to stand before Him. Nothing else will be of any avail. All man's attempts at improvement, all his efforts to reform the flesh, his religious forms and ceremonies, his good deeds so-called, all, all will be unavailing in that day. See to it, then, that your righteousness is that which will bear the gaze of His all-seeing eye. Not a speck or taint of sin can pass unnoticed by that Holy One.

Again, then, let us ask, “Where art thou?” Adam was at a distance from God, in a fallen condition; he was lost. And such is the state by nature of every soul born into this world. This is *your* present condition, unless you have been “born again” of the Spirit of God.

But there is something more in these words, “Where art thou?” They were uttered by a seeking God, a God in grace seeking the sinner. God comes out to bring lost man back to Himself. But man's sin must be brought home to him, and so the question comes, “Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” Man must see his helpless condition. Then the promise of a Saviour is given. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Adam believed God, and next we read (ver. 21), “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them.” No mention of the

fig-leaf aprons. They are worthless. And how could these coats of skins be obtained? Only by the shedding of blood. Precious type of the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus. Sin must be put away, but "without shedding of blood is no remission." "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." That atonement has been made. Christ has died. The barrier which stood between the sinner and God has been removed. The sinner who believes in Jesus is saved. He has a righteousness imputed to him which is not his own. It is the righteousness of God. Thus clothed, boldly will he be able to stand when heaven and earth shall pass away, and neither angel nor devil will be able to lay aught to his charge. He will not be there on the ground of his own works, but on account of the work of another. He will not be arrayed in his own righteousness, but in another's; and the song he will sing will be "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." If it were possible for a soul to get to heaven in any other than God's way, that soul would not be able to join in that song. He would raise a discordant note in that blest abode. But such is impossible, for it is by "*grace* are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

Unsaved reader, still far from God, let this question of the seeking One reach your heart,

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"Where art thou?" Are you going on carelessly in sin, following the course of this world? He in mercy yearneth over you, and willeth not that you should perish.

Are you one who up to this present time has been weaving for yourself a garment of morality or religion? Away with it at once. Deceive not yourself. Get off such a sandy foundation. Christ is preached to you as God's righteousness—the only foundation.

Of each one, who, like the prodigal, forgetful of the joys of the Father's house, is wandering in the far-off country, His voice in grace is heard asking "Where art thou?" He has a heart of love to pour out upon each returning one. The kiss, the ring, the best robe—all are waiting. Then

"Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
Thy Father calls for thee;
No longer now an exile roam,
In sin and misery."

Let each one who reads these lines ask himself, or herself, "Where am I?" Am I still far from God, or have I been brought nigh by the blood of Jesus? Am I saved or unsaved?

G. J. H.

DEAD SEA WATERS ;
OR, HOW A GOOD TEMPLAR THIRSTED.

A NARRATIVE OF A MAN-OF-WAR'S-MAN'S CONVERSION.

Most of my readers have doubtless heard of the sudden and strange mischance by which one of "the wooden walls of England"—or perhaps, as we may now not unaptly transpose the strophe of the old sea song, one of its "*iron-bound walls*"—went down under the blue waters of the Irish Sea, about two years ago. The channel fleet was leaving our bay in a thick fog when, by some unforeseen occurrence, H.M.S. *Iron Duke* came into collision with her consort vessel, H.M.S. *Vanguard*, and the shock which these two ironclads sustained falling heaviest on the weaker, the *Vanguard*, after a very brief time, sunk completely under water ; but, through the mercy of God, not until all her crew were safely got off.

The *Iron Duke* had been some little time moored on our coast, after her destructive misadventure, when I became interested in a few Christians amongst her crew ; and having been led to send Gospel magazines and little books on board, as the months came round, my desire to know more about these children of God in deep waters increased. I had met one of them where I attended on Lord's-day mornings, and

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sometimes seen others at evening meetings. My interest was particularly aroused on behalf of one young man, who had been (as his brother told me), some time converted, but was still unsettled in his path of service and testimony.

He was anxious and desirous for light and guidance, and Christian friends were holding out helping hands through Bible readings, and other means of encouragement and instruction; but Samuel M—— did not seem to see his way clearly for a while, though doubtless going through exercise of soul in secret. He was one of five brothers, four of whom were by the grace of God converted men, and it was his happy lot to be the son of a *praying Christian father*, still alive and residing in Devonshire.

The Lord was now constraining and dealing in “grace and truth” with this awakened soul, and binding him, I believe, for time and for eternity in “the bundle of life,” and amongst the precious sheaves of the “fruit of his toil.”

To my great joy, I learned one Lord's day that Samuel M—— had resolved to take a more decided step for his Lord, and come to His table to partake of those memorials of that dying love, of which He has left us so precious a legacy in the bread and wine, whereby we show forth the Lord's death till He come.

I felt more rejoiced at this step on his part, as I had received from him a few days previous to

it, a little account of his first spiritual awakening and struggles of soul on shipboard. I shall give it in *his own words* ; casting it *prayerfully*, as "*bread upon the waters*," hoping it may be found after many days, "to the praise of His glory, who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light."

"HOW I WAS BROUGHT TO THE LORD."

"It was on the 19th of May, 1873, that I arrived safely in Sydney, Australia, after a long voyage of ninety-four days from England. Being acquainted with a merchant seaman—a *Christian*—belonging to the same ship that I went out in, I soon made acquaintance with many Christian people through him. My desire to become a Christian began to grow, though knowing nothing of the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ. Friends talked to me often, but never do I remember any of them showing me, or telling me, that I was a *sinner, guilty, condemned, lost*. Oh! had that been made plain to me, or brought before me, *how gladly should I have received it*, for my desire grew more and more. I was told, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ;" and I thought I did believe, but not to the saving of my never-dying soul, as I now see. I, like many others, thought I had to do something to become a Christian. Thinking *Good Templarism* was one good step towards Chris-

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tianity, I joined the order, and of course had great zeal towards the temperance cause, imagining it to be a religious order. I became religious by works, not by faith in Christ. I soon began to see that Good Templarism was not what I thought, or at first anticipated. No peace did it bring me with God, although at times I felt quite happy; then again fears arose, and I would get into despair. Sometimes calm happiness returned for awhile; doubts followed—like a tossing ship, up and down—still having the desire to become a Christian.

“In 1875 we had orders to return to England, where I arrived with my officer and the crew on the 16th of June of the same year.

“After my leave was out I returned to the receiving ship at Plymouth, and on the 27th of July was sent to the *Iron Duke*. I believed it was for some wise purpose I was sent to this ship.

“Going into a strange ship brought me to my senses. I looked back, and saw my past life and my history right through—nothing but sin; and not only that, but I found myself *a lost* and a hell-deserving sinner. How the Spirit strove with me! Dreading sleep, I lay awake for about two hours for three nights, as far as I can remember. I was like this, other nights, dreading sleep. Judgment, eternity, and hell came before me in all their awfulness, knowing if I died as I waꝛ

I was lost! But the Lord, who is rich in mercy, revealed unto me Jesus on the cross; and that passage, '*The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*' (Luke xix. 10), came to me in full power. Oh! how did I rejoice to get Christ, and see Him as my Saviour on the cross on purpose for me: it gave me that peace which the world cannot give nor take away, and my happiness was as great as I was miserable before. Then could I see plainly that my past life was not faith in Christ, and Him crucified, but sin and wickedness in rejecting Him as my Saviour. And then I could see that '*Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*' (John vi. 37).

S. J. M.

In but a brief time after Samuel M——'s happy decision, I had a letter from him, telling me that he was under orders for Plymouth, to join another ship. He felt very sorry to leave his Christian shipmates, and friends on shore; but, looking to his Lord for support, he said he believed it was for some wise purpose; for the One who had watched over him for the past years of his life *could*, and he felt sure *would*, be with him still; adding, "Being ordered away thus unexpectedly brings to my mind about the Ethiopian eunuch having received the truth, and Philip being taken suddenly from him; I having

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just come to the Lord's table, and now to be sent to another ship—I trust for the Lord's glory—I have His promise, '*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;*' and though my path here may be a rugged one, yet what is that to the glory hereafter? I trust this going away may be to learn me a lesson that may not yet be learned: perhaps to bring me nearer to Himself; but to be fully dependent on Him is, I think, a taste of heaven below."

I wished him God-speed one Lord's-day morning, after we had met round His table; and if we should not meet again on earth, we shall, I believe, when we shall be unclothed of this mortal tabernacle, and clothed upon with life and immortality, and *know as known*.

And now, to some who happen to read this little paper I would add a concluding word. If not yet blood-washed and pardoned, would you be thankful to any friend who would honestly tell you that you *were in a lost condition*, an enemy to God, and unable to bring one figment of righteousness or good works to meet His approbation, or work out your own salvation? Yet, dear soul! such is your case.

Are you like the Good Templar in my story, desiring to be a Christian, yet believing you have to do something, or take some moral and reformatory step, before you can come to or belong to Christ? If so, you are mistaken and

deceived. "Ho, every one that *thirsteth*, come ye to the waters, and he that hath *no money*; come ye, buy and eat; *yea, come*, buy wine and milk, *without money and without price*. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Incline your ear and *come unto me*; hear and *your soul shall live*" (Isa. lv. 1, 2, 3.) Far be it from me to depreciate the *real* value of "temperance, soberness, and chastity;" but these virtues *are not* CHRIST; they ought to be amongst the beautiful fruits of the Spirit showing themselves forth in the converted man, but when trusted in as righteousness by the sinner, who has not bowed to Christ in heart contrition and seen his own vileness and distance from God, they are but *Dead-Sea waters*, stagnant, briny, and unable to quench his soul's thirst, or cleanse away the corruptions of his fallen nature.

JESUS said, "Whosoever drinketh of *this water* shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of *the water* that I shall give him, shall *never thirst*; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into *everlasting life*" (John iv. 13, 14). Free as the air around us, free as the sunshine above us, which shineth alike on the evil and on the good, is the salvation offered, and *even pressed* by God upon the ungrateful rebel, as well as the anxious

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soul seeking to find peace and acceptance through his own vain attempts at reformation. But both must stand on the *same platform*; they must own and believe themselves *lost*, and unable to bring one iota of self-merit or human standing to render them acceptable in the eyes of a holy God. "The Son of man is come *to seek and to save* that which was *lost*." To use a sailor's phrase (and for *such*, under the blessing of God, I am now writing), "*they must be brought to a round turn*;" the rope of good works and fancied righteousness, by which they are drifting to a distance from God, must be pulled in and laid at His feet, and the soul take hold on that "hope which maketh not ashamed" (Rom. v. 9) — "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even JESUS" (Heb. vi. 19).

O anxious sinner seeking to become a Christian!—if such an one I now address—listen to a sweet proclamation from Christ's heart of love: "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matt. xi. 28). Ah! do you not often long for *rest*? When the waves lash and beat against the sides of your tossing vessel, dark clouds and cold winds drifting around, and you far from sight of land, joys of home, and kindly voices of relatives and friends—in the long dreary voyage of life,

outward bound, don't you wish it was all reversed, and that you were moored in a peaceful haven, or safe at home, or even homeward bound instead of outward? Poor soul! If you were resting on *Jesus*, what an anchor of peace His love would be to you amidst all this. If your feet were but planted on Christ, the Rock of Ages, should earthly wreck and perils of the deep surround you, *death* itself would *then* be but a mist-veiled friend, stretching out a hand to lift you from the horrors of the tempest into that paradise of rest, where the dying thief of old awoke to joy, rapture, and eternal safety, after the tortures of the cross, the great darkness, the earthquake, and the anguish of the broken limbs, to which his fellow-men had recourse to terminate his few lingering hours of life. When terror-stricken companions might be sinking and drowning in despair around you, and their immortal souls passing into eternal woe, you would be welcomed into the presence of Him "who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

To those who have already found Christ, and amongst their number *him* whose conversion I have just been relating, I would affectionately say in parting, "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*" (Cor. xvi. 13).

K. B. K.

THE RICH FRIEND.

“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father : for so it seemed good in thy sight.”—MATT. xi. 25, 26.

IT is worthy of our God that His saving grace should not select for its subjects those who are capable of making a return for the grace bestowed on them, that it should not demand qualifications, either mental or moral, that it should ask for nothing, nor be hindered by anything, whilst it seeks to make itself known. It is in its nature voluntary and free, and in its intensity of desire—its energy of pursuit—it is found in the streets and lanes of the city, in quest of “the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind” ; nay, with more diligence still, it is seen scouring the very “highways and hedges,” in order to indulge itself in the good of man. This is worthy of such a God as ours. His grace seeks sinners for its subjects, and be they never so worthless—never so ruined by the fall, they are none the less within the solicitude of a love that came to “seek and to save that which was lost.”

In this Christianity stands in vivid contrast with every human system of wisdom. Philosophy wants philosophers, science needs scientists, astronomy must have astronomers; and, naturally, unless a man have brains and capabi-

lity for their demands, he cannot claim to be their disciple. Not so with the grace that saves. The "wise and prudent" are set aside, and "babes" are taken in their place. The pride of man and of all human glory is thus stained, and that which would be despised is taken up. And so we read, "When the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;" and again, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." And what is this but the setting aside of all that in which man would naturally pride himself, and the acceptance of that which would be disdained. However, such is the benevolent way of sovereign grace; and it is well when the heart has learned to bow to its divine and blessed condescension by taking the place of the babe or that of the fool, so that it may indeed become wise.

In illustration of this principle I desire to put on record a fact—one of these beautiful instances of free grace—in the salvation of one who had in early years, through an accident, become exceedingly feeble in mind, and who, though not altogether "*half witted*," was yet incapable of occupation other than the most light and irresponsible. He had nevertheless an aptitude for the simpler branches of mathematics, and could with facility calculate large sums of money. Accordingly, he found em-

ployment in a bank, was useful in many ways, and thoroughly trustworthy. We became acquainted thus. When labouring in the gospel in the town near which he lived, he used, now and then, to come in a friendly way to enjoy a cup of tea in the house of those with whom I happened to be staying. There he appeared to feel at home, whilst their kindness to him won his confidence; and it was through this hospitality that he was brought into circumstances which God used for his conversion.

One evening, when sitting on the sofa, my friend and host took his place beside him, and being desirous of his eternal welfare, asked him as to his state of soul. The young man answered unintelligently, not indeed that he was ignorant of the need of his soul, or of the outward truth of the Gospel, but his responses showed us that he did not fully understand the real nature of the matter under consideration. After some patient though fruitless efforts, my host retired, feeling that he had failed in reaching either the conscience or understanding of his guest. Calling to mind the fact that he was accustomed to the use of money, it seemed to me that an illustration bearing upon it might be used of God in explaining the Gospel to him. I therefore took the place which my host had vacated, and, after a word or two of friendly conversation, I said to my poor young

friend that I was very heavily in debt, and that I could not, by any means, extricate myself. I found at once that he was interested. He asked me if I could not pay the debt. I told him that I could not, and that the amount was far beyond my power to pay. He thought the difficulty over, and then said, "If you cannot pay you must go to prison." "Ah," said I, "it is that which I dread, and which I seek to avoid." "But," he replied, "if you cannot pay your debt you must certainly go to prison."

I looked down upon the ground, crushed by sorrow; but after a moment, as though a bright thought had struck me, I turned my face to him, and cheerfully said, "Oh! I see what to do! I have a rich Friend—one who loves me deeply; I will go to him and tell him all my trouble, make known to him the full extent of my debt, and I feel sure that he will take up my case, pay my debt, and save me from prison. But," said I, inquiringly, "would it be the same thing to my creditor, if the debt were paid by my rich Friend, as if I paid it myself?" "Quite the same," he said. And then, with a mind at peace, I told him that I was thoroughly satisfied.

He appeared to enter fully into the matter, and so I said to him, "My dear W., in truth I do not owe a penny; but I know that you are in debt, and I feel deeply for you." He

looked upon me, and replied, somewhat indignantly, that such a charge was groundless. Yet I pressed it upon him, saying that he was God's debtor, that he had committed many sins, and that therefore he was heavily in debt to God. This he of course admitted; but the charge came home to his conscience in power, and he felt the force of it. I asked him if he could pay that terrible debt. He replied, that he could not. Then I told him he must go to prison—the prison of hell—for it was impossible that a holy and sin-hating God could take a debtor to heaven! He saw the analogy between the case already supposed and his own, and felt that the conclusion was inevitable. It was now his turn to look dejected; and I allowed the truth to operate on his conscience. Then, turning to him, I said, "Tell me, W., is there no rich Friend who would pay, by His precious blood, the awful debt which you could never pay? and, if you come by faith to Him, and spread before Him your case, would He cast you out, or turn you away?" The name and blood of Jesus came before him—the name of the Saviour and the blood of the Substitute. W. had oft-times heard of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was able, therefore, to say that even he would not be turned away nor cast out, if only he came to Jesus. "But," I said, "would it be the same thing to your divine

creditor if Jesus, your rich Friend, paid your debt, as if you paid it yourself?" He replied in the affirmative. And oh! what peace flows into the soul that by faith presents the all-sufficient "blood of Jesus" to the throne of divine holiness! By it the claims of holiness are met, and therefore the fears of the conscience are silenced. That blood cleanseth from *all sin*, and the knowledge thereof tranquillizes the troubled heart.

And all this was made known then and there to poor W. He was the debtor, and could not pay his debt, nor avoid the inevitable doom due to such. Jesus was the rich Friend whose blood was shed to meet the claims of justice against sin; but God, having raised Him from the dead, has given proof that the creditor seeks no other payment, and therefore the debtor who avails himself of that payment is without charge before the creditor. That which satisfies the creditor may well satisfy the debtor, and he may truly sing—

"Sweetest rest and peace have filled me,
Sweeter peace than tongue can tell;
God is satisfied with Jesus,
I am satisfied as well."

Well, I thought, the Spirit of God has enlightened the soul of this poor young man; but, knowing the enfeebled condition of his mind, I changed the subject. The evening passed away,

and on bidding good-night to my hostess, he was asked by her if the debt were paid. He replied, "Yes; the rich Friend has paid the debt."

Days and weeks rolled away. Occasionally we saw Mr. W. Once he said, "It is a blessed thing to be saved!" We noticed that he carried a hymn-book, and asked him why he did so. He replied that he was fond of the hymns now. So, later on, he carried a New Testament, and all the signs of true conversion to God were displayed by him.

Years fled past, and now and then I saw him. He was always naturally shy and retiring, but when asked if the debt were paid, he would always answer in the affirmative. Incapable of making any return, or even outward or public acknowledgment of the grace that had found him, he was yet a witness to its free action, its unseeking and unselfish benevolence, its delight in enriching others without seeking aught from them. Such is grace, and in such a way did "the God of all grace" bring to Himself this poor, dear, feeble-minded youth.

His end was sudden. Absent for three days from home, search was made for him, and his body was found cold and stiff in the waters of the river that flowed not far distant.

It appears that he had gone to a place near at hand, where he had been in the habit of visiting, and had dressed himself for the walk in his

waterproof coat. On crossing the river he had fallen, and had not been able to rise again. The waters rolled over him and he was drowned. Well it was for him, dear lad, that on approaching the bank of that other river he could hear a voice saying, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." If there were no human hand to lead him in safety over the narrow but angry torrent where he fell to rise no more—a gentle hand conducted him securely through the dark-rolling river of death; and the rich Friend who had delivered him from prison would most assuredly sustain him in his rough and lonely passage from time to eternity. This Friend "sticketh closer than a brother." He does not abandon the objects of his love; nor because they may be unable to advocate His cause by lives of intelligent devotedness to Him does He cast them off: and if, in the Father's goodness, the things that are hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed to such babes, is not the exceeding grace of God only the more magnified, that objects so incapable of returning intelligent worship should not be passed over, but the rather sought for? And what a lesson may be learned by others who are blessed with the use of faculties of mind and body, that they, as loved by the same Friend, should present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Reader, are you His?

J. W. S.

THREE STEPS TO HELL.

THE Scripture states that hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure ; and, mark you, oh unbelieving, unsaved reader ! there are but three steps to reach the mouth of hell, and descend into its fathomless depths, and be enwrapped with darkness for ever.

What are those three steps ? Alas, that so many who are warned of their danger should persist in taking them. Alas for the fool-hardiness of poor sinners. Though God spake in the flood, and uttered His terrible voice of judgment in the fire and brimstone which fell upon and devoured the Sodomites ; ah, yes, though He revealed Himself in perfect love and grace in the person of His Son, entreating sinners to be reconciled to Himself ; though the Holy Spirit, the third person in the blessed Trinity, has been urging and convicting these many centuries ; though the watchmen have grown hoarse in crying aloud and sparing not ; yet, for all that, thousands persist in taking these three terrible steps downwards to hell. Oh that men would think of and consider their latter end ! The end is near. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Sinner, awake to your doom !

The first step is *neglecting* salvation. It is written, " How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation ? " (Heb. ii. 3). Ah, yes, the

neglecter of salvation is taking the first step to hell. His sins have put him in a lost condition, and by neglecting salvation, the salvation of his soul, he is taking the first of the three steps. Reader, are you neglecting the salvation of your soul? You know you are a sinner, and that the wages of sin is death, and after this the judgment: you know there is a heaven and there is a hell; you know that if you live in your sins you will die in your sins, and if you die in your sins you will be buried in your sins, and if you are buried in your sins you will rise again in your sins, and if you rise again in your sins you will appear before God at the great white throne in your sins, and if you appear before God in your sins you will go to hell with them; and then the billows of God's righteous judgment will roll over your doomed soul for ever and ever. Oh, you know all this, and yet you are amongst the neglecters of salvation. Oh, awake! awake! Awake, O soul immortal, to this! Desist O friend, fellow-traveller to eternity! desist, I beseech you, in your hell-bound course; withdraw your feet from the broad road; accept the salvation which the blood of Christ has obtained, and which God offers you *now*. Oh, take it, and be saved by His grace for ever.

The second step is to *reject* the salvation of God. Many go on neglecting salvation until they become hardened through the deceitfulness

of sin, and then they reject it. God offers and man rejects. God beseeches and man despises. God stretches out His hand of love, and man disregards it. Tremendous sin! Mad folly!

It is written, "The stone which the builders *rejected*, is become the head stone of the corner" (Matt. xxi. 42). Have you reached that second step, dear reader? Have you neglected so long, and is your heart become so hardened, that you have descended to the platform of the rejecters of salvation? Solemn, deeply solemn, if you have. May God lay His gracious and yet powerful hand upon you; may He arrest and save you, for His dear Son's sake. The Jews of old *rejected* Christ, the chief corner-stone, and thereby sealed their own doom. I beseech of you not to follow their example.

And then, when people have descended to the second step, they often become brave in their sins, and then they begin to *despise* salvation. It is written, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts xiii. 41). Ah, yes; here is the third, last, and awful step, so often taken by poor deluded sinners. The step that conducts them to the chambers of hell. Mercy neglected, rejected, and despised, is mercy lost for ever. And oh, what a tale hell can tell to-day!

Has ever a voice come from hell? Yes; from the depths of hell a soul has uttered its voice. Oh, listen! "The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke xvi. 22, 24).

This is the language of a man in hell, who when upon earth neglected, rejected, and despised salvation. His bravery is gone, and misery—eternal misery—fills his poor soul. Dear reader, be warned by this voice from hell, this voice from the man who has practically proved the awfully bitter result of taking, in his own self-will, the three steps to hell.

Remember, those who neglect come to rejecting; and those who reject come to despising. Oh, be warned, and flee to Christ. "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). "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2) "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 31). Beloved reader, believe, accept, come, and be saved.

E. A.

THE SAVIOUR'S MISSION.

“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”—LUKE xix.

Lost! lost! lost! Who can fathom the solemn depth of such a word? The simple word causes a thrill of horror to descend to the very depths of the soul, stirring the conscience, which oft is as a glassy lake till the Spirit of God, with the warnings of a coming eternity, disturbs its serenity, making it as restless as the stormy, troubled ocean when the mighty winds are playing upon it.

Lost! again is the word repeated, falling perhaps with increased weight as the soul becomes convicted of sin. The question might be asked, “Lost for how long?” Hearken—for eternity. An old writer has endeavoured to describe eternity in the following words, which, though graphic and true, cannot unfold its depths. “Suppose,” said he, “that the world were as a huge mass of sand, and that I were to take one single grain from it, and let it drop, then allow one million years to elapse before I took another, and repeat the same thing till the whole mass were exhausted; even though taking millions and billions of years to exhaust the whole, this length of time compared with eternity would be but as the swing of the pendulum of a clock.”

Dare you face eternity in your lost condition? You might dare to face death—hundreds, yea thousands, have done so as martyrs for their country's cause—but to face *eternity* in the knowledge of one's lost condition, how solemn! Do you say that you are not lost, and that you do not intend to have your portion in those doleful shades of unutterable despair? Listen, I beseech you, to the voice of Scripture, and let the dew of God's grace distil on the hardened soil of your conscience; let the beams of celestial glory fill every chamber of your soul: the Lord said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Is there a solitary doubt that the Lord has pronounced those lost who are not saved?

Do you say you do not feel lost? It is not a question of feeling but *believing* what God says; though if you speak truthfully and sincerely before God you know that you are unpardoned, unreconciled, unjustified, unsaved, and these can be summed up in one word—*lost!* Oh, how your conscience is pricked! How the ponderous load of accumulated sins is weighing heavily upon the soul! How in the stillness of solitude does memory, unforgetful of the past, haunt you! In that past, which you dread to recollect, how many sins have been committed which to your neighbour or the world are unknown, but not forgotten by God and yourself! He searches

the heart. Those secret sins, that lie concealed, that untold crime—these speak volumes, and are sufficient to crush the soul. And then that secret anguish of soul which seemingly real smiles are trying to hide, but a voice, silent—though none the less powerful in its silence—from within says, This is vain, this is useless. And then the cup of sorrow which the cup of mirth is trying to drown; but how futile are all attempts! Are these not proofs of the lost condition of unregenerate man?

But how sweet, how precious the truth that while mercy's door is widely thrown open by the death of the Son of God there is room for the *lost!* O wanderer in the far off distance, the father calls thee, come to meet Him! His heart of unchanging, undying love has yearned and is still yearning over thee. He is waiting to clothe thee with the garments of salvation. He waits to place upon thy finger His ring, which is the pledge of everlasting affection. He waits to put on thy feet the long unworn shoes, as a sign that thou art at home with Him. And the fatted calf is only waiting to be killed till thy return. A feast will be provided; and though thy joy will be great, the joy of Him who sought the lost, and who waits to welcome thee, will be greater. O ye who are sitting in the shadow of darkness, open the windows of your soul, and let light pour itself in! It is shining now—"the

true light now shineth ;” but it is passing, and soon those rays of bright effulgence and genial influence shining in the Gospel will cease to fall on a world clad in ebon darkness. God offers salvation to the lost to-day ; to-morrow he may refuse it—it will be too late. Come now.

E. J. G.



THREE GREAT FACTS, AND THEIR EFFECTS.

“ Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God
 (1) BY THE WHICH WILL WE ARE SANCTIFIED, (2) THROUGH THE OFFERING OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins ; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. . . . FOR BY ONE OFFERING HE HATH PERFECTED FOR EVER them that are sanctified, (3) WHEREOF THE HOLY GHOST ALSO IS A WITNESS TO US. . . . Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. . .
 (1) LET US DRAW NEAR with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (2) LET US HOLD FAST the profession of our hope without wavering (for he is faithful that promised) ; and (3) LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER to provoke unto love and to good works ; not forsaking the

assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."—HEB. x. 9-25.

THERE are three points in this Scripture which stand out prominently, and they are replete with blessing for the sinner, because flowing from what God in Himself is. God is here seen as wanting something. He had a will, a wish. There was something He desired. Man has rebelled against God, but God, spite of this, wants to have us near Himself.

This is the grand truth taught in Luke xiv. The supper was spread, and God announced the desire of His heart. "A certain man made a great supper, and *bade many*." The guests were slow to heed the invitation given them, so the Master told His servants to compel them to come in, that His house might be filled. How wonderful! God wants the sinner to be near Him. Who does He want? You! a poor sinner! Yes; He wants you, but you cannot be near Him in your sins. Then how can you be there? This is the wonderful truth which the Gospel brings out, that the blood of Christ, His Son, can cleanse you from all sin. Thus, and thus only, can you get rid of your sins.

Sin, if not blotted out by the blood of Jesus, must sweep every one to hell, the moral man and the immoral, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, every one whose iniquities

are still upon him. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can save anyone from being lost for ever in the lake of fire. *Sin* consigns the unbelieving possessor thereof to everlasting judgment, and *blood* — the blood of Jesus — lifts the feeblest believer therein to everlasting glory.

But answer me this question, Are *you* in your sins, or where are they? You may have the best character in the world, and the devil will help you to make it better even than it is, for he takes a great interest in “the self-improvement society.” This is a very old institution, founded in the garden of Eden, its first members having manufactured “aprons of fig leaves” in hope of remedying their state. It helps you to give up this bad habit and that wicked way, and all its members are devil-deluded into the idea that “dead works” are of some avail, and that by behaving better for the *future* the evil deeds of the *past* will somehow be erased. How this is to be effected the founder of this almost without exception universally patronized society is careful not to explain. “He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (Jno. viii. 44). Yes, “the devil that deceived them” (Rev. xx. 10) was the originator of this soul-destroying agency.

Is it not strange that man should heed the

suggestions of "a deceiver," "a liar," and "a murderer?" But, alas! so it is; and never stopping to inquire, how *future amendment* is to cancel *past guilt* in the sight of a God of infinite holiness, souls in crowds join the society, and—unless getting their eyes opened by grace to see that such a course is a huge Satanic delusion, a monstrous spiritual lie, a diabolical bubble, which they are only blowing to ensure their everlasting damnation—pass on, fascinated by dreams of self-improvement, till, hurled by death into eternity, they find that "improvement" is not Christ, and that the pit of hell is a terrible reality.

My friend, if you are not under the shelter of the blood of Christ you are lost, and, improve as you will, you are only after all an improved *sinner*. You are still in your sins. "But," says some one, "how can you prove I am lost?" Hebrews x. shows me. The work of the Lord Jesus there spoken of proves this, and the Gospel tells me, "The Son of Man came to save that which was lost" (Matt. xviii. 11). When did the shepherd in Luke xv. go after the sheep? Surely it was when the sheep was *lost*. Why did the woman carefully sweep the house? Because the bit of silver was *lost*. Ah! if you have not yet got the great fact that you are *lost* home to your conscience, I would not give much for your chance of salvation. It was the son which was *lost* that the father kissed and clothed; and it was to

reach lost ones, to bridge the chasm that lay between the holy God and guilty sinners, that Christ said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!"

Do not imagine God views your sins and your guilty state by nature as lightly as you do. He says you are lost, and if He meet you as you are He must judge you for your sins. Righteousness keeps God apart from the sinner. This is why in the Old Testament we read blood was sprinkled on the mercy-seat. God's claims had to be met. Thus only could God permit the sinner to come near to Him. The will of God was to have the sinner near Himself. Christ did the work by which alone it could be so. He made atonement, and the throne of God was propitiated. Sin had to be swept away from before God. Jesus only could do that. He was the willing servant for that great work. "Lo, I come to do Thy will!" is the Son of God volunteering Himself for this wondrous service.

And what do we further read was the blessed result of Christ's work? "By the which will *we are* sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ." Now we see what it is which separates the sinner to God. It is the work of Christ, that work which removed the great mountain of sin that intervened between the holy God and guilty man. This truth is beautifully set forth, in type, in God dealings with the children of Israel. Exodus xii. tells of the blood of the

slain lamb sprinkled on the lintel and two side-posts of the door in the houses of the Israelites. That signified they were sheltered from the wrath of God. He was kept out, as a judge. Chap. xiii. declares all are the Lord's because of the blood which had been shed; so now we see every believer is separated to God by the work of Christ on the cross. In Exodus xiv. we find Israel protected and "saved" by God—Jehovah, in the pillar of cloud and fire, placing Himself between Israel and the hosts of Pharaoh. And in chap. xv. we see the Israelites thoroughly happy with God as they sang their song of triumph on resurrection ground. That is the gospel of the Old Testament, and of the New likewise. Sheltered *from* God, separated *to* God, saved *by* God, and happy *with* God.

Who, then, I ask, was it who wanted to have me? God! And who could bring me to God? His Son, and that only by death, His own death on the cross. What comfort for the anxious soul! God seeks to have you near Himself. His will is coupled up with your blessing. Do you think Satan wants to have you? Pharaoh sought to overtake the escaped Israelites, but how did he succeed? To reach them he must march against the bucklers of the Almighty. God was on the behalf of His people, and what happened to Pharaoh? Israel looked back from the sunny banks of resurrection, and saw Pharaoh and his hosts sunk in the waters of the Red Sea.

Well might Israel sing, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation" (Exod. xv. 2). Great was their joy, and most blessed their song of praise; but it was not an endless song. Their confidence in God failed, and their song of triumph was succeeded by the murmurs of the wilderness. But what is said of the joy of the Father's house, that portion into which by grace we have been brought? Does the joy of that sphere ever fail? What does Luke xv. 25 say? "And they *began* to be merry." There is no word of that song coming to an end. It is an endless song. Hebrews x. shows why our song will be an endless one. It is because of the work of Christ. That work gives me *title* now to stand before God in righteousness, and it will be *theme* for endless song hereafter.

In Israel's day, when the High Priest went into the holy place, he could not sit down. There was no seat there for the priest to rest on. Why was this? Because his work was never done. He was "offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins." The work which gives liberty in the presence of God was not then an accomplished fact. Now that work is done, and we have an High Priest *seated*, who ever abides within the veil. The blessed God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, the one whom God sent to deliver man right out of Satan's power, is our great High Priest. He is seated on the

very throne of God, because He has finished the work God gave Him to do. Before He died He cried, "It is finished," and here we read, "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God."

Sinner, you will see the One who did that perfect work! "Every eye shall see Him." How will you meet Him? Will it be to be banished from His presence? It must be so if you do not now know Him, and come to be blessed by Him. If you now believe in Him and His perfect finished work, it will be all blessing—blessing now, and everlasting blessing when you see Him.

But does some one ask, "How do you know His work was perfect?" Hebrews x. tells me so. The Holy Ghost is the witness to the perfection of the work of Christ on the cross. What is His witness? Read verses 14, 15, and 17. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Ghost is a witness *to us* . . . and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." People try to get a witness *in themselves*. They seek some feeling on which to rest for happiness, but this they cannot have.

Suppose you had a legacy left to you, and you received a letter from a lawyer telling you so, would you put this question to yourself, "Do I *feel* this fortune has been left to me?" Ah no, you would never think of your feelings, but

simply believe the letter the lawyer sent to you, and rejoice over the money which you believed was now yours. Thus is the witness of man valued, but how differently is the testimony of God treated. And the word of God cannot fail: His word is true.

The Holy Ghost witnessed the return to heaven of the great Finisher of Redemption before He came to give His testimony. For ten days He saw the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, and then came to earth to announce the glad tidings, that where there is simple trust in Christ and His work, sins and iniquities should no more be remembered by God. What a sacrifice, when such is the work it has accomplished. We would speak with reverence, but, so great is the value of the blood of Christ, that the very memory of God has been affected by it. He will remember no more the sins of the one who believes in the preciousness of the blood of Christ. That blood has blotted out from the memory of God the sins of everyone who believes; but if that blood be despised, what is said of the memory of the lost one in hell?

Ah! memory will have a great place in the regions of the damned. Its powers will deepen the misery of the lost. Read what is written of that scene in Luke xvi. 23: "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. And he cried, Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger

in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, *remember* that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but but now he is comforted and thou art tormented."

You may be a good-for-nothing sinner, but if you believe the word of God as to the value of the work of Christ, the witness of the Holy Ghost to you is, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more." God has seen the blood, and when the sinner trusts in the work of Christ, the Holy Ghost is a witness to him that God remembers his sins no more.

We see, therefore, that we have in Heb. x. these three great facts. (1) *The will of God*, which shows the Father's heart. He wished the salvation of the sinner, that he might take him as His child. (2) *The work of the Son of God*. That work secures the salvation which the heart of God desired for the sinner. This salvation is for everyone who will hear and obey the word of God; but we have also (3) *the witness of the Spirit of God*, which gives the *assurance of salvation* to the one who believes. The Holy Ghost witnesses to the sinner who has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ that his sins are for ever blotted out. What more does any one want? Only a heart to praise this triune God, who *wills*, *works*, and *witnesses* the *present and eternal* salvation of the feeblest believer in Jesus.

These three great, blessed, divine facts are the basis of the three beautiful effects which the Apostle now seeks to draw forth by the thrice repeated exhortation, "*Let us.*" And he says, (1) "*Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.*" You must not doubt the Father's heart, nor the Son's work, nor the Spirit's witness. And what is a true heart? A heart that knows and believes it is in itself utterly untrue and not to be trusted. In Luke viii. 15 we read of the "honest and good heart"—that is, one which believes what God says of the heart of man, that it is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9). It comes to God not seeking to screen itself. With such a heart, then, we must draw near to God, fully trusting God's revelation of Himself, and "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," which is the blessed effect in my soul of the knowledge of the work of Christ for me. The value of the sacrifice of Christ I have bowed to.

Then the Apostle goes on to say, "Our bodies washed with pure water." What is that? An allusion to what we get in Lev. viii. 6, the washing of the priests at their consecration.

And now what are the consecrated ones told by the Apostle to do? (2) "*Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering.*" How unlike this is to many a Christian now-a-days. I

see souls who have what I call a "hook-and-eye" sort of faith. They are sure of their salvation to-day, and all at sea about it to-morrow. Surely this is the work of Satan in the soul. He accuses the brethren before God, and he fills the soul with doubts; but tell me what room there is for any one to doubt who believes in the ransom God has given for the sinner? God is the justifier of the one who believes. Satan cannot touch the blood of Christ, and in that blood the sinner who believes has been washed. The blood cleanses from *all* sin, and its efficacy is everlasting. Who can accuse you when God justifies you?

"But will not Christ condemn me?" asks the doubting one. How could that be when it was Christ who died for you? May your hearts lay hold of the wondrous security of the one who trusts God's word. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

And what else are the consecrated ones exhorted to? (3) "*Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works.*" This is very important. You may be able to see very little of Christ in me, but you are told to provoke me to increased devotedness. How can you do this? You must lavish your love on me. How would you cure a pump if it were dry? By pouring into it a few buckets of water, and soon the sparkling water will flow forth in refreshing

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and continuous streams. Now this is how you are to deal with the sleepy, half-dead brother or sister. Let such an one see in you that which you long to find in him, and thus by your love you will provoke him to renewed energy in the Divine way.

Then how needful the next exhortation. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Let us seize every opportunity of being together as God's people; then will there be occasion for this holy provocation. If you like best to be by yourself, I can only say it is a very poor thing, and a bad sign of your own condition. It is the sheep that is sick that straggles away from the flock. Let us keep together and care for one another. Let us answer to that for which God has created us in Christ Jesus: namely, love and "good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. ii. 10). Let our energies, beloved fellow-believers, be all controlled by the blessed Spirit of God, so that we may be to the praise of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

W. T. P. W.

**“HAUD ON, DEARIE, HE’LL NO’ SHAK’
YE AFF.”**

“And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”—
MARK V. 25-34.

I WAS travelling in a third-class carriage on the Caledonian Railway some years ago, starting for an evangelistic tour, when, at a small station in the country, a middle-aged woman of grave and serious demeanour, and evidently of the humblest class of society, got into my compartment. Giving her a Gospel tract, she read it, and then made some comment which led me to judge she was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, an impression which further conversation quite confirmed—in fact, she was a child of God, and happy in the sense of His love to her. Presently she volun-

teered that she was going to her home, but with rather a sad heart, as she had been at the death and burial of one who had been her most intimate friend from the days of childhood. On my inquiring if her friend had died in the Lord, she replied—

“Ou, ay. I believe she was a guid womun.”

“What grounds have you for such a statement?” I asked.

“Weel, sir, she was a guid-livin’ womun, for I’ve kenn’d her frae I was a bairn, but jist afore she deed I spier’t* at her what her hope for eternity really was.”

“And what did she say?”

“She answered me, ‘I canna say that I ha’e that peace an’ that assurance I’ve heerd some folk tell o’, but I can truly say I’m like yon puir womun in the Gospels wi’ the issue o’ bluid, who, when she heerd o’ Jesus, cam’ an’ touchit the hem o’ His garmint; and tho’ I canna say I feel as I wad like tae, an’ my faith is weak, I’m jist clingin’ tae Him.’”

“That was good,” said I; “and what comfort did you seek to give her?”

“Weel, weel, sir, I jist said, ‘Haud † on, dearie, He’ll no’ shak’ ye aff!’”

The train stopped; my friend got out; I have never seen her since, and I never expect to again till I see her in glory, but her last words have

* Inquired.

† Hold.

remained firmly engraved on my memory; and though many thousands have doubtless heard this simple narrative in the preaching-rooms where I may have related it, I put it on paper and send it forth in an enduring form, with the hope and prayer that it may cheer some timid, doubting, yet withal believing soul.

"Haud on, dearie, He'll no' shak' ye aff!" It was a fine word for a dying soul, that clung to the Saviour, to hear. It is in such moments that Satan gathers up all his powers, arrays all his hosts, marshals all his forces, and shoots all his poisoned arrows to distress and distract the physically enfeebled one. What comfort in such a condition must it have been to this dying one to hear such a sweet testimony to the blessed Lord as this, "He'll no' shak' ye aff!"

Let no one suppose that in narrating this incident I am pleading for an uncertain state of soul. Quite the contrary. If my reader has been hitherto in uncertainty as to his or her relationship to God, my deep desire is that the apprehension of what God's grace really is may for ever dispel all the gloomy clouds which have hindered the enjoyment of the sunshine of His favour. Do not tell me about yourself, and what you are, or are not; what you have done or have not done. Peace, and the assurance of salvation are not found in anything that springs from us, but in what God is and has been for us, as seen

in the life and death of His blessed Son, the Lord Jesus. You must then keep your eye on Christ, and your ear attentively open to what He says, if you are to have peace.

Look at the touching tale which heads this paper, and to which the dying woman referred. What was the state of matters. Twelve years ill, she had "suffered many things," had "spent all," was "nothing bettered," but "rather grew worse." Twelve is the number that speaks of completeness in matters of human administration. Here it was complete misery. Every human resource had been found to be a source of vexatious disappointment, not of healing. Complete poverty was the result, for she had "spent all." This is just the case for Jesus, and if you, my reader, have found out that you are a poor weak sinner, needing salvation, and unable to save yourself, spite of all the remedies which incompetent spiritual physicians prescribe, in the shape of good resolutions, amendment of life, almsgiving, attendance on the means of grace, observance of ordinances, prayers, tears, penitential imposts, and perhaps even bodily flagellation, you cannot do better than follow her footsteps.

Her faith was beautifully simple. She had heard of Jesus, and what she had heard had begotten in her heart the full conviction that to get into contact with Him, even remotely, meant

sure and certain blessing. So convinced, her course is simple; may yours be the same. She "heard," she "came," she "touched," and "*straightway* the fountain of her blood was dried up," and, as a very simple consequence, she "felt" that "she was healed."

Now this is always the way the soul comes to Jesus, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." It is what you hear of Him in God's word that leads you to cast yourself simply on Him. The moment faith does that the blessing is sure, and present too. Faith always secures the blessing, because it has Christ for its object, and not "self" in any shape or form. There was no virtue in her touch: all the virtue was in Him whom she touched, though it flowed forth bounteously in response to that touch of faith.

But there is a point of immense importance here. Not only is she sure she has touched Him, though it were only the hem of His garment, the sense of healing being "*straightway*" communicated, but He knew He had been touched, and by whom. Yes, Jesus knows if you have come to Him in simple faith or not. He is not an unobservant witness of the heavings and throbbings of the weary, restless heart, that scarce knows what it needs, yet finds all that need met in Himself. Hence, "Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone

out of him . . . said, "Who touched my clothes?" In vain do the disciples speak of the throng. The multitude had thronged but not "touched" Him; faith alone did that. Yet did He not know who it was? Clearly, for "He looked round about to see *her* that had done this thing." Why these queries, then? Because the Lord loves to confirm faith wherever He finds it. The woman, healed thus perfectly, was about to retire without any confession of Him whose grace she had tasted. So now is it with many souls. They have trusted Jesus, got a sense of relief, perhaps even the half hope that they are forgiven, but they have never got full peace or assurance. Why? Because they have never simply and fully confessed Christ, and hence never got to the point where they were free to listen simply to what He has to say to them. Till this moment is reached two words describe the condition of such souls, viz., "fearing" and "trembling," which is just what we read: "But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth."

This is unreserved committal of one's self to Jesus, and what is the result? What I am wont to call the finest "confirmation service" in all Scripture. Had the Lord allowed her to go off without what now follows, she never would have had peace; for Satan would have followed her

and whispered, "Oh, yes, it's quite true you are better just now, but your trouble will be sure to break out again; you are relieved, not cured;" and the fear of the impending plague would have corroded the joy which she rightly had. How gracious is the Lord! He does not like any soul that has trusted Him to be duped, deceived, and distressed any longer by the devil; so He speaks words which for ever calm the troubled heart, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and *be whole* of thy plague."

Not only is she made whole, but peace is to fill her heart if she thinks of the future; for "*be whole of thy plague*" are His last words to the one with whom He owns relationship by the exquisite epithet "daughter."

She had therefore the divinely given certainty that she could never relapse into that state out of which the virtue which flowed from Jesus had drawn her. Similarly, the one who trusts Him now is entitled to know that forgiveness and eternal life are present possessions, and never can be lost; for what He gives in grace He does not recall.

Scripture testimony is abundant on this point; *e.g.*, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him *shall receive* the remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). "In whom *we have* redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the

riches of his grace” (Eph. i. 7). Again, “I write unto you, little children, because your sins *are forgiven you* for his name’s sake” (1 John ii. 12). Thus we see on what ground God *for-gives*. Christ’s work, and faith in His name. But not only does He *forgive*, which takes up my past history, pardoning my sins, He *gives* something that I am to enjoy now and for ever. Thus my present and my future are met by what He gives, viz., “eternal life.”

How is this obtained? Hear His own word, and doubt no more. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life” (John vi. 47). “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I *give* unto them eternal life; and they *shall never perish*, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John x. 27, 28). What certainty! It is a confirmation of the simple saying, “He’ll no shak’ ye aff.” And not only does He give eternal life, but the one who believes Him is to know that he has it, for, “These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name” (John xx. 31); and, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know that ye have* eternal life” (1 John v. 13).

If you trust the blessed Son of God, never so

simply and feebly, present and eternal blessing is yours, and you ought to know and rejoice in it. Not only is it yours, but you can never lose it, for it is "in Christ," and therefore secure. Weak and feeble may be your faith; but, since it has Christ for its object, all is secure and certain, for "Christ is all;" and possessing Him, you possess all things. Do you think sometimes He will give you up, because even since you trusted Him you have failed to rightly respond to His grace? Such a thought is entirely a suggestion of Satan, contrary to the Spirit of Christ and the teaching of Scripture; for it is written, "Him that cometh to me I will *in no wise* cast out" (John vi. 37); and, "Jesus having loved his own which were in the world, loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1). These things being so, of all who trust the Saviour, this also is true: "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning *chosen you to salvation* through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto *he called you* by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14). Therefore, dear reader, I will only add a closing word, "Haud on, dearie. He'll no' shak' ye aff." W. T. P. W.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

BELSHAZZAR'S days seem to me peculiarly to foreshadow the present days of Christendom. These are days of the world's feasting and merriment; the captivity of the people of God is forgotten, and the vessels of God's Temple are as it were again brought into the world's banqueting houses, to minister to their revellings and earthly joys. But if my reader is in the midst of such scenes, be sure of this, already God's finger is writing on the walls of the temples of earth's glory, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Tekel;" and if not visibly there, yet in the pages of God's Word are written the words, "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." God's servants are sounding out the cry; the midnight hour is already past, the day of the Lord is close at hand, and every witness that God sends, is a savour of death unto death to those who reject Christ's salvation, and are revelling in the World's banqueting halls.

Nebuchadnezzar's days are passed in the history of Christendom. We have no longer either a proud Roman Emperor ruling the world, who would have everybody bow down to his image — pagan idolatry — and force them, under the penalty of death, to worship it. (See

Dan. ii. and iii.) Neither does Babylon now rule spiritually (at least amongst us Protestants), and make every soul bow down to her image under pain of torture, death, and the Inquisition. By the mercy of God we have been delivered from the reign of the harlot church of Rome, which was once joined with the Kings and Princes of Christendom in the middle ages, oppressing and trampling down the people of God, like a second Jezebel with King Ahab reproduced in the history of modern times. No, my reader, these days are passed in the history of Christendom.

We are now moving in the days of easy going life. "There is no danger," they say, "there is plenty of time yet. Others say Christ is coming, but we see no change since the beginning of the creation. The earth is solid, the mountains and rocks firm, the seasons go on; let us build houses, plant vineyards, make ourselves happy, and a few little innocent pleasures will do us no harm." But, my reader, where are you trying to make yourself happy? Shall I tell you? In a world that was once so wicked that God had to destroy it with a deluge. In a world where God manifest in the flesh was born, and was crucified, and Who, in consequence, having been rejected, is now in heaven, and is quickly coming again to judge it. Ah, sinner, a greater than Cyrus is coming. He is standing at the door. Men are

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erecting their palaces, their centennial exhibitions, their temples of fame, but the people of God are despised, though perhaps not violently persecuted, and as I said before, the vessels of God's sanctuary are now ministering to the world's banquetings and feasts.

No doubt Belshazzar at his table would tell his guests about the history of those vessels; would talk slightingly of the God of Israel, His Temple, and His people. But Daniel was an unknown person in those days, and was marked as God's servant and child by entire separation from Belshazzar's feast. There sat the proud King, no doubt, utterly forgetful of God's dealings with his father Nebuchadnezzar, boasting of Babylon's glory, her high walls, her illustrious personages, her generals and her victories. There sat the proud men and statesmen of Babylon, with lofty looks and lifted up hearts, quaffing wine with one another, and doing the civil with Babylon's ladies. There sat the grand ladies of the same empire, haughty and looking with wanton eyes at the young men, dressed from head to foot with gorgeous apparel and fine linen; the mothers seeking for good marriages for their daughters, the daughters rivetting the young gallants with their charms. As for Cyrus and his armies, they were the subject of ridicule. What could they do against the high thick walls of Babylon and the great river Euphrates

that flowed through the city, which was closed on each side by its brazen gates ?

But suddenly there is a pause ; Belshazzar the King looks up from his cup of wine and sees the fingers of a hand writing on the corner of the King's palace. His countenance changes, his knees knock together, he cries aloud to the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and wise men of Babylon, to come and explain to him this wondrous phenomenon. No one was able to explain it, but there the hand was, there the finger, there the writing, and the conscience of the King bore witness that it was a presage of his doom. There is a gloom now on every face in the feast : the wine, the revelry, the fine young men, the beautiful women, are all forgotten. Every face is directed up to the wall. Some faces are hid in terror, but every heart is occupied with the strange handwriting of judgment.

The news spreads through the palace, the Queen-mother hears of it, and knowing that there was one man in Babylon that could convey the secret to the King, runs to tell him. Daniel is sent for, and is brought hastily into the banqueting hall, and the King asks him with loud promises of reward the meaning of this hidden writing. The man of God, the only one there who had peace in his heart, stands forth and addresses the King. He refuses Babylon's

gifts and rewards, and then recounts to Belshazzar and his lords, God's dealings with his father. He reminds him how all the glory of his kingdom had its source in the Most High God. It was He who established Nebuchadnezzar in his kingdom, and gave him all his power so that all the nations trembled before him. He reminds Belshazzar again how when his father's heart was lifted up with pride, that God drove him from his kingly throne and gave him a beast's heart, so that he was driven from amongst men, and dwelt with the oxen for seven years, till he confessed that the God of heaven ruled in the kingdom of men, and gave it to whom he would. All this had been done, and yet Belshazzar had been forgetful of it, and had not humbled himself, though he knew it all.

On the contrary he was lifting himself up against the God of heaven, and had brought the vessels of God's house before his lords, and had drunk out of them, and had praised the gods of gold and silver, which could neither see nor hear. He then interprets the handwriting. "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin. Mene: God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Tekel: Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. Peres: Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

Thus Daniel speaks. Proclamation is made, to make him the third ruler of the kingdom, but

as the herald goes round, louder shouts of victory and despair are heard. Cries of, "The brazen leaved gates are open, and the Persians have taken one end of Babylon," sound forth in the midnight air. The short history of judgment is over. On that same night Belshazzar was slain, and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom.

Oh, my reader, and what now shall I say unto you? Is not the history and the glory of the nations of Christendom somewhat set forth in Babylon's history? Has not God allowed a spiritual Babylon to hold dominion over the people of God ever since the first few centuries of the church's history? And was not that a history of worldly tyrannizing glory, over God's people, until God, as it were, forced conviction on the worldly rulers of Christendom at the time of the Reformation, that He was the Saviour God?

And since the Reformation what has been the history of Christendom over again but the history of Belshazzar? There has been an utter forgetfulness of what has preceded, and the nations are giving themselves over to feasting and revelry, despising God's people; and praising their institutions, as they call them, and their religious systems, but utterly forgetful and ignorant of the God who has made Christ head of His body—the Church—and has given into His hands all things in heaven and earth.

Reader, I was once (as, perhaps, you are now) in the midst of all the world's glory, its feasting and revelry. But I saw in the light of God's Word, God's fingers writing the mystic letter of judgment on the walls of this world's palaces. I have heard the cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh." I have seen the world's judgment already written, 1800 years ago and more, on the cross of the Saviour. In that cross, under His blood, my soul has found refuge, and then I understood that the long suffering of God was salvation. Yes, dear reader, believe me, the reason why this world's judgment is not already executed is, that God is waiting, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But, oh, think of the solemn words, "Mene, Tekel!" Already has the verdict gone forth on the nations in their present shape; "Mene," "thy kingdom is numbered and is finished." To each individual soul who has rejected Christ is the word repeated.

"Tekel!" "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." Ah, dear reader, such is man. Tried without law he was lawless, under law he was a law-breaker; tried under grace when Christ came, he proved himself the enemy of God. What has God done? He has exalted His Son; and on the ground of His sacrifice He is still pleading with a world that rejected Him. Be ye reconciled to God. Afresh from the glory,

the gospel is presented to a Christ-rejecting world, as the only way of salvation. To thee, sinner, God offers afresh His forgiveness. Only repent of your awful neglect of His salvation, take the place of having been actually tried and found wanting, and you will find immediate forgiveness, and a complete righteousness in which to stand in the glorified Christ.

Seek not any longer the favour of the proud men of the world whose looks are lofty, and whose hearts are lifted up. Look up into the glory of God, and see a man seated on the Father's throne, rejected by the proud men of the world, but honoured and glorified by God, and say which will you choose? Look not any more on the institutions of men, their centennial exhibitions to show off the world's glory, their high towers, fenced walls, armoured ships and picture galleries. There is a day coming, yea, it is close at hand, when all these things shall be destroyed by the coming of the Lord from heaven. Oh, cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, wherein is he to be accounted of. (Isaiah ii. 10-22.) What will all these things profit in the day of the Lord's glory?

The day of the Lord cometh, the proud man and the vain woman that now figure together in the world's banqueting halls, ball-rooms, and palaces, will then have to stand naked in their sins before the Lord of glory. Everything in

that day will be judged according to Christ's standard, and woe betide any that stand before that throne of judgment in their sins.

Again I sound the cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh." (Matt. xxv.) That day will be a day of joy and delight for those who have had their sins washed away by the blood of Christ, that possess eternal life and Divine righteousness in a glorified Christ. But, oh, it will be a death-knell to this poor world. When God's people are gone, Satan will reign supreme; the strong delusion to believe a lie will set in; the anti-christ will reign on the earth, soon to give place to Christ returning with His angels, who, in flaming fire, will take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And believe not, dear reader, Satan's last lies before the end, that there is no such thing as eternal punishment. Believe not any silly professing Christian, led astray by the serpent to beguile you in such a thing as this. God does not deceive people when he says three times in succession, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 43-48.) And again, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And again, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." (Matt. xxv. 41-46.) Think you that

the eternal God, who created an immortal creature for his glory, can support this creature, living independently of Himself, *all* the days of his life; and prostituting all his time, talents, and mind, to sin and wickedness, in which he has lived and died, and, after all, save him? Tell me not you cannot help living in sin for you were born in it. I answer it is the very reason for your turning back to that God who made you, and who has now revealed Himself in giving His Son to die for you to save you.

As a Saviour God, He is revealed in the gospel. His word is, Turn unto me; come unto me; look unto me. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) Oh, reader, may this may be your happy part. It is true that you are weighed in the balances and found wanting; but God is revealed to you as a Saviour; through His glorified Son whom He gave to die for you, He offers you free forgiveness and eternal life and salvation as His present gift, as well as the certain hope of glory in the future. These glad tidings the word of God brings you. The Holy Ghost strives with you. Oh, open your ear and hear. Listen to His gentle but determined pleadings. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.)

A. P. C.

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"I WILL FORGIVE THEIR INIQUITY, AND
I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SIN
NO MORE."

A FEW years ago a young man lay dying. His sufferings of body were not small, but they were as nothing to those of his mind. Life, health, *existence*, lay, as it were, behind him, all past and gone for ever. And what lay before him? *Eternity*, a fathomless, boundless, endless eternity. To be spent how? Where? With whom? Like the man in the iron cage in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," A——'s cry was, "Oh! eternity, eternity! How shall I grapple with eternity?" And were his fears unreasonable and unmeaning? Was it the fever of a sickness shortly to end in death that raised such thoughts in his mind? Surely not. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus, to whom our Lord addressed these words, was a man to be respected and esteemed in every way, but heaven would have been no heaven to him, the presence of the Lord no rest or delight as he then was when he came to our Lord.

And so it was with poor A——. He longed for heaven, for happiness, as so many do, but unlike many he had become fully conscious that happiness was not to be found in heaven, in the Lord's presence for him, until he had first experienced

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the power of the precious blood of Christ in cleansing him from all sin.

Some servants of the Lord heard of his state, and visited him. They told him over and over the story of God's redeeming love through Christ. How God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we, as forgiven, may become the righteousness of God in Him; that our iniquity and sin, no matter how deep, can never outreach the atoning efficacy of the blood of the One who is able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him. But poor A—— heard them not. "How shall I come and appear before God?" was still his cry. "Oh, that I only knew my sins were forgiven!"

A—— had a Christian brother, who witnessed with deep anxiety, and yet with thankfulness, the sense of sin, the conviction of his lost state before God, that possessed his soul. This brother went to a devoted servant of the Lord who lived in the same town—one who had brought the message of divine love to many a perishing soul—and told him of his brother's extreme anguish of soul, and dying state of body. Mr. D—— at once went with him to his brother's bedside, went as the ambassador of God, fully expecting the Lord to bless His own word to this poor sin-convicted soul: went not to leave that dying bed till the poor thirsty one had freely drunk of the water of life, never to thirst again.

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"I come," said Mr. D——, "to tell you that ruined, lost, hell-deserving as you are, peace has been made for you, fully, equitably, and for ever made, through the blood of the cross. It is on Christ God's eye is now fixed, and not on you; on His one, great, and all-sufficient atonement, and not on your sins. His blessed word says to you to-day, 'But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back' (Isaiah xxxviii. 17). Now, observe all this has been done by the Lord Himself, and therefore we may conclude well, sufficiently, and fully done, completely to meet every requirement which God's holiness and righteousness could demand. It has been done in love, mark that, 'but thou hast *in love* to my soul delivered it.' When you were dead in trespasses and sins, all unlovely indeed, *He loved you!* Do you think He loves you less now? And what has been the proof of His love? That He has delivered your soul from the pit of corruption. And the proof that the deliverance has been full and complete is seen in that He has cast all your sins behind His back. All, *all*; not one now meets His eye."

"Oh, that is lovely, beautiful, good news for poor wretched me to hear," said poor A——, "but still, you see what is behind the back *may* be brought face to face with one again, and where, oh where should I be then?"

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“My dear A——, the Lord can never go back from His own word. He says Himself, ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *my word* shall not pass away.’ It is the inspired expression of God’s mind and will to man, immutable and unchangeable as Himself. He must make good His word. Hear what that word says to you to-day, ‘He will turn again; He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea’ (Micah vii. 19). The fathomless sea of God’s love in Christ now rolls for ever over your sins and iniquities.”

“Oh! Mr. D——, your message of God’s salvation is like life from the dead to me; but still, the sea will yet give up the dead that are in it; they will all rise from its depths once more. And oh! my sins, *my sins!* what if *they* should be dragged up too! I want, oh! I do want you to show me they no longer exist before God, and cannot therefore reappear. That they have passed from His memory, that God has, as it were, forgotten them. I know nothing can go beyond Scripture, but show me a Scripture that declares this.”

“Here, then, it is. Not my word to you, or the word or thought of any created intelligence under the sun: God’s word, through His Scriptures of truth, reveals Him saying to you as you are, now, to-day, “I, even I, am He that blotteth

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out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' (Isaiah xliii. 25.) 'For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' (Jeremiah xxxi. 34.) It is God who acts and speaks thus. For His own sake He no longer remembers your sins; they are no more in His remembrance than if they had never existed; for He has forgiven your iniquity, and therefore, through forgiveness, remembers your sin no more. This is enough to satisfy God; has been enough to satisfy every poor lost sinner who has ever come to Him through Christ; and oh! surely, surely it is enough for *you* to rest your soul on for ever."

"Enough, enough; ten thousand times enough! Now I know my sins that He has cast behind His back can never be brought face to face with me again. My sins that He has buried in the depths of that sea of love can never, no never, be dragged back to sight again, for they are blotted out, unrecorded before Him. *Forgotten!* Oh, that is the word for me! What God forgets, why need I remember? and He declares to me, 'I will forgive their iniquity, and *I will remember their sin no more.*' "

"No more:" what a word! And what an experience was poor A——'s now. Though the sufferings of his mortal frame only increased till

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“ His ruined body lay
A worn-out fetter that the soul
Had burst and thrown away,”

his peace of soul proved unshaken and unclouded to the end. For he read his title to the rest that remaineth to the people of God written in blood, and profoundly endorsed by One ‘ who weighs actions to the uttermost farthing.’ And having fully proved the reality of the truth of God to go down to the very depths of his own great need and fully meet it, and witnessed of its supreme blessedness to others, the ransomed spirit of A—— calmly took its departure from his worn out body till the morning of the resurrection, and now finds its rest and its heaven in the glorious presence of the One who forgave his iniquity and remembered his sin no more.

Does this paper command the attention, even for a few moments, of one careless and unsolicitous of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus ; of one

“ Too giddy and too gay to wait
On the *sad* theme, his everlasting state ;
Sport for a day, and perish in the night,
The foam upon the water not so light.”

Do you credit the little narrative you have just read ? I hope so, for it is true. And if true, in what position are *you* ? You do not, like poor A——, stand before God sin-convicted, though you have quite as much reason to be so as he. You do not share his intense shrinking

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from entering an unknown, unending eternity. It were well for you that you did.

Oh, unconverted soul, God has not cast *your* sins behind His back. The pit of corruption is what awaits you. What words, the pit of corruption, where the very misery of life is the experiencing a death that is undying! Your sins have not been buried by Him in the depths of the sea. They all are before Him, unhidden and unburied, and they will yet be brought face to face with you, for God has not forgotten them. He does not say of *them*, "I will remember them no more." They are fast in His memory, though they may have slipped yours.

Have you ever given one moment in all your life to consider what is the great object of your creation and existence in this world? Have you ever thought, has the idea ever crossed your mind, that God has some one great aim or object in it? If not, do you know such a question is worth consideration. Christ gave Himself for you, for the joy of saving your soul, of appropriating you to Himself. He endured the cross, despising the shame, that He might redeem you to God through His blood; that you might be His while here below, and shine for ever and ever in His image and to His glory, through that atoning work by which God can righteously forgive your iniquity and remember your sins no more.

R. B.

“THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY.”

1 John ii. 17.

ALL here will fade away but “the word of the Lord” and “he that doeth the will of God.” Everything will be wrecked; but the word of the Lord and the doer of His will shall survive the crash and ruin of everything. All that the eye rests upon, all that the heart counts most dear, all that charms the senses, will vanish. Life, with all its pleasures, is described as a vapour that for a little time appears and then vanishes away (James iv. 14). Vain show, this poor world! and vainer still is he who clings to it as an enduring thing. Only while the breath is in the body can it be possessed, yet, by a strange infatuation, young and old, rich and poor, are hurried along by its enchantments. Doomed it is, but men will not believe so; the day appointed, too, and the judge ordained to carry out the sentence (Acts xvii. 31). Facts are these of intense solemnity.

I admit the world's attractions, I allow the fact that it holds out present advantages, and I know that as the ivy clings to the wall, so it tenaciously entwines itself around the human heart; but nevertheless it is all vanity, and never yet has it given satisfaction to its votaries.

“But the word of the Lord endureth for

ever" (1 Peter i. 25). Have you turned to His word, and heard its searching statements of what your state is, what sin is, and what the world is? "Heaven and earth," says Christ, "shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

But not only does the Lord's word abide forever, but also the doer of God's will. Christ said that it was God's will that we should believe on Him whom He sent. Have you done this, dear reader—really turned from yourself to the Christ of God? To do so is eternal life, and oh what blessedness is this! Your own will I know you have done, your own pleasure you have followed, and your own happiness sought; and as God looks at your history, He sees it to be one of disobedience, carelessness, and rebellion, though doubtless man would pronounce differently. Oh, turn now to One who spake as never man spake, and who in untold love went to the cross and gave up His precious life as a sacrifice for sin, which had offended the majesty of God; who broke through death, and now lives enthroned at the Father's right hand! Himself thy portion, the joys and lights of earth will wane, for His excellency surpasses all.

Reader, everything around warns thee; God's voice addresses thee, and "to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart."

T. T. E.

“DO YOU KNOW HOW THE TIME IS
GOING?”

OR, A MARINER'S QUESTION FOR THE STRANDED YEAR.

DEAR reader, ere I unfold the little tale connected with this heading, I would affectionately ask you to pause for a moment and apply the question to your own soul, “*Do you know how the time is going?*”—then ask your heart does it not often feel an unsatisfied and restless longing for the accomplishment of some undefined period, when you hope things will be more satisfactory than they are now. I have never met with anyone in my journey through life who was quite content with the present; even in the most thoughtless, and *so-called light-hearted*, there was always a looking forward to something which they hoped or anticipated would yet come and make their happiness more complete, or if they had not already experienced earthly joy, something which would at last give it. And why is this? I think if you will read with me the seventh verse of the second chapter of Genesis it will explain: “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and *breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*; and man became a living soul.” So you see by this portion of the word of God that *the soul* of man was and is *the breath of God*—consequently immortal, undying.

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But Adam fell, and in chap. iii. 19, we read, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, *till* thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt *thou return.*"

Now there are some in the present day who in blind wilfulness close their eyes to the teaching of other portions of Scripture, and tell us this means annihilation of soul as well as body. To such we would say, turn to Rev. xx. 12-15: "And I saw *the dead*, small and great, stand before God. . . . And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the *second death*. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

In the early spring of this passing year, whose tides are so fast ebbing out, I became acquainted with a young seaman, Richard C——, serving on board one of the fine iron-clads of our British navy, an Admiralty war-ship. He had through the great mercy of God been led to see himself a sinner needing a Saviour, and the love of that Saviour had met his case, and given him joy and peace in believing. On one occasion I expressed a wish to know something of how he became converted, and turned from darkness to light,

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and from the things of time to those of eternity. In humble hope that it might be blessed to some other poor sinner or brother seaman, he wrote me the following account.

“My conversion took place on ship-board. I was like most of the unconverted—a pleasure-seeker, a lover of evil, delighting in mischief—and would endeavour to suppress every thought or sound of God. I had a companion like-minded, although I had the vain opinion that I was a little better than he, for he was a great gambler. However, one quiet evening my friend (as I shall henceforth call him), was taking a walk on deck—I was below—and a Christian sailor was also walking the deck, and being desirous of knowing what o'clock it was, he asked my friend (using a sailor's phrase), ‘*Do you know how the time is going?*’ ‘No!’ was my friend's reply. The Christian in a soft tone uttered, ‘Dear me! there's a man that don't know how the time is going.’

“My friend overheard this, and asked the Christian what remark he made; upon which he was told that it was a very sad case indeed, if he did not know how the time was going with himself.

“My friend at once knew that his soul was alluded to; it made him think, and by God's great grace he was converted the same evening—the Gospel's great and good news having been

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conveyed to him by the Christian sailor. He at once sought me, and told me he had obtained everlasting life through Christ Jesus. I was greatly astonished, and told him I was very glad to hear it; but when he spoke to me about the Lord, I wanted to get away from him, and became more distant day by day. I was only too glad to hear of my late friend having to go away for a few weeks. About a week after he left I received a letter from him, full of the love of Christ, and entreaties to me to flee from the wrath to come. I glanced my eye over his letter, then put it away, thinking it was not for me. He begged me to answer it, and I did so, telling him that I hoped the Lord would be gracious to him, but not mentioning anything about myself. Soon after I had another letter from him, also full of entreaties, and that was treated in like manner. About six weeks passed, and my friend came back.

"When I met him, he asked me how I was getting on, and whether I had thought any more about my soul.

" 'Well,' I replied, 'I should like to, but I can't; it's no use, I am too far gone; and I like the world too much to give it up just at present. I will think more of it by-and-by.'

"About this time another acquaintance of mine became converted, and he also entreated me greatly to look at the lost condition I was in.

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Thanks be to our blessed Lord, HE made me look, and I saw my ruined state, but could get no further: I could not understand that Jesus died *for me*. The Holy Bible was put into my hands, and I was requested to read a little of the Gospel of St. John. Whilst reading the third chapter my thoughts were fixed—I might say rivetted—on the 14th verse, ‘And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.’ And so, I thought, ‘the Son of Man *is lifted up*.’

“It came to my soul in great clearness, for I could remember learning at school that the Israelites murmured against God and Moses in the wilderness, and fiery serpents were sent among them to punish them: therefore the people came to Moses and said, ‘We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee. Pray unto the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.’ And Moses prayed for the people. Then God commanded Moses to set up a *brazen serpent* as a remedy and safeguard against the deadly effect of the bite of these fiery serpents; so that those who *looked at the serpent of brass in faith* were cured and safe (Num. xxi. 5-9).

“Well, I thought, if it pleased God to save the Israelites by looking at the brazen serpent, how much more would it and does it please Him to save us by looking in faith to His own dear

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Son, whom He Himself set up (after undergoing all the agony of the cross) at His own right hand in heaven.

"I wanted no more ; that was quite sufficient for me. 'Thanks be to God!' I exclaimed ; ' He has also given me everlasting life ! ' I may add that now, when I receive a letter from my once worldly friend, I am addressed as 'Dear brother in Christ Jesus.' Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift !

R. A. C."

Reader, whoever you may be, into whose hands this little paper falls, if you are still at a distance from God, I solemnly and earnestly repeat to you the same statement that was made to Richard C——'s friend by his Christian shipmate, "*It is a very sad case indeed with you, if you do not know how the time is going !*" and how the affairs of your soul are with regard to its state during an immeasurable and limitless eternity. If this little narrative should meet the eyes of any seaman, *and for such, with affectionate desire on my heart, I have especially given it, oh !* I beseech of you, dear mariner, buffeting the cold, dreary ocean of life, do *not* cast it heedlessly aside.

What would be the result of a cruise on the wide seas of earth without a compass? What the entering into a foreign and unknown port without a pilot?—doubts, difficulties and disasters !

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Or, if a great tempest broke over your ship, whirling ropes, masts, and rigging to the winds and waves, how sad and appalling your lot without a lifeboat. Yet these dangers of earth are nothing to the hourly and daily jeopardy which your undying soul is in if a stranger to Christ. Oh, come to him, for He beseeches you, as He called Peter and James and John of old on the shores of Galilee when they least dreamed of the eternity of blessedness about to be offered them by the Son of the Most High God, so He now utters the same sweet invitation to you, “FOLLOW ME! COME! *and I will make you FISHERS OF MEN!*”

Dear friend! do make Christ your pole-star, your lifeboat, your pilot! He is still the same loving friend, the same tender Saviour, who saw His poor, doubting, weak-hearted disciples of old toiling in rowing, with the wind contrary, deep troubled waters around, angry breezes overhead buffeting them back from the shore they sought to gain, and who came in the dark fourth watch of the night, walking on the stormy element, and bidding them be of good cheer and not afraid (Matt. xiv. 24). There was a day when John, the best loved disciple, was only a simple young fisherman mending his nets, but he obeyed *that loving call*, and what was the result? He could lay down his head on the holy bosom of Jesus, and pillow his

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troubles on the HEART of God manifest in the flesh; and from that heart of Divine compassion he personally learned the blessed message to our fallen race, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH IN HIM should not perish, but have EVER-LASTING LIFE. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED*" (John iii. 16, 17).

Later on he tells us, "*And this is the record, that God HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life.—These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE*" (1 John v. 11, 13).

Oh! be no longer content to float unconcernedly down the gulf of time, lest the receding tides of another year, or at best a few brief years, drift you into the bottomless whirlpool of everlasting perdition. Be yours the happy choice, dear reader, to cast in your lot with those to whom the lips of Jesus accorded the sweet benediction, "*BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HAVE NOT SEEN AND YET HAVE BELIEVED.*"

K. B. K.

TIME—PAST AND PRESENT.

“Ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord :
walk as children of light.”—EPH. v. 8.

Oh, by-past years! ye days of earth,
I would not call you back ;
I only mourn the barren dearth
Of faith which marred your track.

Not e'en my springtide's golden youth,
To worldly wisdom fair ;
Its skies were roseate, but in truth
No light from heav'n was there.

I sigh not for that short-lived past,
'Tis resting with my LORD !
Nail'd to His cross, in mercy vast,
Atoned for by His blood.

Along its vista, *boundless love*,
With guiding, sparing grace,
And new-born soul-life from above,
My praising heart can trace.

I mourn not for the ceaseless flight
Of days, and months, and years ;
They'll terminate in *timeless light*
The hour my Lord appears.

I thank Him for the present hour :
I fain would live to shine,
A little lamp, fed by the power
And oil of grace divine.

Dear Lord, a brimming cup of love
For me Thine hand hath filled,
Of bounteous vintage from above,
From boundless grace distill'd.

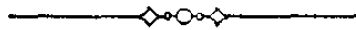
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With choicest gifts it streameth o'er
Of blessings for this life,
And every hour, with added store,
Seems richer and more rife.

One blessing vast above the rest
My favoured path hath crowned,
'Tis that upon my SAVIOUR'S breast
This soul GOD'S PEACE has found.

Oh! in this cup of love's o'erflow,
Mix, Lord, Thy gift of grace,
That in my heart a grateful glow
May hold the foremost place.

K. B. K.



A FRAGMENT FOR THE PRO-
CRASTINATOR.

THERE is only one way to *keep* out of hell. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). But there is *no way* of *getting* out. "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi 18).

"Almost persuaded," now to believe;
"Almost persuaded," Christ to receive;
Seems now some soul to say?—
"Go, Spirit, go Thy way,
Some more convenient day
On Thee I'll call."

THE TWO POSTS.

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

G. B.

 THE TWO POSTS.

IN every town and village there is one individual who is an object of interest, and none more so; he is eagerly looked for and listened for daily, not for what he is, but for what he brings. I refer to the postman. And day by day this individual brings that which makes some hearts glad, while others are bowed with sorrow through the intelligence he brings. As they break open the black-edged envelope with trembling hand and beating heart, the eye rapidly scans the lines until the dreaded part is reached that makes known that—father's gone, or mother's gone, or some other relative or well-known friend is gone. Yes, gone; but where? To heaven or hell, which? That is the question. My friend, have you settled it yet—where you are going to spend eternity?

Just turn with me for a little to the book of Esther, while we look at the postmen, with their different letters, hastened on by the king's commandment, and the results when these letters

are delivered, read, and believed. And while we do so we shall see another of God's pictures, out of His picture book (the Old Testament), of man's complete and total ruin, and God's perfect and blessed remedy, though brought out more specially in this Scripture in the way of contrast.

The first thing we find is the Jews have an enemy. "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman" (vii. 6). And, my friend, do remember this. You, too, have an enemy. One who will minister to your lusts and passions just now, and appear to be your friend, but who seeks in reality to blast all your hopes for eternity and lead you to hell.

Now, notice the contrast here. It was through the *faithfulness* of one man (Mordecai), who would not bow to the Agagite, that sentence of death was passed upon the whole race of Jews (iii. 1-13). But it was by the *unfaithfulness* of one man (Adam) that "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so DEATH passed upon ALL men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). And, mark, Haman gets the decree signed by the king. Sentence of death issues forth from the king himself, but the city Shushan is perplexed. The sentence is pronounced on the first month (iii. 12), but was not to be executed till the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (ver. 13). And, my friend, remember that Adam listened

to his enemy, though he professed to be his friend, sinned against his God, and the sentence of death, a righteous sentence too, has been passed by God Himself. It was He who said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And man has sinned, "all have sinned." *You have sinned*, and are under the sentence of death pronounced by God Himself. The decree was given in Shushan the palace. The sentence came from heaven itself; but God could not be happy, and heaven could not rejoice, while men lay under that terrible righteous sentence without a way of escape. No wonder the city Shushan was perplexed (ver. 15).

Then we get another thing in ver. 13. "The letters were sent out by posts to destroy, to kill, to cause to perish *all* Jews, young and old, little children and women, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month. . . . And the posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment" (ver. 15). See the speed the postmen make with their *message of death*. It was sad news they carried that day, and the people trembled as they heard their doom read out in their ears. The king had signed it. It was real. The sentence had gone out against them, and no man could reverse it (viii. 8).

Now read the first three verses of chapter iv., and see the effects of this DEATH MESSAGE.

Would to God I could see the same effects in you. "There was great *mourning*, and *fasting*, and *weeping*, and *wailing*; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes." They believed the message. Like the people of Nineveh who believed the preaching of Jonah and repented, so these souls believed the king's message of death, and consequently were in the deepest sorrow.

But oh! how sad, how sad! how little of that has been seen in you, sinner! Surely it is that you do not believe what God says when He writes, "The wages of sin is death"—"All have sinned"—"It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment," and such-like solemn Scriptures. Can it be possible that you believe that, and yet no tear has wet your cheek? Condemned by God's lips, and yet you do not tremble? Guilty before Him, conscience accusing you and charging home your guilt, and yet you are not startled by it and led to cry out for mercy? Oh, what a hardened state! "The devils also *believe* and *tremble*;" and yet you are unmoved.

O sinner, sinner! what an eternity awaits you, unless you are converted to God. Think of it. You, not your neighbour, but YOURSELF IN HELL, and that FOR EVER. Then you will get what you could not find here—"Time to think." Yes, and eternity to sorrow over your sins, which would have been washed away in the blood of

Jesus had you trusted Him ; but you knew not your danger and felt not your load, but were blinded by Satan, the God of this world, till the thirteenth day of the twelfth month arrived and found you out in your sins, and the sentence was put into execution, and you passed from this scene into eternity WITHOUT GOD, WITHOUT CHRIST, WITHOUT HOPE. Oh, sinner, may God read His message of death in your ears now, cause you to hear it, press it home on your conscience, put you into the deepest distress, lead you to repentance, and make you ready to receive the good news which the second postmen bring !

We have seen the sentence is pronounced on the thirteenth day of the first month, but has not to be executed till the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, so that they have eleven months' grace, during which time a mediator comes in, who puts her life in her hand, saying, "If I perish, I perish" (iv. 16). Esther goes to the king, obtains favour, and life is granted to the Jews. Like another one we read of (David) who "put his life in his hand" to save Israel (1 Samuel xix. 5). But when I turn again to the contrast, I read, "There is one Mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus ; who *gave* His life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6).

Yes. Jesus did not "put his life in his hand" —*i.e.* risk it—but He *gave it up*, a ransom for

many. Oh, what wondrous love! He “suffered for sins, the *just* for the *unjust*, to bring us to God.” He came to *save* those who were doomed to die. He died upon the cross, finished the work, rose from the grave, passed into the heavens, and sat down. All is done. Now the postmen are being sent out to tell sinners that whosoever believeth shall have eternal life, forgiveness of sins, the Holy Ghost, and soon, glory with Christ up there. Thank God, the heaven-sent postman brings joyful news, blessed news to the believer. Every question is settled for ever, and a straight path opened up to glory. Oh, if there is an anxious soul, the Lord lead you to believe the letter!

Through Esther's going to the king, life is granted to the Jews. Fresh letters are written, sealed with the king's seal, and no man can reverse them, and sent out as fast as they can go, and mark a little word you get here when the MESSAGE OF LIFE is sent out—“pressed on.” Yes, the posts were “*hastened and pressed on* by the king's commandment” (viii. 14). Time was short; the execution of the sentence was near at hand; haste was needed. “The king's business requires haste.” Oh! what a hurry God is in to bless a sinner, and how slow to judge the sinner. “And the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad” (ver. 15). Thank God the second lot of postmen had good news. A MESSAGE OF LIFE.

Suppose some of them had refused to believe this message of life? Then their enemies would have slain them. And now that God sends His postmen with the message of life, will you refuse to believe it? Well, then, you will perish for your unbelief. You will go to hell in your folly. Oh! just listen to His letter. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know (not *feel*, but *know*) that ye have eternal life" (1 John v. 13).

Now what were the effects of the second message when it was received? They had light instead of darkness, gladness instead of sadness, joy instead of sorrow, honour instead of shame, feasting instead of fasting, a good day instead of a bad one. And what are the effects when a sinner receives the message of life, believes on the Lord Jesus Christ? He is turned from "darkness to light," for the apostle was sent "to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light" (Acts xxvi. 17, 18). So he gets *gladness, joy, honour, feasting, and a good day*; and the day he commences has no evening—it is an eternal day. Luke xv. says "they began to be merry," but it does not tell us when they stopped. Ah, no! The prodigal began to be *in want*, but it ended in *plenty*. They began to be *merry*, but it never ends. Philip preached Christ in Samaria, and there was *great joy* in the city.

Oh, what joy when a sinner takes Christ! The message of life came from Shushan the palace, and Shushan the city rejoiced. The message of life comes from heaven itself, and "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The prodigal sat down to *feast*. And the desire of God's heart is that poor wandering sinners on the downward road, under sentence of death, should listen to and believe the message of life and have *light*, joy, gladness, *honour*, feasting, and a good day. The Lord grant that every unconverted soul who hears this may believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, lest the thirteenth day of the twelfth month arrive and find you Christless, and the sentence be executed, and you are sent to hell because you would not have life when brought to you, and brought to you at such a cost. Life is brought to you through Jesus' death and resurrection. "It is finished." Yes. "All is done." Believe it and live. W. E.

THE FOUNTAIN.

In Russia's gloomy region,
 Not far from Valdai's mount,
 In the grounds of Tsarskoé Sélo,*
 There stands a marble fount;
 And many have stood in wonder,
 And gazed in mute surprise,
 For in sculpture rare, with no compare,
 A *broken* pitcher lies.

* Or Czar's village, or palace grounds.

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This is the strangest fountain
Methinks has ever been ;
For in mourning attitude
A girl's fair form is seen ;
Bending low in girlish grief,
She scans with sorrow sore,
From pitcher gleam a crystal stream,
That flows for evermore.

Noiselessly it ripples on,
The thirsty soul to fill,
And on it flows through *all the rents*,
A never failing rill ;
'Twas thus one stood and wondered,
At seeming wondrous thing ;
As hidden quite, from all human sight,
There gushed the tideless spring.

Methinks that marble fountain,
A sculptured picture rare,
Of rugged rocks, and shattered jug,
And youthful figure fair ;
Methinks the crystal spring,
Using a useless thing,
Are lessons sweet, the soul to greet,
And tune the heart to sing.

M. H. P.

“I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM GOD UNTO
THEE.”

SUCH, Reader, were the words of Ehud to Eglon (Judges iii. 20). It was a message of DEATH. Mine to you is a message of LIFE! Do you care to hear it? Stop! Don't fling it away; you may never have another. Pause a moment!

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"I can't *to-day*; I have not time for these things."

Indeed, why?

"Oh! I am too busy *to-day*; I wish to settle a few little matters of interest, and some of greater importance, connected with my occupation in life. These religious matters must be left for Sunday."

Then the object of your interest, that which commands you for *this day* at least, is not anything which relates to *eternity*; it has only to say to *time*. What a solemn thought! You, a sinner, determining to spend this day—and that perhaps your last on earth—in business or pleasure, while the salvation of your immortal soul is neglected.

"But we must live, and I want to be free to enjoy myself at Christmas-time."

Indeed? What do you mean by "Christmas-time"?

"Oh, Christmas is the time of the year when they say Christ was born, and we all try to be very merry at that time."

Quite so; and may I ask, Where is Christ now? Is He still here?

"No, certainly not; He died."

How did He die? I thought He was the Lord of Life.

"Well, to tell the truth, He was killed—men put Him on a cross, and there He died between two thieves."

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Then, in plain language, men murdered Him ?

“Yes ; I suppose it amounts to this.”

Well, then, is it not a serious thing to be holiday-making in connection with this murdered man ? Most surely. Nothing could be more solemn.

But I have a message from God to you about this rejected One. He is *alive*. The men the world prizes and does homage to are *dead* and buried. The only man God counts worthy of honour and glory is *alive* in heaven. His message to you *to-day* is about Him, the blessed Son of His love, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was dead once, for Him men “slew and hanged on a tree” (Acts v. 30), “but God raised Him from the dead” (Acts xiii. 30). Of Him, Paul spake in ancient Athens, “wholly given to idolatry,” and seemed “a setter forth of strange gods : because he preached unto them *Jesus*, and the resurrection” (Acts xvii. 18). He could say, and, sinner, you must remember, that *then*, “ignorance God winked at ; but 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).

Friend, have *you* repented ? Have *you* ever

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yet truly bowed to the name of Jesus? Not yet? Then do not delay. God's APPOINTED DAY draws near—how near you know not. Suppose IT dawned *to-day*. What a terrible state you would be in! Unrepentant, unforgiven, unprepared, uncleansed, Christless, LOST! O, dear soul, do not "mock" or say, like some in old Athens, "we will hear thee again of this matter" (Acts xvii. 32). The mockers and the halters of that day were alike left to their own vanity and unbelief; for "Paul *departed* from among them" (Acts xvii. 33), and you, if you halt, or hesitate to receive the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, can count on nothing but this coming judgment; for He said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall *die* in your sins" (John viii. 24), and, Scripture adds, "after this the judgment," saying, "and as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 27, 28).

Your portion is "*death*" and "*judgment.*" "It is appointed unto men." Do you fear these two terrible consequences of sin? I have good news, "a message from God unto thee"—a message of grace: "So Christ was once offered *to bear the sins* of many." "Christ also hath once suffered for *sins*, the just for the unjust,

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that he might *bring* us to God” (1 Pet. iii. 18). God thus opens a door of escape for thee, dear soul, whoever thou art. None are too vile, or too far off, for Christ’s precious blood to meet. It cleanseth from all sin. He is alive. “He is risen” (Matt. xxviii. 6). “Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. xv. 3), and “was raised again for our justification” (Rom. iv. 25). His resurrection is the clear proof of the value of His blood, which was shed in atonement for sins. “Raised up from the dead,” “alive,” “glorified,” He sits at God’s right hand, the exalted Christ and Lord. All things are His. *All must soon own Him*—every knee bow to, and every tongue confess Him. Do not wait for dire and awful, yea eternal judgment, to force from *your* lips a confession of His worth. Bow to Him *now*. Believe Him now, and the “salvation of God” is yours. To delay even for a day is folly, and may cause your eternal ruin. Procrastination is the thief of souls, as well as of time. Besides, this Lord may return. “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him” (Matt. xxv. 6).

Do you say, “Where is the promise of His coming?” I reply, in God’s everlasting word, which further adds, “The *day* of the Lord *will* come as a thief in the night!” (2 Pet. iii. 4.) Can you meet Him? Dare you, *then*, face Him as you *now* are, in your sins? No, sinner! no,

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thou canst not. Turn, then, to Jesus, *now*. *Yes, this very day*. "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). "Hear, and your soul shall live." The Lord Jesus said, "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*. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (John v. 24, 25).

What a blessed thing it would be if you were at once to come to Him. If you have reached so near the end of the year without His blessing, oh, I beseech you, do not let it close and leave you still unsaved. Let the closing hours of 1877 find you fully decided for Jesus. You have nothing to do but simply to trust Him. God bless thee, my dear reader! "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved," and for eternity thou wilt remember with joy this

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W. T. P. W.