

THE AMBASSADOR;

OR,

TIDINGS OF GRACE AND TRUTH
TO ALL CLASSES.

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,
that Christ Jesus came into the world to save
sinners.”—1 Tim. i. 15.

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THE AMBASSADOR:

Tidings of Grace and Truth to all Classes.



A DENSE FOG.

FOR two days in December London was enveloped in the densest fog that has been known for many years. Traffic was stopped, and in many places business was suspended. Many people lost their lives, especially those whose occupations called them near the river and the various quays of the docks that line the river-side below London bridge. In the heart of the city it was so dense that, it was impossible to find one's way along, and many an enquiry was made in meeting another "Can you tell me where I am?" which only received the reply, "I am in the same difficulty;" and this not by strangers, but by persons whose lives had been spent in the great Metropolis. When night set in it was a scene of confusion in many parts, and now and again a cry was heard, "A torch, a torch!" To some within my own knowledge it was the messenger of death; others who had great plans and momentous schemes on hand were frustrated. Being of a thoughtful turn of mind I could not help linking this fog and its many circumstances with the gospel; and, as my heart

runs more particularly in a gospel channel, I gladly pick up materials everywhere, so that by incident or anecdote, illustration or figure, I might be able to bring home to the heart of any one, whose ear I can gain, that precious—that all absorbing truth: the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the knowledge of which set my own heart at liberty many a year ago; and the equally absorbing, but more priceless truth, as to His person, whose grace, and love, and glory have won my affections, and enabled me to set them upon something infinitely better than this poor world can give. And thus, having the conscience set free, as well as purged, and the heart occupied, its desires must run in the same channel as God's, whose love has been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost. It seems, I often think, most astonishing, that, with the Bible in one's hand, there should be any difficulty for any exercised soul as to how a sinner is saved—saved fully—saved entirely—saved everlastingly! But I know Satan is a vigilant and watchful enemy, and if he sees a poor sinner awakening out of the sleep of indifference, and arising from the place of dead profession, he is sure to cast a fog of unbelief around the heart, and a thick haze of doubts, difficulties, and fears; so thick, so dense, so close that there seems no finding a way—no getting light on any hand. But if the sinner be like some who found themselves lost in the very midst of the most populous city of the

world, and will cry out, "A torch, a torch;" if he does not know what danger is lurking on the right hand or on the left: whether if he take a step forward he might be plunged into difficulty, or if he retraces his steps whether that might not also be fraught with disaster. I say, if my reader is in such a condition as to eternal things, and needs a torch: well then I would in all love hold up my little light in such a manner that it may throw its flame on the pathway he is treading. I got my torch lighted at the Word of God, and that is the only place where light is to be got. It may be a beautifully made torch, and spun out of the best materials, but what is the good of it without a light? And having a light, I need not say to the enquirer after a torch. a word about it as to what it will do; it is the light that manifests itself. So I would say to the sinner, from the Word of God, that Jesus Christ is the light of life, and that with simple, unquestioning faith you are told to believe in Him—that He, and He alone, can save you—that in order to save you He must put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and having done that, and all that God required to be done, He was raised again as the proof of God's satisfaction and delight in that work, and now God can righteously receive all who come to Him by Jesus Christ, so that in order for your salvation you have not to move a step one way or the other.

It would have been sheer madness, when a person was lost in the fog, and crying out for a light, to flourish the torch about in the air, in the vain endeavour to penetrate that thick mist, and to reveal the many pinnacles that stud the world's great city. *Hold the torch low*, so that the pathway may be clear. Let the traveller see where he is, and enquire where he wants to go, and *knowing the way yourself*, and with the light in your hand, you shall be able to lead him in safety. Another day when all the fogs are gone, and it is light on every hand, you will not only be able to see the housetops—where before you could not see the door-step—but you shall be able to see the highest pinnacle of St. Paul's, and the sun lending additional lustre to the gilded ball on its summit. So also with a sinner who is sensible of his lost condition, and wants a friendly hand to bring his torch; I say, show him *the door-step* first, he's afraid of stumbling. Poor lost one! how low the torch of truth is held so that you should not fall! Jesus says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Follow Him—in other words, believe on Him, and you shall be safe; you shall not perish, and He will lead you home. There you shall learn all about Himself, and what in grace, as the sent One of God, He did for the sinner. You want light—get near to Christ and you shall have it, and there you will see what *sin* is as He sees it, and know

the immeasurable love of His heart towards you. Having learned this, and that He is indeed *your Saviour*, you will be a learner; and it is the delight and the office of the Holy Ghost to take of the things of Christ to reveal them unto us; and thus you will get an enlarged capacity, a subject mind, a devoted heart, and a readiness to be filled with the precious truths unfolded in the word of God.

Then you will need the light to guide you along, for "without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." I tell you what I did when I was out in the fog. I thought I knew the road all right, and had no fear of stumbling, but once or twice I found I was on *very high ground*, and very nearly had a fall. But just then, some one passed with a big torch, and threw a light for some distance, and—quite unconsciously to the bearer of it—revealed my danger to myself, and made me cautious how I walked. So, seeing he had got such a clear bright light, I determined to follow him. The light he carried manifested to myself whether *he* was going right or wrong, so that after all it was not following the *man*, but the *light*. So if I find a christian has more light than myself, as to the things of God, I am only too glad to follow. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." (John iii. 22.) Paul says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." But then, I say, we are (as christians) called to

walk in the light as He is in the light, and with the light of truth in my hand to shine upon my way, every pebble of difficulty will be seen, and the foot of faith will be able to plant itself firmly upon the King's highway.

Again, while this dread and drearish fog was enveloping us, it brought to my mind how much it resembled sin. During those two days it was so dense, there was no escaping it. The place of business—the most secluded spot—the most privileged sanctuary of the household—was full of it: there was no getting out of it. Doors would not shut it out, bolts and bars were not proof to its power, every one felt its presence, and how powerless they were to get rid of it—or to get away from it. Ah! is not that a picture of sin? where has sin not penetrated? Does not that babe in the cradle with its lusty demands for attention, or when its little frame is convulsed with pain, prove that sin has to do with it—that it has a nature which is sinful? as well as if you enter the cabinet of a king who, with his ministers, is scheming and plotting against a neighbour nation for plunder or for vengeance. It is sin, *sin*, SIN! Sometimes shewing itself in an infantine way like a little spring oozing out of the ground in a manner scarcely perceptible; and again riding rampant over everything in a right royal fashion, and in the most revolting form; and for one whose eyes are opened to see and feel its power,

and finds there is no excluding or getting away from it, what is to be done? Ah! my friend, there is only one place where it cannot penetrate, that is, God's presence; and to be found there, you must be cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, so that God can say, 'There is no spot in thee. How could there be in a blood-washed saint of God? I sometimes find people engaged with high doctrine and lofty truths, and yet know nothing of either the person or the work of the Lord Jesus, or God's love in giving Jesus. What should we think of a poor wayfaring man who stood before a nobleman's house, if, instead of accepting the invitation of the steward to go in and get all he needed, he wanted to talk about the architecture of the building, and to argue about the merits or demerits of the materials used? We should think him crazed. A bit of bread and a drop of water would be better than years of admiration or argument, if he were hungry or thirsty. Will he tire the master's patience, and stand gazing and gazing until the steward is recalled, and the door is shut? and if he does so, who shall he blame but himself? and will the sinner have any one to blame if he be lost for ever? Surely not, for the great work of salvation—from first to last—has been done by Jesus, and you are invited to taste the blessed fruits of redemption.

A sad case occurred on one of the days of the fog. A poor fellow who worked in one of the

docks, and was accustomed to the place, yet so dense was the fog around him that he walked into the water, not knowing he was near the edge. Is not this like many who have the Bible in their houses, have read it over and over again, have not even gainsaid its precious truths : yet have deliberately walked into the pit, have died unsaved ? That very Bible would have given them the needed light and power. Do not say "If I shut my eyes, I shall not see the fog." Is your danger the less ? is it not rather greater ? Unserved reader ! once again I would hold my torch very low. Oh, let its light show you where you are. See how clear it shines, don't be afraid ! if you have been living in the darkness, it may fall very powerfully on your eyes, but you will be able to bear it presently. Is it not a *steady* flame ? no flickering about it ; no uncertainty—"He that *believeth* on the Son *hath* everlasting life." Why, dear me, those nine words are sufficient to dispel the fog of years of unbelief ; everlasting life from believing in the Son of God ! But look again ; do you think there's no danger, and that I want to frighten you ? let me hold the torch of truth a little this side ; do you see how near that terrible gulf you are, and that if you fall over you are hopelessly lost ? Suppose you die unsaved, unforgiven,— "He that *believeth not* the Son *shall not see life*, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.)

“PEACE! REST! HOME!”

SUCH were the words of a poor man a few moments before leaving this scene of sorrow to be with that One of whom he could say, “He loved me and gave himself for me.”

A few months since I visited that dear man for the first time—he was then very ill, and appeared as if he would not be here long; but his soul was unsaved, and to which he seemed indifferent.

After talking to him some time, and reading a portion of God’s Word, he said, “I am pretty comfortable;” which he evidently was, but certainly was far from being *happy*. Yes, he seemed *comfortable* in his sins—a condition in which that great enemy of souls delights to see a poor sinner; because as long as he does not see that he is, in God’s sight, *nothing but sin*, and feels not the chains of Satan, with which he is bound, there is no desire for Christ, who alone can break those mighty chains; but if, on the other hand, he has the knowledge he is in bondage, there will be a craving, and an anxiety to be set free. But there was no such desire in the heart of that poor man—Satan had him tightly bound, though he knew it not. I pointed him to Christ as “the way”—the *only way* by which he could get to heaven, and that “Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;” but all appeared of no avail. I left the house that night with a sorrow-

ing heart, feeling assured he would not be "in the body" long, and yet would not accept Christ. The words of the Lord Jesus came vividly to my mind: "*Ye will not come to me that ye might have life*" (John v. 40). Such has ever been the condition of man—turning a deaf ear to the Word of God, and all His gracious invitations; as though he liked the chains of Satan so well that he did not wish to be set free, not thinking for a moment of the place where at last he would be brought,—“where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

I visited him several times after this, and he seemed occasionally a little better in health; but there was the same carelessness and indifference regarding his precious soul, until a few weeks before he fell asleep, when it pleased our God in His wondrous grace to bring him to a sense of his danger, and lead him to accept Christ. From that time I believe he was always perfectly happy, “rejoicing in the Lord,” knowing now what it was to be *happy*, and not merely *comfortable*. On one occasion, as I entered his room, I said to him, “Well, Mr. C., quite happy then?” to which he replied, with a smile, that I shall not forget, “Yes; as happy as the days are long.”

I visited him but once after this, when he was very bright, and I thought he might linger on for some time, as he appeared a little better than usual. But this was to be the last time we were

to meet on earth, for a few days after the tidings reached me that poor C. had fallen asleep in Jesus. He enquired for a friend and myself a little while before expiring, but we were both prevented from seeing him. Almost his last words were those given above, "Peace! Rest! Home!" Such was death to him, for it had lost its sting, and the grave had no victory.

Reader, how is it with your soul? Are you yet unsaved—outside Christ—rejecting the Son of God's love, who "was made sin," that all who believe should "be made the righteousness of God in him"? It may be that you are, and yet *comfortable* in such a condition. If such be your state may God bring you to see that you are nothing better than *a sinner*, and that you need Christ to save you. Possibly you may be desirous of enjoying the pleasures of the world, (having the idea that there is plenty of time to think about Christ) saying, as I once heard a man say to a christian, "*I believe in enjoying the things of this world.*" But who can tell whether you may be allowed to enjoy them another day, or even another hour? and after all it's a poor joy. Do you not quake and tremble when you lay your head on your pillow at night, not knowing whether you ~~may~~ again see the morning light? If a thought of God enter your mind, do you try to put it off as a mere wandering? Ah! this is often the case with a man of the world! he tries to shut out God

from his very thoughts, because his conscience tells him he is guilty, and that if he die in such a state there is nothing before him but that place "prepared for the devil and his angels." How different is this to a christian ; he can lay down at night with perfect peace, for he knows "all is well," that if death should come it would be to take him home—fearing nothing, for he knows he is secure in Christ, who said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment" (John v. 24). Do you not think he ought to lie down in peace, when he has such a blessed assurance as that ? I entreat you, if you have *not* listened to His word, and believed on Him that sent Him, not to delay another moment—there is "nothing to do," for Christ Jesus upon Calvary accomplished the mighty work of redemption—completely finished it (knowing we could do nothing), that we might be saved, and enjoy the peace which *He* made, for he has "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20). Do not be led astray by the traditions of men, believe God's Word, and reject all that is contrary to it ; as Scripture says, "Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 4). Listen not to the reasoning of your own mind, for if you do Satan will certainly take advantage, for he knows how weak you are.

Perhaps you are one of those who can boast of

having read the Bible from beginning to end, and come to the conclusion, as one, not long since, told me he had, that "it cannot be inspired, because it contains such blank contradictions."

Ah! my friend, it is not that there are contradictions in that blessed book, but simply that you are a "natural man," having not the Spirit of God, and therefore *cannot* understand them: as the Scripture says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit;" and why? "Because they are foolishness unto him: *neither can he know them*, for they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). Thus, you see, your not being able to understand it, rather than otherwise, would be a proof that it is inspired. Reason, then, no longer, but in simple faith trust God, and rest assured if you cannot understand certain passages of Scripture, it is because of your weakness, and your inability to rise to the glorious heights of the thoughts and ways of God. Well might that inspired apostle exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33). Thus can the christian stand in wonder and amazement, admiring that which the infidel calls foolishness, knowing full well (without any of the much-admired eloquence of a man to prove it) that the thoughts and ways of God are so grand, and so much higher than his that he cannot attain unto them.

I would again urge you to believe on Christ at once, for this may be the last hour you will spend in this scene ; and if you do not believe, your last words may be similar to those of a poor man who died a few weeks since, which were, "DEATH ! HELL ! LOST !" Such was his dying testimony—LOST ! He had many times heard the glad tidings of salvation, but had refused to drink of that water of which the Lord Jesus said, "Whosoever drinketh . . . shall never thirst" (John iv. 14). Man is ready enough to drink of that which suits his carnal appetite ; but, alas ! how slow to drink of that which Christ offers "without money and without price." It was so with this poor man—he had refused Christ, and death was to him something terrible, for he knew that after death there was the judgment—yes, the judgment of God. Do not such words from the lips of a dying man, if you *are* unsaved, make you tremble ? I can only hope they may do so.

What a contrast between the death of a believer (which is but a falling asleep) and an unbeliever. How beautiful the last words on earth of the one, but how terrible the other ; one could say, "Peace !" while the other could but give utterance to that solemn word,—"Lost !" and that for ever.

May God in His grace use these few lines to the blessing of some poor soul.

THE DETECTIVE.

MANY years ago I was staying for a short time at the house of Sergeant D——, a man of considerable abilities; and as a police officer, much valued in the town where he held an important post. Although not properly a detective—for they had two professional detectives in the company—yet there was such natural shrewdness and penetration about him, that he often succeeded in detecting and capturing culprits who had escaped the vigilance of the professionals. He could disguise himself in a manner that often deceived his most familiar friends. Indeed, I have entered his house, not knowing what was going on, and have accosted him as a stranger, so well did he play his part; and all this to bring the offender to justice.

Yet there was one offender he could never detect—a guilty one who had grievously sinned against God and man, and who, with all his natural vigilance, he could never cope with—and that was *himself*. If there was one thing more than another he hated, it was the Word of God. That disturbed him even by my sitting quietly reading it; for at that time I was like one who had long been in search of treasure, and had unexpectedly fallen upon a rich and inexhaustible mine; and right heartily was I digging for the precious ore. I had not much chance of speaking to him; but I

know he felt its power, and felt that God was in his house—that the detective was detected, although he would not own his guilt. That man was the terror of evil-doers in the town ; they never knew when he was going to pounce upon them ; perhaps that simple-looking countryman loitering along was he ; or that elegantly dressed man, who was your fellow-passenger in the first-class carriage, was none other than Sergeant D—. Yet I never feared him, be the disguise what it may. Why ? Because I had a good conscience—a conscience purged by the blood of Christ, at peace with God, and in my measure loving Him with such a love, that I should have shrunk from doing aught against my neighbour. Therefore I did not fear the police nor the detective ; nay, not the very chief of police. I had had to do with God in a soul-saving way a little before ; His Word was a detective indeed, for it found me out a sinner—searched me through and through. Could you, unconverted reader, stand unabashed before a naked sword, wielded by a powerful arm ? The Word of God is compared to a two-edged sword : “ For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight : but all things are naked and open

unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 12, 13). Is not that a detective that not only finds out what you are, but where you are? but unlike the officer of the law, instead of bringing the poor culprit to justice, to receive sentence, is brought to the God who delights in mercy—who has given His Son to take the sinner's place. You cannot hide yourself from the penetrating eye of God, who not only sees the acts you commit, but reads the motives of action—sees the springs of evil. The law is indeed a detective, for it finds out evil doers; like a policeman going about finding offenders. Why, the presence of a policeman shows what a world it is; full of sin and offence against man and God. The law of the land is strong to punish the offender—the breaker of its laws; yet, if a man blaspheme the name of God, lives a life of iniquity, so that it does not injure man, no notice is taken of it—even in this christian country. If a man insult his neighbour, or assault, or rob him, the whole force of police would be brought to bear, (if necessary) to bring him to justice. But a man insults God, casts contempt upon the precious name of Jesus, and is even bold enough to deny His existence, but the earthly tribunal has nothing to do with this.

I often wonder if the policeman, as he turns the key on the cell door of his prisoner, ever thinks he will have to stand before a judge, (if he does

not accept Christ as a Saviour), where no special pleading will avail.

As a rule, I fear they are like Sergeant D—, sharp enough to find out offenders against the law, yet never find out what poor guilty things they themselves are. I know some cases where the poor occupant in the condemned cell is more to be envied than the jailor, because the one has found out that he has not fallen too low for the God of grace to reach him; and that though his soul has been so deeply dyed, the precious blood of Christ can cleanse him; and passes away (as did the thief on Calvary) from the place of judgment a justified man, suffering the penalty of outraged human laws; but accepting Christ and His great salvation, entering heaven as a trophy of grace, while the poor jailor, who holds the keys, is in danger of greater condemnation, because he believes not on the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

Some people are very fond of talking about the law, and that we ought to keep the law; but do these insisters of the law do so? Let us see. The law, I say, is a detective, for it finds out what a man is capable of doing, and what he is incapable of doing. The law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with *all* thy heart, thy mind, thy soul, thy strength." Do they do this? They ought to do so—the creature should do so—but *do* they, for one day, or for even one hour of the day? The next clause is worse, for it says,

“thy neighbour as thyself.” Who does this? Did we share our supper last night with the poor family who had none? That is a searching word, “as thyself.” Christ did more than this, and the follower of Christ can do so too; for love is the fulfilling of the law. The law only desired a man to love his neighbour as himself, but love will go further than this—it will enable a christian to deny himself to serve another (Luke x.).

I remember a young man, with whom I was conversing on the subject, insisting we ought to keep the law or we should never get to heaven. He was very religious, “attending all the means of grace,” as he said, not only a teetotaller, but the secretary of the Temperance Society; yet I am sure there was not a spark of divine life in the young man’s soul. The outside of the vessel was nice and clean, and nothing but the detecting Word of the living God could find out the vileness inside. But he was not a doer of the law—and I tested him in a very homely way. I said, “Very well, the law says, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;’ now, you have two good coats on, and yonder, in the street, is a poor fellow with never a one; now, as a law-keeper, you ought to give him one, as a proof that you love him as yourself.” He had never looked at law-keeping in that practical way; and it was too much, for he smiled, and bade me good-night.

The sequel of poor Sergeant D— was, he fell

into a grievous breaker of the law, and to escape justice fled, and then I lost sight of him.

I have sometimes been asked, after preaching, "Did any one tell you anything about me?" "No;" I replied, "I know nothing of you." "You might have known all about me, from what you have been saying to-night," said one.

"It was God directing the arrow, I only pulled the bow ; He knew where the joints of the harness were, so that the keenly-pointed barb could penetrate the conscience." There is power in God's Word—happy is he who owns it, and bows to it. Did you ever think that God reads you through and through, and that there is no escaping His penetrating eye?

I like the little Sunday scholar's reply to her teacher, who was speaking about God being everywhere; and thinking it a hard question, said, "Can you tell me where God is not?"

"Yes, Sir," said a bright-eyed girl, "'God is not in all the thoughts of the wicked.'"

Ah, yes, the fool says in his heart, No God; and he would fain keep Him from his thoughts.

Time passes—hours grow into days—days expand to weeks—and weeks lengthen out to years, till the short span of life is complete. And what then? An eternity of joy, and bliss, and glory, with Christ; or, a long, dark, unending day with—— I wish not to complete the sentence; trusting it will not be true of any reader of the Ambassador.

TRAVELLING BY EXPRESS.

TRAVELLING on one occasion, lately, by an express train to that great mart of merchandize, London, I could but think how such a journey illustrates the course of human life. The passengers were seated in first, second, or third class carriages, according to their different stations in society, and were being urged along, whether with or against their will, by a power beyond their control, to the destination for which they had set out. How like this is to the "course of this world," which, being energized by Satan, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" carries all with a resistless force to the region of death, the vast central terminus where the railways of this life meet. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27).

There is something very exhilarating in travelling by express, though there may be the accompaniment of a slight sense of fear as to the ultimate safety of the journey. Still, on the whole, the sensation is one of enjoyment. We pass station after station without stopping; we have now a dark tunnel or two to go through; then a glimpse of a pretty piece of scenery on either side, and a hasty glance at some elegant villas with their tasteful gardens sloping to the edge of the railway, succeeded by an unsightly view of the roofs of the

houses in a dirty locality, where the squalor of poverty shews itself in all its wretchedness. But every view, pleasing or painful, is transient; a glimpse, and on we go; no time to dwell upon anything. Is not this like the journey of a prosperous life in this world? There is joy, and there is sorrow; there is weal, and there is woe; and there are the lights and shadows of the way; but they are all fleeting, and make but slight impressions, so long as men are successful in the pursuit of the main object upon which they have set their hearts and minds. The fear, however, is, lest infatuation in the pursuit should seize the mind, so that the real and proper end of existence should be forgotten or ignored. Man is an accountable being, and is responsible to God. He must stand before his Creator, in all the awful majesty of a Judge, and hear from Him the solemn sentence of eternal condemnation or else appear before Him as the justifying God and Saviour, giving eternal life, eternal redemption, and eternal glory, to the believing soul, on the ground of the perfectly finished work of His only-begotten Son, "who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

But what is this which we see before us? When we started on our journey the sun was shining brightly, and shedding its brilliance on all around, but now a veil of thick darkness hangs over the great city towards which we are fast approaching. It is enveloped in one of its dense

fogs; such fogs as only smoky cities know. Still, on we go—no check as yet in the speed of the train, though there is a slight damp upon the spirits of the travellers. But, hark! what is that sudden, sharp, and loud report, succeeded by another, and another? It is the fog-signal—there is danger ahead, and the engine-driver is warned to be wary; *and the warning is heeded.* We soon find that the rate at which we were travelling is lessened. Again and again similar reports are heard, which so act upon the watchful driver that we are made conscious that we are moving very slowly and cautiously indeed. This needful delay is rather trying to the spirit of impatience, but life is sweet, and a safe journey much to be desired; and so we become reconciled to the tardy motion of the train. We grope, as it were, our way through the mist of cloud and smoke, which surrounds us, and at length, through the mercy of God, are all set down in safety at the terminus, free to pursue the business that brought us to town.

Has not this a voice to our consciences, yea, and also to our hearts? They who have not received Christ, the Life and the Light, are hastening on through the dense spiritual darkness which covers this world, to the great and solemn end that awaits them. If they continue in their present state, and thus die in their sins, a million-fold more terrible fate than that which arises from the

most fearful accident on the railway must be their portion. But God "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," and is therefore continually warning them as to whither they are going, and what will be their end if they heed not His beseechings and admonitions. The 33rd chap. of the Book of Job shows us some of the means which God takes to awaken souls to a sense of their condition, "having no hope, and without God in the world;" though, alas! "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." Sometimes He takes away the desire of one's eyes, or the delight of one's heart; or He employs less striking, but

not less impressive ways of arousing the soul from its natural state of insensibility. One verse from His own heart-searching Word, or, it may be, a sentence from an earnest discourse of a soul-loving servant of Christ, may be fastened upon the conscience; or one may be disturbed from one's lethargy by the presentation, in a railway carriage, or omnibus, or by the way-side, of a messenger of mercy in the guise of a Gospel Tract; or, a kind christian friend may, in his love for one's soul, have put some earnest questions as to one's condition in the sight of God; or have done the like service by means of a friendly epistle, indited in the spirit of one who would pluck a brand from the burning. But whatever may be the modes which God in His grace may deign to use, they are all so many voices to the soul to take heed, and an invitation to accept of that salvation which He offers "without money and without price." But, oh! beloved soul, be careful not to slight or reject these warnings and entreaties. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Prov. xxvii. 12). Hear, and learn from, what is said of Noah in Heb. xi. 7: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear [or, being wary], prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

God had told him of the flood which was coming upon the world of the ungodly, long before there was even a sign of it; and he believed God, and, "being wary," he took the God-appointed means of deliverance from that judgment, and thus he and his house were saved, when all the rest perished in the swelling of the mighty waters.

May you, then, heed and fear, and take refuge in Christ, the Lamb of God's providing; and then, whether the remainder of your journey be long or short, you will, instead of being led of Satan to that terminus which introduces the soul into everlasting woe, have your present portion in Christ, and will in God's good time, be called away to dwell in His holy and joy-inspiring presence for evermore.

T.

UNDER A SHEET.

IN a small dark room in a London street,
Where two ways part and two ways meet ;
Unsavour'd by flowers—unshadow'd by trees,
Lies a poor man with a dread disease—
A disease that stole with a stealthy pace
Till it held with its fatal, firm embrace
Feature and countenance—leaving no trace
Of the manly brow and the noble face.
Slowly, solemnly, spreading at will,
Keeping at bay all surgical skill ;
Skill could not touch it, or cause it to flee,
But closer it clung
And tenaciously hung
Like a horrible blight on a hopeful tree ;
And the poor sick man
Was obliged to lay,
From day to day,
Nothing to gaze at—nothing to scan,

Of beauty no mark—of health no trace—

None dare look at that poor sad face

But the loving eyes

Of his faithful wife,

Livingly linked in joy and strife—

Livingly linked in the better life

That never dies.

But God, who the need of His creature sees,

Knew the spread of that dire disease—

Knew the desire of his heart was such,

For that which disease could never touch ;

The longings no words could frame was heard ;

(The soul to its utmost depths was stirr'd,)

He blessed the Word—

The Word of life that fell on the ear

Of the sin-sick soul with a sound so clear ;

(Not hope deferr'd),

But bringing salvation, full and free,

Imparting life to a poor dead tree ;

(Rotten in trunk, and branch, and root,

Blossoms all blighted, and worthless fruit) ;

Giving him peace no arm could make—

Giving him peace no power could shake :

Peace and life,

Blessedly rife,

Causing a river of constant joy

Nothing could sully—nothing alloy.

Where was the cloud his faith could dim ?

Jesus had triumphed, and triumphed for him ;

Jesus had done it from first to last,

Sins were all gone, and judgment past :

Washed in the flood

Of His precious blood,

God had pronounced him clean and white,

Fit to appear in His holy sight.

Yet his retreat

In the silent gloom

Of the dark back room,

Under a sheet.

Jealously hid from the world's great strife,

Hidden away with the "light of life,"

Precious and sweet,

To mingle his thoughts with the Lord above,

To dwell on His great—His changeless love

Under a sheet !

Better than under rich drapery's fold,
 Fashion'd with cunning, and cover'd with gold,
 And nothing of Christ in the heart ;
 Although he is pining in weakness of frame,
 There's a treasure, a pleasure that flows from *that* name
 Which never will rust or depart.

Better by far to be crippled, than run ;
 Than healthy, and wealthy, and not know the Son—

His Son, whom in love
 God sent from above,
 To ransom and succour the sin-stricken one.
 Still in the gloom
 Of the small back room

Lies the poor christian, happy and blest,
 Christ is his comfort—Christ his rest,
 Christ is his hope ; and he waits for the dawn,
 Through the dark midnight, watching for morn.
 Waiting the trumpet, the shout, and the voice,
 (When the oppressed and the troubled rejoice) ;
 And so till the time when the wilderness ends,
 Clinging to Christ, as the dearest of Friends ;

Intercourse sweet
 Under that sheet,
 Priceless and blessed the moments he spends.
 Afflictions may deepen, and death may come in,
 But they cannot alarm

The one who is justified—cleansed from his sin,
 And lovingly hid from the tumult and din ;

For he leans on the arm
 Of One who's almighty on earth and above,
 The One on whose bosom he nestles in love—

Desirous to greet :
 Still may he cling with the faith of a child,
 Though the blasts of the desert be stormy and wild ;
 Yea, cling to the Holy, the True, undefiled,
 Though wealth may all vanish, and friends disappear,
 To the heart that trusts in Him, Christ always is near

The foe to defeat—
 To hold blessed intercourse—loving and long—
 To cause His own thoughts in the spirit to throng,
 To draw forth in blessing, and draw forth in song,
 Devotion and worship, thanksgiving and praise
 From a poor broken vessel that constantly lays

Under a sheet !

THE PAINTED CELL.

I WAS lately reading the account of a gentleman's travels through the United States; during which he visited the prisons; in one of which he found a German, who, "with colours procured from the yarns with which he worked, had painted every inch of the walls and ceiling quite beautifully. He had laid out the few feet of ground behind with exquisite neatness, and had made a little bed in the centre that looked, by-the-by, like a grave. A more heart-broken, dejected, wretched-looking creature it would be difficult to imagine."

I thought this was making the best of his circumstances, willingly deluding himself as to the real character of the place. It was a prison, but highly decorated, and his singular-looking little flower-bed, like a grave, must have reminded him of death—the still more gloomy prison for all who die out of Christ—for all who pass away with their sins unpurged and unjudged.

I thought it a striking picture of the world, that same prison and its singular inhabitant. If one looks around by the light of the inspired Word of God, it is not difficult to see what is going on, and what it will all end in. It is a wonderful age, with its telegraph wires circling the earth, and interlacing the land so thickly, and in such a maze-like fashion, that it resembles the veins and tissues of the human frame. There

seems to be no limit to man's skill and ingenuity, his ready wit and his powers, straining every nerve, and sparing no effort to arrive at greatness and perfection : we listen to the tale of his marvels, we gaze at the monuments of his skill, but the christian cannot but sigh, as he contemplates that in these exhibitions of skill and marvels of genius God is not there—that it is the effort of man to paint and decorate his cell, and live as pleasantly as he may during the brief space he has to live. The world is to the unconverted man a huge prison-house, in which he fancies he has so much liberty, and outside is the little grave—the end of all his greatness. It is true that those who outlive him may decorate his grave with a splendid monument, and enclose the dust of departed greatness in marble ; but what profit is there in all this to him who lies beneath ? Does it, or can it, avert that solemn judgment which is righteously due to him that bows not to the claims of God, who commands all men everywhere to repent and to believe in the name of His only-begotten Son ?

The sound of the mighty hammers from the great iron-works in different parts of the country, as I have listened to their heavy thud, especially in the stillness of night, takes one's thoughts back to the time when Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and built a city, and called it after the name of his son. The fiftieth Psalm says, " Their inward thought is that their

houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations: they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings." It did so in Cain's descendants, and soon there was not wanting the decorations in brass and iron to please the eye, and the strains of harp and organ to please the ear. If Satan can engage the eye and ear he has gained the outposts—and the heart, the garrison of the man, soon falls a prey to his power. So again, Scripture says, "*All that is in the world*, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John iv. 16).

It is a difficult matter to get hold of a man's ear for God. It is a busy age, and he cannot spare time to listen to that which so intimately concerns him, and so goes on, and on, that God has to say, "Woe unto him, for he has gone in the way of Cain." Yea, how often is one's heart pained at not only the indifference of many to the best interests of their soul, but at the levity with which the Word of God is regarded—oftentimes used as the butt of ridicule; and that holy name (which God declares every knee shall bow to, and every tongue confess to His glory) constantly on the tongue of the blasphemer.

It is not my purpose to speak for or against

what man has done for his fellow in the labour of his brain, and in the product of his fingers, what I say is, that they have not improved man morally before God—they have not made him a whit happier. For the wealthiest and cleverest, in their private life, are in a great many cases like the man in the prison, “dejected and wretched;” for after all it is of the earth, earthy. It reminds me of the saying of a christian, who was subject to periods of insanity, and who, during one of these seasons, was visited by his master. The poor man, on seeing his employer, said, “There’s no blood upon him;” shewing that amid the ruin of the poor mind, one thought possessed the heart, the blood of the Lamb by which he was ransomed.

I often call to mind his words as I look upon some marvel of man’s greatness, and say to myself, “there’s no blood upon it;” albeit it bears the name of Him who has no place in the hearts of those who are within.

Cain had a murderer’s mark upon him, and he was a prisoner, but he painted his cell very beautifully, and decorated it gorgeously, no doubt. But what was it all worth, looked at in the light of the coming flood, whose gathering waters were to burst forth with fury from above, to join the fountains of the great deep in their work of judgment on the world of the ungodly? Simply vanity. The wise man of the age, who lent a

listening ear, was Noah, who moved with fear, and prepared an ark to the saving of his house (Heb. xi.). The foolish man rejected the words of the preacher of righteousness, and perished in the flood. Perhaps some were simply indifferent to the coming events, and were solely occupied and contented with the things of every-day life, as the Lord Jesus said, They ate, they drank, they builded, were married, and given in marriage, until the flood swept them all away.

Does not this characterize men of the present day, who, like the poor man, are trying to make the cell as pleasant as possible, without hope and without God in the world? The heart seems set upon amassing riches, and rearing sumptuous dwellings, with all the trappings of a dazzling life; whilst the future, (with all its glories or dark solemnities) seems not to have a place in the heart; or if conscience makes itself heard, and demands attention, then its voice is sought to be silenced by alms-giving, or a round of ceremonies, which are but solemn mockeries to Him who says, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Blessed be God, there are exceptions to the rule, and He has His own in the palace, and His grace gathers out one here and there from amid the gay circles of this world's society, who having found in Christ a treasure, priceless and unfading, gladly renounce all it has to offer.

What a mistake people make when they imagine

that if a man becomes a christian he is a morbid, melancholy creature. It is not so with him who knows peace with God through Christ Jesus. I can understand a man being so who simply turns religious, and whose heart has not known the comfort of the love of God, nor the blessed liberty which belongs to a child—a son—an heir—who breathes the freedom of Christ. Of course, a man whose conscience only is reached and probed, but not purged and relieved, cannot but groan and cry, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?” When he learns to rest for salvation wholly and solely upon the finished work of Christ, there is *peace*, and *joy* will follow. When a great burden, which has pressed sorely upon my heart, is gone—taken away by the act of another—it is relief, then a sense of peace, where it was torment; and the heart expands in gratitude to him who gave the ease, and, as a consequence, there is joy. Everything in its proper order : light, life, peace, joy, and glory !

Nothing can touch my peace, for that is Christ, who made peace by the blood of His cross : circumstances may come in and turn my eye from Christ and hinder communion, when, of course, the joy is for the time gone. It is more than joying in God in Rom. v., it is *exulting in Him* ! But I must know Him in His true character before I can exult in Him. He looks for whole-heartedness in His people. How Satan lures the heart

with the thousand little *harmless* things around; they are his most successful traps to catch the unwary christian. To one in the habit of looking at things by the light of the Word of God, instead of by reason, or natural understanding, the present scene is but the painted cell, very richly decorated, and no expense or skill spared in the embellishments. But after all, what has a man in it, who has not Christ, but *a little grave just outside?* And how intent he is upon its decorations; and what perseverance he exhibits in covering every inch of the walls and ceiling. The sentence that hangs over him he would fain forget or deny; yet it remains in full force,—“He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

What would the Governor of Newgate think of the man lying under sentence of death, if he requested his cell to be papered, and showed great anxiety about the pattern of the paper, and the colour of the paint? Would he not think the man insane? and would he not press upon him the fact of his solemn position, that in a few days he would have to leave his cell to receive the punishment which the law awards to a murderer?

Don't turn away, unsaved reader, at my comparison, I want to put it in a very homely way. In saying you are a sinner, I tell you God's thoughts about your condition—I wouldn't say you are a wicked man; you may be a moral man,

and a very excellent character, but these things will not take you to heaven. It is faith in Christ alone that gives one a title to heaven. It is His blood that has atoned, and that cleanseth from all sin (1 John i.).

Many a one has said, "I would give all I possess to be as happy as you are." But, I say, no giving is needed in order to get peace with God, for that is the foundation of the christian's happiness. One word in closing: "*The gift of God* is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

REASON, OR FAITH.

WHEN Bruce, the celebrated traveller, returned from Africa, to his ancestral home in Scotland, he published an elaborate and interesting account of his travels in Abyssinia, relating many particulars of the manners and customs of the people of that distant country; some of which were of a strange and peculiar nature. Abyssinia was a part of the world of which but little was then known in Europe, and consequently the truth of some of his statements was questioned, and even denied, much to the grief and indignation of that high-spirited man. The account, for instance, which he gave of his having frequently seen a steak cut from the loins of a living bullock, and immediately eaten by some of that barbarous people, was

especially the subject of denial and derision, even by some of the learned of the day ; though the truth of that assertion has been abundantly substantiated by the testimony of other travellers who have since visited that country. Looking back from the point which the confirmation of Bruce's extraordinary statement gives us, we can see that the mistake of those who formed so unfavourable an opinion of the trustworthiness of his narrative was, that they could not bring themselves to believe a statement which was beyond the bounds of their own experience. They had never seen such a barbarous sight, and they had never heard of it except from this one witness ; and so they concluded to disbelieve the statement altogether. To have been just, they should at least have suspended their judgment, instead of hastily condemning one who has been proved to be on the whole a faithful narrator of the wonderful things which he saw.

My object, however, in alluding to this is only to illustrate the truth, that men, in far more important matters, are ready to doubt, and even despise statements and things which are above the limits of human apprehension, I mean the august verities of Revelation ; which can only really be known by the teaching of the Spirit of God. The testimony to this fact, contained in 1 Cor. ii., is conclusive to all who bow to the declaration of the Word of God : " The

natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The case of Naaman, the Syrian, recorded in 2 Kings v., is one in point. He "was a great man with his master, and honourable a mighty man of valour, . . . a leper." Passing over, on the present occasion, the intermediate stages of his course, after the saying of the "little maid" had reached him, till we find him "at the door of the house of Elisha," he appears before us as a hearer of the testimony of God by the prophet, who "sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." Now, what was the first effect upon Naaman of this word of the Lord? Why, it stirred his wrath. The purport of what he said in his rage was,—Is it likely that my cleansing can come from washing in this paltry river Jordan? Is it reasonable that so great a result can flow from so insignificant a stream? Are not the far more noble rivers of my own country "better than all the waters of Israel." And, speaking within the range of mere reason, it certainly did seem unlikely that a seven-fold washing in Jordan should cleanse him from his fearful and defiling leprosy, the cure of which was beyond the power of man to effect. But the question was,—not about the

meanness of the river, nor the likelihood of its effecting his cure,—but was God to be believed? That was the sole question for him to have settled. All other questions were merged in that all-important one. Happily for him, after the conflict which his spirit endured through his unbelief, he at length yielded to the divine direction; and the result was exactly in accordance with that which had been declared, for “his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.” He proved, what he ought never to have doubted, that “it was impossible for God to lie,” and that he who believes Him, and submits to His way of cleansing, has the blessing which the reception of His word is intended to give.

The instance, too, of the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, narrated in the 21st chap. of Numbers, with the effect of a look upon that unique object by the serpent bitten Israelites, is most instructive for our souls. “The people spake against God, and against Moses,” and therefore “the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.” The murmurers and complainers were thus in a terrible state, writhing under the deadly bite of the serpents, whose venom had poisoned their life’s blood, and with no human refuge or resource to which to turn. But where all human resources failed, the grace and power of God supervened as an effectual remedy, surmounting the terrible effects

of sin and its consequent judgment. "The Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole : and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Thus the serpent of brass was made and set according to the word of the Lord ; but did it seem likely—did it appear reasonable, that by the simple act of looking upon it, the wretched perishing ones should live ? No ; it did not seem likely—it did not appear reasonable. Nothing in the whole range of human experience could lead to such a conclusion. There was no way of connecting it with any of the ways or thoughts, or the wisdom of man. But again the question was : Is the way of God's wisdom and mercy to be restricted by the puny thoughts of the natural mind ? When the message of mercy was circulated through the camp of Israel, "that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live," was it a time for reasoning and questioning ? Was it not the time for faith in God and His word ? And, unlikely as it seemed to mere human reason, it nevertheless "came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." The poor, perishing Israelite had but to lift his languid eye to the remedy which God had

provided, and in the looking he found life. To doubt Him was to die; to believe Him was to live: and all who believed Him, and beheld the serpent, became a living testimony to the grace, truth, and power of God, displayed towards them in such terrible circumstances as those in which they were placed, through their sin against Him.

Let us look, also, at the 3rd chap. of the gospel of John, where we find "a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews," and thus a noted man among his people, coming to Jesus by night, recognizing Him as a "teacher come from God"; yet, notwithstanding all his natural and religious advantages, utterly confounded by the simple statement of the Lord, that, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." His exclamation and enquiry, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" express the absolute incompetency of nature, even though religiously cultivated, to enter into the things of the Spirit of God. And when the Lord affirms the deep reality of His statement, and enlarges upon it, in the blessed patience of His grace towards him, the strangeness of the doctrine to the mind of Nicodemus, as well as his inability to apprehend it, find vent in his further utterance of astonishment: "How can these things be?" The Lord then proceeds to announce to him the wondrous fact and soul-

saving truth, that, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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." These precious words which the really anxious, though fearful, Nicodemus heard from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake, were declared to him, not that they should be received by the merely natural mind, but that they should be believed, through the power of the Spirit of God; that thus he might have eternal life. And it is cheering to find, in tracing his subsequent history, that they were so received, and that in the end he openly identified himself with the rejected and crucified One, with whom he first had this secret interview by night.

How blessed it is that now the Son of Man *has been* lifted up; that, as the sin-offering, He has put away sin—that He has finished the work which God gave Him to do; and that God is now speaking from heaven by His Son, pressing, and, as it were, beseeching sinners to be reconciled to Himself. But, as in the case of Naaman, who at first slighted the remedy which God had provided for him; as human reason would have been utterly at a loss to account for the life-giving power communicated through the serpent of brass, which

Moses, at the command of God, lifted up in the wilderness; and as Nicodemus, though a master of Israel, was unable by the power of his human understanding to comprehend the things of the Spirit of God: so, now, there are those to whom "the preaching of the cross" is "foolishness," who either, as the Jews, "require a sign," or, as the Greeks, "seek after wisdom." Still, as the great Ambassador for Christ says: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i.).

May you, then, beloved reader, be found not among those who "make God a liar" by not believing the record which He hath given of His Son, but of that blessed company which, through bowing to God's testimony to Him, and the perfection of His finished work, are saved by the grace and power of God.

T.

EMPTY VESSELS.

2 Kings iv. 1—7.

A WIDOW is the expression of helplessness; the human pillar of support is broken, and she is cast upon the Lord. The widow and the fatherless have a special care in his heart. He says, I will be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless. The poor widow who came sorrowing

to Elisha found not only the natural cistern broken, and the earthly well dried up, but that the creditor was about to lay his hand upon her, and take her two sons. In her distress she remembers the Lord, and therefore seeks Him through His prophet. The cry of need never reached His ears in vain. Faith never knocked at the door of life without getting an instant answer; nor does the heavy heart of a saint of God make supplication in vain. And as in the widow's case, "to him that hath more shall be given;" and, as in the case of the prophet's widow, the circumstances that seem to be a cause of anxiety are in His hands the source of blessing. "What hast thou in the house?" asks the prophet. "Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house save a pot of oil." "Go, borrow thee vessels, even *empty vessels*; borrow thee not a few." She acts at once, and what a result! every vessel full, and as long as she had a vessel there was the supply. The Lord is not the first to leave off, He did not in the day of Abraham in the matter of Sodom. No; the God of all grace knows no limits, but giveth liberally. Death had made havoc in the poor widow's hearth, and famine seemed ready to swallow her up and her two sons; but it was only an occasion for the display of His goodness who needs empty vessels to draw from His fulness. And having got such a large supply, she needs wisdom how to use it; and who

can give the wisdom but Him who has given the oil? The prophet says, "Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest."

When the heart of a christian gets the relief from pressure, and the supply is abundant, there is danger of independence, for our hearts are not to be trusted for a moment. As one once said, "It is better to go out of the house the Lord's cripple with His sufficiency, than to walk out in our own strength."

Pay thy debt! let the conscience be satisfied that there is no claim, and the heart can enjoy its peace.

Why do we often, when the pressure of trying circumstances is taken off, feel that that was a healthier time for the soul, than when all around was calm? Because those very circumstances brought us directly to Himself: our helplessness threw us upon Him, and we learnt to draw directly from His heart and His hand. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." "It is a good thing to both hope and quietly wait upon God." Haven't you, christian reader, found the water to spring up from the most unexpected spots? I have, times out of number. It is the waiting soul that gets the blessing.

Not only do we get from Him that which will meet every demand, but a supply all along the journey. As in another place the prophet Elijah

says, "the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruise of oil fail." So also said the prisoner Paul, "My God shall supply your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

I find so many Christians, who know their debt was paid by Christ, but who are fearful of the every-day life, forgetting who it is that cares for them with a Father's tender care—as though when the debt was paid the supply failed. Let the words of the prophet sink down into the heart of any such—live thou and thy children of the rest. He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. ii). And again, He that spared not his own Son how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.

"My Shepherd is the Lamb,
The living Lord who died,
With all things good I ever am
By Him supplied."

That was a fine note of praise a grateful and trusting heart sent forth, and its music has cheered the heart of many a one who was sinking because of the trial.

Why do souls not get what their hearts so much crave for? because they do not go to the fountain as empty vessels. I bless God when I was converted I knew nothing of doctrines, or creeds, or ceremonies, and all that I had to do was to *learn*. The *unlearning* is the sorest part, and oh, how the old thing cleaves to us—perhaps, for

years. If we go to the Word without *our thoughts*, our *judgment*, our *pre-conceived opinions*, all would be clear as noonday both for the conscience and the heart. A Saviour's work—a Father's care! Does one take an empty vessel to the ocean with a fear of its getting filled? Nor did the needy one ever go to Jesus without getting its need met, nor a troubled one make known its supplication with a thankful heart without getting the care removed, and the peace of God taking its place. Scripture says, we are "the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. ii.).

But when the vessel has been to the fountain, and got *cleansed* and *filled*, He looks for full vessels that shall refresh His heart—hearts full of praise and thanksgiving.

A poor murmuring christian was complaining to a brother, that she was a very leaky vessel. "Well, keep close to the fountain," said he, "that the water may run in as fast as it runs out!"

Perhaps I have gained the ear of an unconverted reader. What about the creditor and the debt? I want to tell you about Him who paid *my* debt. It was Jesus, the Son of God. He met every demand that justice had against me, debts righteously due, and which must be righteously paid. Forgiveness is not payment, but in God's sacrifice we get both: atonement and forgiveness. With the work of His Son God is well pleased, and His throne and honour so fully vindicated, that He

sends forth the glad tidings of forgiveness to every one that believeth on the name of Christ.

The day of settling may seem a long way off, but the day will surely come. You would not like to pass away with all your sins upon your shoulders, would you? And yet you cannot tell one moment from another when you may be called to give an account to Him with whom no prevarication or excuse will avail. I want to go abroad among my neighbours for empty vessels for Him to fill. His grace will not cease until there is no longer a vessel to fill. Then the vessels He has filled with grace here shall be taken away to the many mansions of the Father's house to be filled with glory.

Do you know what keeps my heart so intensely happy that it is perfectly satisfied? It is that God loves me; that Christ loves me; that the Holy Ghost leads my thoughts on in the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. You know how much we can do for those we love, and how we bear with their crooked ways, and if we can act so towards those whom our hearts are centered on, how much more shall He do towards those whom He loves with a perfect love—and blessed be His name He does lavish His blessings in such abundance that the heart is constrained to go out in worship.

I would knock at your door and ask, Is there an *empty vessel* in the house whom the Lord can fill—

yea fill to overflowing with His peace and love? Bring it out at once—to-morrow may be too late—for the oil may be stayed.

WHAT DOEST THOU HERE?

At a party given to some of the high and noble of the land, where everything was accumulated that could minister to the gratification of the flesh and of the mind, a lady—accosting a young gentleman, who had once made a high profession of following Christ, but who, alas, had turned back to the world—said to him, “I am surprised to see you here, Mr. ———. What can you want here? This is no place for you.”

Surely this was an arrow from the Lord, and should have pierced the heart of the one who was thus addressed. “If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Heb. x.)

DO YOU KNOW MY MASTER?

OLD Betty, as she was familiarly called in the little village of S—, was dying. She had reached the great age of ninety-two. She had been a wonderful woman in her way; always ready to lend a helping-hand to a neighbour in distress, and was highly valued for her sterling principles; she had lived for many years in an old thatched cottage at the end of the Park; was highly

respected by the great folks at the Hall, in whose family she had served from generation to generation. The little folks of the Hall very much loved the old nurse ; and at every festivity there old Betty was not forgotten. But now she lay dying—the tabernacle was falling to pieces, and the spirit ready to depart to Him who gave it.

Only a little while before, the old Vicar had left, and the new one had just taken up his abode at the vicarage. He was not long in becoming acquainted with the old lady at the cottage. A godly man, he sought souls for his Master. Finding old Betty was nearing her end, and not knowing that she was safe in Christ, one day, while at her bedside, he thought she seemed unconscious, and said to her, “ Well, Betty, do you know me ? ”

“ No ; ” was the reply.

“ Not know me, Betty ? ”

“ No.”

“ Do you know my Master ? ”

“ Who is he ? ” asked she.

“ The Lord Jesus Christ.”

“ Yes ; bless His holy name,” was the instant reply ; “ I’ve known Him a many years.”

“ And what is going to take you to heaven ? ”

“ Nothing but the blood of Christ.”

“ But have you not done a good deal for your children and grand-children ; for I hear you have been a good wife and mother, and an

excellent neighbour, will not all these things help you to get there? See how long and faithfully you have served the family at the Hall. Why, Betty, won't all this goodness help you a little?"

"No, Sir," replied the aged woman, with emphasis, "Nothing but my Lord—nothing but His precious blood."

More to the same purport passed between them, which shewed to the visitor how firmly she was grounded in Christ. And he knelt down beside her, and gave thanks to the Lord for the bright testimony the aged pilgrim bore to the precious blood whereby she was redeemed—and wherein she was washed.

What power there is in the name of Jesus—what sweetness and unction to the soul of one who loves Him, and is on the point of passing away to be with Himself. Do you know my Master? Do you know Jesus? That is sufficient to get an intelligent response from a heart that has tasted that God is gracious. So she died—with the foot firmly planted on the Rock of Ages.

That is what I would ask—Do you know *Him*? my reader; not know about Him or what He has done only; but do you know Jesus?

We are not in the habit of loving people we don't know, even if we are ever so familiar with their name and their deeds—but the person must be known to be loved. It is *He* who

attracts the heart down here, and claims its allegiance and devotedness ; and it is with Himself we are going to spend a blessed eternity. May you, my reader, know Him as your abiding, un-failing portion here and in the day to come—the day without a cloud to all who believe in Him.

DEVOTEDNESS.

THE present condition of things around us is bewildering and embarrassing in the extreme. It is a day of poverty and weakness. Boasting or assumption ill becomes those who have but “a little strength.” One has said, “If I look within I am miserable ; if I look around I am confounded ; if I look *up*, all is bright and beautiful : is it then not worse than useless to waste the moments that are passing in looking whence nothing can come but disappointment and vexation ?”

But some one may say, that is a beautiful theory : have we no responsibilities in the directions expressed in the words “within” and “around” ? and is it a matter of no importance that these should be answered ? The reply is, yes. And they are best sustained and met by setting the “mind on things above, not on things on the earth,” that is, occupation with Christ, where He is, is the way to the possession of that which nothing can cloud, dim, or take away ; and

when it is so, these responsibilities I have spoken of are fulfilled according to the thoughts and mind of Christ—a matter of primary importance to a true heart.

He that has Christ before him, as the One to be pleased, as the One whose interests are to be consulted, is the very one who will do the best for all under Christ according to His mind and His thoughts; and this, let it be observed, is not each one according to his own thoughts or judgment, doing what he thinks will suit Christ, but *first* learning from nearness to, and intimacy with, the Lord, what He would desire, and then going forth, undaunted by either difficulties or dangers, to accomplish that desire.

It is clear that before the desires of a person can command me, the *person himself* must stand out before me as an object. The desires of one whom I neither know or value, I should not care to make myself acquainted with; not so of one I valued and loved, how much more of one who has eclipsed and superseded everything else in my heart, and has no rival there. And this, I should say in starting, characterises devotedness. The one who is devoted is abstracted from all else by an object which has so completely engrossed the affection and occupies the heart, that all thought of self-interest, or any other interest, is buried in the one who is my object. For example, look at Mary, in John xx. What does she care for all

else but Christ? Nothing. The early dawn, while it was yet dark, found her on her way to the only spot on earth that had now an interest for her—the tomb of Jesus. And when she comes to find *Him* not there, how inconsolably does she tell her tale of sorrow to Peter and John : “ They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.” And what a contrast their ways to hers ! each satisfies himself of the accuracy of her report, and then they return to the circle of their interests on earth—“ their own home.” Oh, what a picture ! Not so Mary : she return home ? without *Him* she has no home, nothing. She is a true heart—very ignorant, no doubt ; ignorant, too, where she ought not ; yet, for all that, she is devoted ; see how she lingers about that empty tomb ! Is she not here like another Ruth, saying, “ Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried ?” But there is even more than this, for, if she is inconsolable without *Him*, and weeps as if her heart would break, see how she never calculates or measures for a moment ; poor, weak, feeble woman as she is in body, such is her love, that if she only knew where *He* is she is prepared to come and take *Him* away. *Him, Him, Him!* is the sum-total of her thoughts ; difficulties and hindrances she thinks not of. What a picture ! Prudence ever calculates ; devotedness never ! But there is even more, and a striking character-

istic, too, of one who is devoted ; for, when she finds Him alive, too, as He was, and not dead, the love that was inconsolable without Him, is prepared, now that she has seen Him, to do whatever He desires, though she never see Him again. (Verses, 16, 17, 18.) Beautiful picture of its kind it is ; presenting these two marked features of a devoted heart : first, and above all, the object Himself, and all else is nothing compared with Him. Second, and next to Himself, His wishes—His desires.

To sum up, then ; true devotedness consists in knowing Christ as the object that eclipses all others ; in finding that it is Himself that alone satisfies my heart, so that the circle of His interests and desires become the circle of mine : where He is, there I must be, and being where He is, that is, near enough to Him to know His desires and mind, I set myself to accomplish them, and in so doing I take no account of difficulties, dangers, hindrances, even as David's mighty men were, who, undismayed, broke through the hosts of the Philistines, that they might meet the desire of their Captain.

The one who is devoted is carried in a love that rises superior to everything in its way, and breaks through every host that stands to hinder or oppose. The Lord give His people in these last days so as to know and love His blessed Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave up His own precious

life to put aside and end before God the history of that which grieved His love, that entire devotedness to Him may be the character of those who know Himself, and have tasted of His love.

—*Extract.*

STAY ; choose not rashly, trembling heart,
For know'st thou not how griev'd thou art
If ever called upon to part,

E'en with one bound for heaven !
And, oh, we all are tried full soon ;
How many a morn grows dark at noon ;
And *Death* must rob of every boon
God hath in mercy given.

Be sure, if thou has turned thy face
Full heav'nward as thy destin'd place,
God must in His deliv'ring grace,

Provide a death scene here ?
So surely will the Jordan flow
In on thy heart—on all below,
And with'ring winds around thee blow ;
But thou shalt know Him near !

'Twere not enough, could we partake
Thy every thought, or joy, or ache ;
E'en could'st thou bring Him down to make

Sweet company with thee ;
He must away with all that clings
Of nature dust upon thy wings,
And then the emptied one He brings
Where none can walk but He.

Then He can call thy heart above,
And tell thee all His thoughts are love,
And give to thee—a heav'n-bound dove—

Blest fellowship with Him !
Whence streams of life within thee flow,
While death close round thee here below—
Then, and then only, shalt thou know
Devotedness to Him !

THE BLACK OMNIBUS.

EVERY morning, summer and winter through, the black omnibus passes my door, on its way to the Sessions House, to take prisoners who have not had sentence passed upon them, or to convey to prison those who have been condemned to suffer the penalty due to their misdeeds.

The sound of that heavy vehicle, with its solemn and monotonous rumble, causes a feeling of awe to creep over the heart, as one contemplates its solemn business, and the occupants of its narrow cells. Its very colour is in harmony with its character, for it savours of judgment; perhaps every one seated in its dark cells is under condemnation.

It may be there are those who have led a life of wickedness, and not detected hitherto, but at last justice has laid its iron grasp upon the evil-doer, and how shall he escape? Once within the firm grip of the law, when the guilt is brought home to the prisoner, it is vain to resist or to gainsay. Should he attempt to do so, he is soon overpowered. Directly the sentence has gone forth from the lips of the judge, the prisoner is handed off to the cells below, to await the close of the day, when all who have received sentence are carried off by the Black Omnibus to the prison in the suburbs.

It has often a motley group of passengers;

some hardened in crime—men, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron, and are lost to every sense of right and wrong: men, who by their lawless life have nothing to lose, and everything to gain, and with whom it is as a game of hazard, who risk the consequences in the chance of escape; but there is now and then one who in an evil hour, gave way to the temptation, and fell. What a dark cloud settles upon the soul of such, when the terrible sentence falls upon their ears. Torn from family links and ties, that twine round the heart as part of its existence; taken away from a scene of joy and usefulness, to be shut up in the gloomy walls of the prison house. That Black Omnibus always reminds me of that passage in the 5th chap. of John, where it says, “He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him.” And why does this terrible sentence hang over the head of the unconverted? Because God, in His great love to the sinner, has given His beloved Son to bear in His body the wrath due to the sinner; for while He loves the sinner, He hates the sin that has separated the creature from Himself. And, knowing how helpless man was to meet the demands of His holiness, He found out a way whereby He could put away sin in a manner that should glorify Himself, and bring salvation to the sinner. Redemption was God’s thought about the captive in prison, and the One to work it out was His only-begotten Son. It was the delight of

the heart of Jesus to do His Father's will; and though it was death—even the death of the cross—He shrank not from it. He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, who was ever well-pleased with His Son, and by whom He had been glorified on the earth, and to whom glory and honour were awarded, and a name bestowed above every name in earth or heaven. And, moreover, since the mighty work of redemption had been completed—wrought out by Christ—finished in such a manner that God could now act in mercy, He sends out news of this work which had been completed—tidings of gladness, that there was forgiveness of sins for all who come to Him by Christ—who believe in Him, and in the blood-shedding of that cross, where sin had been judged and put away. There is no mystery in the words that are published—the trumpet gives no uncertain sound; it declares plainly enough, that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” And if the sinner has heard such a clear, full, free gospel as is contained in that verse, and yet does not accept it, does he not deserve punishment? You, unsaved reader, may not be yet in the Omnibus, for it also reminds me of death, but it may be waiting just outside, ready to take away the unbeliever to the prison-house of judgment.

“How fond you are of that verse in John,” said one. “Indeed I am, when thinking of, or speaking about, God’s salvation.” It opens out the heart of God in His love to the poor world, and of His perfect willingness to save every one, whoever he is, and how ever vile he may have been—yea, to the uttermost all who come; save them, too, now, from Satan, sin, the sting of death, the power of the grave, and the terrible judgment that makes the stout heart to quail when but a little of its fearful reality is felt in the soul.

How willing God is to save! He brings His salvation nigh, so that there is no searching, or climbing, or seeking, on the part of the exercised sinner. “He is not far from every one of us.” “He is nigh to all them that call upon him.” If the heart only be lifted up in desire after Him, a full and gracious answer is given instantly—aye, though it be in the street. Many a one has been saved in the street, perhaps by the truth learned in a Sunday School when a boy, or a text gleaned from a tract, which has lain treasured up in the mind, and now bursts into light—for it is the *Word of God*, used by the Holy Ghost, that must bring about the change, and produce the new birth. Sometimes a Scripture that has been read scores of times suddenly comes home to the heart in convincing and converting power. There is power in God’s word.

If a soul really needs guidance, he has but to

ask in faith, to get the needed light. God has His own sovereign way of bringing home the truth to the conscience.

I was noticing a policeman's hat one day in the city, and saw under the city arms the well-known motto, "*Domine dirige nos*," (which means "O Lord, direct us,") and thought to myself, if that policeman's heart uttered the beautiful text that he bore upon his hat, he would get direction and guidance—and as Jesus says, "Every man that hath learned of the Father cometh unto me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." There is that text on every lamp-post in the city—if I remember rightly—and on the Viaduct it stands out in large characters. Of course, thousands pass who do not understand it—but if they wanted an interpreter, one could soon be found. A young companion once called my attention to it, giving its meaning, and it made a great impression on my mind, and occupied my thoughts for some time, the result of which was the following lines were penned :—

Who in this populous city
Casts up his eyes to the Lord—
Needing the love and the pity
Which he is shedding abroad,—
Longings for Him, underlying
All the sad glitter and gloss—
Earnestly, fervently crying,
"*Domine dirige nos !*"

Poverty, sorrow, and sadness,
Neighbours to honour and wealth ;
Mirth is abroad in its madness ;
Evil is thriving in stealth.
Man is absorbed with his pleasures,
Which his affections engross :
Seldom he cries as for treasures,
“ *Domine dirige nos !* ”

Motto of earth's greatest city,
High on the Viaduct hung,
Whose meaning, so full of sweet pity,
Is hid in a Foreigner's tongue ;
Words of deep import and blessing,
To such as may value the cross,
Whose cry is, as troubles are pressing,
“ *Domine dirige nos !* ”

Lord, Thou wilt give the direction,
Lovingly, thankfully sought,
Compassing with Thy protection
Those Thy Belov'd one hath bought.
Walking in grace and meekness,
Counting earth's glory as dross,
Cry we to thee in our weakness—
“ *Domine dirige nos !* ”

I once asked an Inspector of Police, if, when a man were received into the service, he chose or brought his own clothes. “Of course not,” he replied. Neither does the poor sinner have a choice in the matter. God has the robe—and it is His gift—in which a sinner saved by grace shall be clothed. The man who was at the supper without the wedding garment, was thrust into outer darkness—was put, so to speak, into the Black Omnibus and taken to judgment.

But I would rather speak of the grace of God, if I might win the unsaved one to Christ. Have you not sometimes regarded God as the one who was going to call you into judgment—as though there were no mercy with Him? Just as though He were an austere judge from whom you expected nothing but condemnation? Yet, if you carefully read the New Testament, or, say, the Gospel by John, or an Epistle like Ephesians, you cannot fail to see that, instead of condemnation, it is grace, mercy, and peace—and love as the foundation of all—and the arms of mercy held out towards you, so that you may be lifted out of death unto life.

What a different scene awaits the christian at the end of *his* course. Instead of a Black Omnibus and the terrors of judgment—it is a chariot of glory to convey him home. Nay, more than that, for the chariot of glory waited on Elijah to convey him upward; but for us who believe, it is the Lord Himself who is coming. How fitting and beautiful—the Bridegroom coming to receive the Bride; not sending for her, with a convoy of angels, but, as He said, “I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John xiv.)

If you, fellow-christian, were quite certain that Christ would come to-morrow morning, would you not like to keep awake all night to be the first to welcome Him? O! for watchful, wakeful hearts, yearning after Himself! “Come, Lord Jesus!”

A moment of time, and natural links will be broken—kindred ties snapped, never to be reunited. Having found Christ precious unto our hearts, we desire to make known His preciousness to others.

G. C.

THE KISS—THE ROBE—THE FEAST.

How full and free is the salvation of God, as manifested to us in the Lord Jesus Christ, and indicated in the figures of the Kiss, the Robe, and the Feast, given in the last of the three parables in Luke xv. Without now seeking to dwell upon all the wondrous truths contained in that parable, let us look at this salvation for a few moments, in the aspects in which it is presented to us in these three beautiful illustrations.

The Kiss. See how the returning and repentant prodigal is met and saluted by the father, in the earnest out-going of his love. There can be no doubt that the son, who had so grievously wandered and sinned, and who had manifested such ingratitude towards so gracious a father, would, as he drew towards the home that he had so unworthily left, have his misgivings as to the kind of reception with which he should be met. He well knew that He deserved to be treated with

coldness and severity; but before he could even make his confession, the father “prevented” him. Let us mark every stage of the gracious actings of his love, at this overwhelming moment, to the sorrowful and self-condemned one. “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.” Oh! marvellous love! Oh! wondrous grace! What could the son do in such a case, but unreservedly confess his sin, and own his total unworthiness of such overpowering love? It was impossible for him to cloud the sunshine of that time of love, by giving utterance to the thought which he had entertained in the distance, of asking to be made as one of the hired servants of his father. Not only could not such an expression come upon his lips, but surely it must have been banished from his heart. How blessed for those who know and have tasted the Love of God in Christ, to see the sure and permanent foundation upon which it all rests—“In WHOM (the Beloved) we have redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” (Eph. i.) “If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart;” and looking upon His only-begotten Son in all the perfection and fragrance of His one offering, He can give expression to the fulness of His grace and love even to the chief of sinners. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that,

as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. v. 20, 21.)

The Robe. The father, having assured the heart of the late sinful and wandering, but now repentant son, of the unreserved fulness and freeness of his forgiveness, thus sealed with the salute of love, immediately has him clothed worthily of the relationship in which he stood to him. "Bring forth the best Robe, and put it on him," is his authoritative direction to the servants. When the son was thus clothed, with the addition of "a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet," every vestige of his former wretched state and condition was gone, and in that Robe the father could look on him with pleasure and complacency. What a sweet figure of the glorious truth, that "He (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!" (2 Cor. v. 21.) Not only are we washed from our sins in the precious blood of Christ, and are now "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," but IN HIM who thus died for us, but who is now risen again, and ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, we are made the righteousness of God: so that, IN HIM, God sees those who are His children "by faith in Christ Jesus," in all the perfection of Christ. Oh! what a Robe, and what a Righteousness!

The Feast. Not only was the son thus received and robed by the father in the greatness of his love and grace, but his father had such joy in the return and reception of his son, that it must find its suitable expression in a feast. Hearken to his words: "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. And they began to be merry." Yes, there is, indeed, "joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." As the shepherd, when he brought home the lost sheep which he had found, rejoiced with such joy, that he called upon his friends and his neighbours to rejoice with him; as the woman, in the gladness of her heart at finding the piece of money which she had lost, called upon others to participate with her in her joy; and as the father said, "It was meet that *we* should make merry and be glad;" so, not only is there joy "in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," but the fulness of that joy is in the bosom of God Himself. And while it is shared in by all within the house, it is of such an overflowing character, that the only adequate expression of it, is in the eating of the "fatted calf;" setting before us, surely, the Father's delight in all the perfection of that One, who "offered himself without spot to God," on the ground of whose perfect sacrifice God can indeed "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”

OLD ZACKY AND HIS WIFE.

OLD Zacky Smith was well known in the Norfolk village, in which he had lived from childhood; but he was known, moreover, as a good old Christian—one who loved the Lord, and was not afraid to confess His name. Zacky's wife, too, was treading the same path, so it was heart to heart in divine things as well as in natural ones; and very pleasant it was at the close of the day, when the toil was over—the hard toil of the field with pick and spade, or the still more toilsome task of “grubbing” up the gnarled roots of an old tree that had sent its many fibres far and wide; very pleasant it was, I say, after the simple repast was over, when the aged couple sat down to the well-worn and well-known and well-trusted Bible. The Lord had a large place in that little cottage, a larger place than would be given Him in the mansion or in the palace. There was not much to bind old Zacky and his wife to things of earth. Many a long year ago their hearts had had such a taste of the grace of Christ, that they gave up the

world, though *their world* was not a rich portion, nor a fashionable portion, yet it was the world—albeit it may have been only the mud cottage and the potatoe garden they coveted—and now they were just waiting like pilgrims, at the top of the hill, after a long journey, to go in through the opened gates.

The old man was always ready with the word of life, by the road-side as well as at home. There was such a savour of reality about him in his blameless walk, that what he said had a power that often went home to the heart of the hearer.

One day old Zacky was busily employed in the middle of a stream, grubbing away at the root of an old tree that impeded the course of the current, for it was no longer of use nor ornament; it had one time sent forth goodly branches and rich foliage, but, as I judge, the lightning struck it, and left it only a blasted and shrivelled trunk. A neighbour's boy was passing by at the time, and said, "Well, Zacky! you have got a dirty job there."

"Ah, Johnny! 'taint for long," said the old man, smiling, "and I shall have done with the mud and the slush; only a little while, lad. I aint like this old stump here that wants such a heap o' work to get it out o' the stream. That's like a sinner; he's deep down in the mud o' sin, and the waters o' death are all round him, and if he is to be got out, some one else must come an' do it, that's

certain. May as well expect this old tree to get out of the stream, as a sinner to get out o' Satan's grasp by his own power. Some sinners need a good deal of pickin' and shovellin' and grubbin', afore you can move 'em; once out o' the old river, lad, it's rooted in Christ, and waiting for Him."

Now and then Johnny and the old man would have a little talk, and as Johnny said, it was "wondrous nice" to hear him talk about Jesus—words that have been treasured up in his memory since he became a Christian—words that cling about Johnny's heart with a sweet perfume long after the speaker had been taken home. It reminds me of the spouse in Canticles iv., who laid hold of the handle of the lock which the Beloved had just touched. She says, "My hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock." Ah! who can come in contact with anything that HE has left His impress upon, without smelling the savour of His presence? So it is when Jesus lays His hand upon a poor sinner, and draws him to His heart, there is a knowledge taken of him that he has been with Jesus.

A little while after, and the circumstances of old Zacky were changed. He and his aged wife were both ill—one in one room, the other in another. No clouds flitted across their sky, it was a sun-setting time; a radiance and a glory shone about them that was not lost upon others. The old man

was asked if he were all right. "Ah, yes!" said he, "if there be a bit o' trouble, it is because I can't just have a look at that poor old dear in there," motioning to the room in which his wife lay. The old man, in his simple manner, asked the Lord if they couldn't both go together. He had his request, for his wife fell asleep a few minutes after himself. They had travelled many a mile of desert together in the toil and struggle; they were not to be separated now—they went home in company; and, to speak in his own quaint language, it was "no pickin', nor shovellin', nor grubbin'" that they wanted; just a word from the Master's lips—"Come home!"—and the mattock of the field was dropped, and the bodies laid aside till the resurrection morn, when the sleeping ones shall wake up in His likeness.

THE LIFE-BUOY.

WHAT a world of sin and suffering this is! It is, indeed, a groaning creation, waiting "for the manifestation of the sons of God," when it shall "be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." (Rom. viii.) As one passes through the great thoroughfares, or the intricate windings of the Metropolis, while one sees on every hand abundant proofs of the goodness and mercy of God

God, to His erring creatures, how much of ungodliness and wretchedness thrusts itself upon one's observation. The effect of this upon the softened spirit of one who knows in his own soul the grace of God, as manifested in the gift of His dear Son, has been thus expressed :—

“THAT GREAT CITY.”

Whene'er one treads the mighty City's streets,
That busy hive of human industry,
How much is seen that pains th' anointed eye !
What cause for grief the godly Christian meets !
At ev'ry turn are Satan's vile deceits :
Wealth's dingy mine ; Ambition's airy tower ;
The noisy Revel ; Pleasure's tempting bower ;
The World's guilt wares ; and Sin's impure retreats.
And yet there walk, amid the thronging crowds,
Some godly souls preserved by power Divine,
On whom the beams of heavenly Mercy shine,
Whose hearts and hopes are set above the clouds.
How blest the Grace that keeps its flag unfurled,
In Love and Pity, o'er a guilty world !

I was led recently into such a train of thought on reading a short but sorrowful account of a young woman who threw herself from the Thames Embankment into the river, and was drowned. Poor creature ! whatever might have been the cause of her rash act, she was unquestionably in a desperate and desponding state of mind, blinded and driven by Satan, that remorseless and unpitying foe to the souls of men, whether they are enjoying “the pleasures of sin for a season,” or are in the anguish of utter wretchedness and woe.

It being noon-day when the poor woman thus rushed to her destruction, her act was observed, not only by some of the passers-by on the Embankment, but by some travellers on board a steamboat, the captain of which steered immediately to where the poor creature was. There was a life-buoy on board, and this was thrown out to the sinking woman; but so determined was she upon accomplishing her wretched purpose, that, it is said, she refused to avail herself of the proffered help, and, consequently, almost immediately sank.

How many—alas!—act in as suicidal a manner with respect to their precious souls. Eternal life is presented to the sinner in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in how many instances it is rejected! As the Lord said to the Jews, “*Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life*” (John v. 40); and as He also said to Nicodemus, in the 3rd chapter of the same Gospel, (ver. 18,) “He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, *because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten son of God.*” Possibly the wretched woman was unable, in her exhausted condition, to lay hold of the life-buoy which was thrown to her; but God does not require that the sinner should have the least particle of strength in order to be a partaker of His salvation, for He has declared to us that man is “without strength.” The work

has been finished by Christ Himself on the cross, and God has testified to His satisfaction with that work, by raising Him up from the dead, and giving Him glory ; and all He looks for from the sinner, in order that he may be saved, is, that he should believe His testimony concerning His Son. How solemn, then, it is to choose destruction, when eternal life is thus presented in the fullest, freest grace to the sinner by God Himself.

The act of the Captain in taking his vessel near to the drowning woman, and the placing of the life-buoy within her reach, were proofs of his willingness to save the poor creature from a watery grave, whether she was willing to accept his proffered kindness or not. And, surely, God has proved His willingness that sinners should be saved, for "in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." It is likewise declared of Him, that He wills (or desires) "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 4.) It is also written, that the Lord "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter iii. 9.) Hearken, too, to what the Lord Jesus said to Jerusalem, that city which had been favoured with so many privileges, but which it had turned against itself: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are

sent unto thee, how often *would I have gathered thy children together*, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, *and ye would not !*" (Luke xiii. 34.)

Mark the contrast : "*I would,*" but "*ye would not.*" Oh, poor sinner, how canst thou reject such grace ? May God incline thy heart to lay hold of the Life-Buoy presented to you in the Person and perfectly finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn not away from it, lest the last time of its presentation may have come ; "*for yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry*" (Heb. x. 37). God grant that thou mayst not have the anguish of reproaching thyself with the thought that when He called thou didst refuse, when He stretched out His hand, thou didst not regard it, but didst set at nought all His counsel, and wouldst have none of His reproof.

T.

DEATH'S STING IS GONE ; OR THE SINLESS ONE HAS DIED.

HAVE you ever seen a Bee that had lost its sting ? Suppose such an one were buzzing about the room at this present time, and you knew it had stung your friend ; you would say, There it is, poor little thing, but it is quite harmless now, for it has left its sting in another, and therefore can never sting

again. It may buzz about our ears as usual, and make a great noise, or even lodge upon us ; and did we not know that its sting was gone, we might feel timid, and shrink back from it with alarm. But now we can let it buzz on without the least fear, because we know that its venom is taken away

Just so is it with the believer who knows his happy place in Christ. To him death has lost its sting—its terror is gone, because it has stung the *Sinless One*, the Holy, Harmless, Undeiled, the Lord of Glory ; the only One upon whom death had no claim. He put Himself in the sinner's place, and gave Himself up to death's cruel grasp ; laid bare His breast, and received its deadly pang in all its painful gloom, so that, by passing through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death (Heb. ii. 14). By dying, the Lord Jesus paid the penalty due to sin to the uttermost. He then made death His prisoner, and left it behind Him in the grave for ever.

He knew that none but He Himself could do this ; therefore He left His throne of glory, and went to the cross, and the tomb—drank the bitter cup to the very dregs, and then led captivity captive, and thereby deprived death of all its dreadful power. Yes, let it be known through all the earth, the Son of God put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. ix. 26). The guiltless died in the place of the guilty. And though death

may still buzz about our ears as usual, like the little Bee with its weapon gone, and be very terrible to those who know not the joy of sin forgiven, and life everlasting ; but to the intelligent child of God, it comes as a welcome messenger of peace and love, to call his happy soul away to the Paradise above, sweetly buzzing him off to sleep, so that by-and-bye he may wake up again in the full enjoyment of eternal glory. It is in this way that "*Death is ours ;*" and like the little Bee, it comes loaded with honey in all its sweetness and joy for all who are in Christ Jesus. (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.) How many there are who have a longing desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better (Phil. i. 23). They would welcome death at any time as one of their chief joys. They have obtained the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1. Cor. xv. 57.) Once they dreaded death as an enemy, but now they find Him a smiling friend.

Yes, Jesus died and rose again, and, by dying, conquered death, burst its cruel bands, and threw the gates of heaven wide open to all who believe in His name, blotting out their transgression, and giving them eternal life and glory. Resurrection life—Life beyond death—Life on the other side of the tomb ; therefore, neither death nor the grave has now any claim upon those that believe in Him, since the Lord of Glory passed through both in their stead.

They may be called upon to sleep in the grave

for a short time should He tarry, but, at the most, it will only be a little while. (Heb. x. 37. Rev. xxii. 20.) Then that same Jesus who died and rose again, will come and wake them up to dwell with Himself for ever, He will descend from heaven with a shout. His sleeping ones will come forth to meet Him in the air, and go back with Him at once to the Father's house, the mansion above, that home of glory, the place which He has prepared for them.

At the same time we who are alive, and remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, and never sleep at all, nor know what death or the unclothed state is—mortality will be swallowed up of life. The Lord Jesus will change their vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body (2 Cor. v. 4. ; Phil. iii. 20. 21). This is what is called in Scripture, "*That blessed hope*" (Titus ii. 13); and they who know the joy of it, in any little measure, can truly say it is so. Is it not blessed indeed to rise in the morning, knowing that we may see His face and hear His voice before the evening? And to lay our heads on our pillow at night, with the sweet thought, that we may be with Him before the morning with bodies like His own, to enjoy His company in unclouded glory.

This sweetens life's bitter cup, and bids our sorrow cease, for oh! what eternal joy will that happy morning bring. It will indeed be

a morning without clouds, as clear shining after rain, to all who are ready for it—all who have seen the worthlessness of their own poor worthless selves and all that they can do, and have found their all in the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah liii. 5, 6.)

Then again, the little Bee by stinging not only lost its sting, but at the same time procured its own destruction, as it cannot survive long. It can never sting again. It has lost its power, and must soon perish. So is it with death, by its having stung the Guiltless, Spotless Son of God, it sealed its own destruction. Though it may seem to go on as usual for a time, yet its doom is fixed, God's word is certain, and its end will be that it will perish for ever. Hence in the new earth there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither will there be any more pain, for the former things will have passed away. (Rev. xxi. 1—8.)

Oh! what a glorious future is opened to our view in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; and how sure and certain it is to all who believe in His name. Sure, because it is finished, and it is He Himself who has done it, therefore the question is settled for ever. (Heb. x. 14.)

Did you ever see an unbeliever die with the

full sense of sin upon him ? if so, you have seen the truth of that Scripture which tells us, that "the sting of death is sin" (1 Cor. xv. 56). The pain of body was nothing, when compared to the thought of meeting God with sin unforgiven. Then on the other hand, have you seen a christian fall asleep in Jesus with the full knowledge of sin put away by the precious blood of Christ ? (1 John i. 7.) Then you have indeed seen one for whom death had no sting—its bitterness was gone.

I have seen many such, and it was so with one at whose bed-side I sat a short time back. Death was staring him in the face, and he knew it was only the question of a few hours at most.

He pointed to God's word that was laying on the table, and, smiling, said. "I am not afraid, because I believe what God has told me in that book, and I know that my sins are for ever gone. I am as sure of being with Christ in glory, as I should were I already there."

And another, after speaking for some time about the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that will follow, said, "With this blessed hope before me, I can lay my head back on my pillow, and welcome my last breath with as great delight as I ever welcomed anything in my life."

Oh ! the power and the preciousness of that precious name, the name of Jesus.

AN UNEXPECTED GIFT.

A poor christian was one day cast down, being in trouble, having to meet a demand for which he was not prepared; but he called to mind the words of the Lord, "Cast your care upon him, for he careth for you;" and therefore, "with thanksgiving made known his requests unto the Lord." Whilst he was asking, the answer was on its way. The first post brought a letter, containing that which not only met the demand, but more than enough. The poor man was taken by surprise, as it came from an unexpected quarter, with the words, "for his acceptance."

But what is this to the gift of God to a poor heart troubled about its condition? It has been waiting "for his acceptance" a very long time, and will not only meet his present need, but will be a source of blessing all his days down here, and through eternity. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The poor man opened the letter, there was the cheque—"pay the bearer." It was taken to the bank, and the money was handed over. That cheque did two things: it paid the debt, and filled the poor man's heart with joy and thanksgiving. It is a feeble figure, but will it not illustrate what a sinner receives when he receives Christ: the terror and the trouble replaced by forgiveness and peace?

I, for one, can say that when I got Christ, I

got more than ever I expected—more than human thought could conceive ; not only relief from the pressure of trouble, but such a sense of His love, that there seemed no room in the heart for anything but gratitude, and adoration, and praise. Don't rest satisfied, fellow christian, that you have got a relief for the conscience without having something for the heart. I believe the reason of much dwarf stature in the divine life is the result of this contentment of relief for the conscience which is met by the blood, and stopping short of the right desire of the renewed heart, which is the Person of Christ. The more we get occupied with Him, the more we are engaged with the thoughts of the Father who delighteth in the Son. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."

EXTRACTS.

SOME one may say with Paul, "I am the chief of sinners—I have sinned with a high hand." Well, if you have you need not wait another minute without being able to join Paul in saying, "But the Lord had mercy on me." Can you say it? If this hour were to be the hour of your departure, could you say, "I am a subject of His mercy, for Christ died for me, and I believe it; Christ is mine, and I know it?"

Do you complain of coldness and deadness, and say you cannot believe? The reason is, you do not go *to the truth*, the very thing to be believed; you do not go down upon the Rock, the truth; not so much in books, or sermons, or services, but *in His Word*, where God speaks to you for salvation. Oh! fix your faith on the immutable Word of God, and you *are* a believer, and have *peace* in believing.

READY FOR FLIGHT.

To think of the coming again,
Of the One whom I love and revere,
Instead of its giving me anguish and pain,
Or causing a shadow of fear—
Fills my soul with such holy delight,
That I cannot do aught but rejoice;
And I oftentimes wake from my slumbers at night,
To list, as it were, for His voice.
The thought of His coming again—
That One I have trusted and love;
To be before Him without blemish or stain,
And fit for His presence above:
Why, it makes me more ardently sing
Of the *manner* in which I am blest,—
And I'm just like a bird that would fain flap its wing,
And rise from its own little nest.
On the top of the tree I would perch,
Till the first dawn of morning should break,
That for *me* He might not have the thicket to search,
But find me already awake.

O would that my notes might arouse,
As they fall on a sleepy one's ear—
Who is hidden away in the soft, leafy boughs,
Unconscious the serpent is near.
I have nothing to do but to sing,
(*Himself* is the sum of my song)
And so I'd continue until He shall bring
The moment I've wished for so long.
All's clear ! both within and without,
Through the grace of my Father to me—
So the trump, and the voice, and the archangel's shout,
Are things that I think of with glee.
The robber may come in his stealth,
Though it scarce would his trouble repay,
For I'm not overburden'd with treasures or wealth,
Or things he would carry away :
The moth may my garment divest
Of its beauty ; and rust may corrode ;
But they can't touch *the garment* in which I am drest,
To appear in yon blessed abode.
The Lord is my treasure and trust—
My joys are all under His care ;
Nor mildew nor moth, nor robber nor rust,
Nor Satan, can penetrate there !
Poor sinners may well be afraid,
And flee from the sight of His face ;
He's presently coming in terror array'd,
To those who've rejected His grace !
But, surely I've nothing to fear
From the One I expect from above,
Who daily and hourly becometh more dear,
The more that I learn of His love.
Of His love, and His praise, and delight,
In singing I never shall tire ;
And, oh ! may He find me as happy and bright,
As His heart would expect and desire.

A RURAL VISIT.

WHILE staying in the country with a christian friend a short time back, I heard of a village of peasants, about two miles off, who were not allowed to hold any religious meetings of any kind in the village. The whole of it was under the control of one man ; and if any of the cottagers had a few of their neighbours come together into their cottage for prayer, there was only one law for them, and that was, they must give up their cottage, and so leave the village.

I therefore went with some tracts, thinking to leave one at every house, and also hoped that I might be able to speak a few words to the inhabitants individually about their souls, by telling them of Jesus and His love, how He left His throne of glory and came into this world, and died that they might have everlasting life.

The village consists of about forty houses, very pleasantly situated on the side of a little hill facing the west. The men were mostly in the fields at work, and some of the cottage doors were fastened, the cottagers being out doing their appointed tasks in various ways ; while some few were employed at home. Those I could get access to received me very kindly, and accepted with thankfulness the little papers and books I had to give.

On my offering a tract to one old lady, and at the same time repeating to her that beautiful verse in the third of John, "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," she looked at me very solemnly, and said, "Yes, this is love indeed ! How unlike it is to everything of earth ! What does the world do for you ? What has it done for me ? I have been bustling about in it all my days, and it has left me a poor old woman, scarcely able to help myself, or walk across the room. But I have nothing to complain of ; my needs are all supplied ; I enjoy my morsel with God, and am happy !" Then putting her right hand on her breast, with her eyes beaming with joy, she said "I have Christ here !" And then, raising the same hand, with her eyes towards heaven, she said, "I also have Christ up there, and I value a kind word spoken for Him in this world more than I do all the treasures of earth !"

I said, "This delights me very much, to hear you speak in this way. How long have you known the Lord Jesus, and been so happy ?"

She replied, "I have, through mercy, known Him many years ; but I was so fully occupied with the world while I was able to work, that I had but little time for reading God's precious word ; but now I can do so to my heart's content, and my joy is indeed full. I long to behold Him

who loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood; and I know I shall soon do so. When a few more days are ended, I shall see His face, and be with Him for ever."

We, having spoken a few more words together of that blessed Saviour who was so precious to each of our souls, and whose face we both longed to see, I took my leave of her, and left her humble abode with feeling of the greatest delight, knowing I shall surely meet her again in everlasting glory: because 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." (John v. 24.) We could therefore rejoice together in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. v. 2; Col. iii. 3, 4.) Knowing that heaven and earth will pass away, but His word never will.

I called at a few more cottages, giving in a tract and speaking to each individual as I had the opportunity, and soon came to another clean old lady's door, and offering her a little book, I smilingly said, We are going to heaven, will you go with us?"

She did not smile again, but mournfully replied, "I hope I am going to heaven, sir; but sometimes I am very much afraid I am not!"

I said, "How is it that you are so uncertain about it? Is not Christ sufficient for you? Does not His blood cleanse from all sin? Is He not now at the right hand of God for us? and is not His

love the same at this moment, as when He died and rose again ?

She sorrowfully replied, "Oh yes, I know His love is unchangeable, and I know that He has done all things well ; everything which is needed for our salvation He has accomplished ! The fault is my own : I am so unlike Him in every way, that I very much doubt whether I ever can be with Him in glory ; though the hope I sometimes have of being there fills me with delight, and it is all my joy and all my desire. I ought to be ashamed to tell you, sir, but the truth is, my heart is so deceitful ; it is so little stayed on the Lord, and ever ready to run after every little thing but Him, however trifling it may be ; and it grieves me continually to know it is so. I strive against it, but seem to have no power."

"I can truly feel for you," I replied, "I know what it is to have suffered very much from the same thing myself, I therefore know the cause of your misgivings, and also the reason why you have so little power in your soul. You have not yet found your all in Christ, by believing in Him you forget that He is in the presence of God for you, this being the case, how can you do anything else but doubt ; because you are looking at what you yourself are, and not at what Christ is for you. And you see yourself so unfit for God's presence that you think you never can be there. Neither could you ever be, did it depend upon what you are. But

it does not; it depends on what Christ is for you, in the presence of God. And He is for you everything you can possibly need, either in this world or in that which is to come. He has borne your grief and carried your sorrows. He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Therefore it is your privilege, and should be your delight, to turn away from yourself altogether, and think of Him and His precious blood. You would then be happy by seeing yourself in Him, who is altogether lovely, because believers are accepted in the Beloved, (Eph. i. 6.) and are loved of God as He is loved. (John xvii. 23.) Realizing this, you will have joy and confidence in your soul, and power to walk so as to please Him in this world. We get power to walk for God down here just in proportion as we are occupied with Christ up there."

She then said, "Ah, sir, but I have not walked for God as I ought. I have not been faithful; indeed I am just the opposite to what I ought to be. I wish it was not so! Sometimes when I am quite alone, reading my Bible, I am happy, very happy, and can forget this world, and all its cares. But I so soon lose my joy, and have to go on again in sorrow and darkness without any assurance of soul. The Lord Jesus says, "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. But I hear His voice so seldom, and follow Him so feebly, that I often think I am none of His."

I said, "But I am sure you are; and if I were to be looking at myself, and my walk in the way you are, I should be filled with darkness and sorrow, and should have the same doubts and fears which you have. But we are never told in God's word to do so, but to look unto Jesus, and remember that it is in Him we stand, and that it is in His loveliness that we are so lovely and precious in God's sight. We never get any good by looking at ourselves or anything down here upon earth; because our heart always becomes filled with whatever we are looking at. Therefore, if we are looking at this world, through which we are passing, our hearts get filled with it; and if at ourselves, then our heart becomes full of self; or if with each other, then we get occupied with each other. But if we are looking at Christ, then our hearts are filled with Him; and so beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are thereby changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. We can never walk properly for God, only as we are enjoying Christ in our souls; and if our hearts are not filled with Him, present things are sure to fill them, in one way or another, so producing darkness of mind. But when we are full of Christ, then we are strong and happy. But if with other things, then we

are weak and sorrowful." We must have to do with the world as we pass along, but how happy to remember that we are not of the world even as Christ is not of the world, this gives real power.

She answered, "I know it to be so, and I am a great loser; but I do not think of the world because I delight in it; neither do I look at myself because I am pleased with myself, for I myself am the most loathsome thing I know. I hate my life because of sin; for I seem made up of it. It is interwoven with all I do or say. And as for the world, there is nothing in it but I would be glad to forget for ever, if I could. But I cannot; the world seems in my heart."

I said, "Neither will it be otherwise, until you give Christ His right place. Then you will be able to forget the world and all its cares, knowing that He careth for you. (1 Peter v. 7.) Your heart being filled with Him, there will be no room in it for other things. The world will lose its hold upon you, and you will be able to pass in and out, doing your little duties in it; knowing that you 'are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world.' It will then be under your feet, instead of being in your heart, and the joy of the Lord will be your strength to walk so as to please Him. We are told to 'rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice.' We are never told in Scripture to rejoice in ourselves, or in circumstances, or in each other; but in the Lord. It is

quite right to loathe ourselves because of sin, and those who love God will surely do so ; but, on the other hand, believers should be always rejoicing in Christ, knowing that He has died that we might live, and His blood cleanseth from all sin, it makes us whiter than snow before God ; we are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son—so that our proper home is the Father's house, and we are on our way to it. And feeling as we do our weakness and infirmities as we pass along, should make us cleave to Him all the more ; but we ought not to allow these things to fill us with doubts and fears, but on the other hand it is our privilege to look on with joy to that happy day when the Lord Jesus will come and take us to Himself, and change these vile bodies, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. Then we shall be like Him indeed. We shall then have up there that which we have so longed for down here."

She then said, " You will not understand, sir, that I give way to sin. I thank God this is not the case. They think me very good, and speak of me as such ; but it is not what I do, but it is what I am in myself which gives me so much sorrow."

I replied, " No, I do not think for one moment that you give way to sin ; you hate it too much to do that : but what you want is power to enjoy God in your soul, and honour Christ before men.

And this you will get the very moment you give Him His right place in your heart, by taking Him as your all."

She answered, "This is what I do desire; and I know He is honoured by a happy trust in all He has said and done; and I ought not to dishonour Him by doubting His word. And I do hope, for the future, I shall not be so, but be enabled to look away from myself and sin and the world, and everything connected with it, and find my rest and joy in Christ alone."

I said, "I pray God that it may be so with you: so will your remaining days on earth be more to the glory of God and the blessing of your own soul. And you will also be a blessing to those about you, because when we are enjoying Christ ourselves, God often makes us the happy instrument of helping others to enjoy Him. Being happy ourselves, we help others to be happy."

She then thanked me very much, and I took my leave of her, being fully assured that when we met again it would either be in the glory with Christ, or seeking to glorify Him upon earth.

I then went into all the other cottages which I could get access to, and found two more feeble, doubting ones, but who, I fully believe, I shall meet again in that day of glory.

But in these two cases which I have attempted to describe, I think we have a clear description of that which makes the difference between a happy

and an unhappy christian in this world—because they were both children of God—both heirs of glory through faith in Christ, and were both on their way to the Father's house, where they will enjoy His company for ever. But that which made such a great difference to their joy and peace as they passed along through this world was : the one was occupied with *herself and the things around her*, and therefore was full of *weakness and sorrow* ; but the other was occupied with *Christ and glory*, and therefore was full of *joy and strength*. And this is always the case. If you find a christian who is unhappy, you will always find he is thinking of himself or something down here which is not Christ ; but on the other hand, if you find a truly happy christian, you will find the Lord Jesus to be the great theme of his soul. And it must be so, if we wish to honour Him, for all our springs are in Him. We need Him for every step of our journey, as well as we do to first take us up. We can no more walk by our own strength than we can save our own souls. We need Christ for the one the same as we do for the other—without Him we can do nothing. (John xv.) H. T.

THE HIGH TIDE.

I SUPPOSE that all have heard of the high tide with which the river Thames has recently been visited ; when the water rose considerably above its usual

elevation, and overflowed its banks, carrying with it much damage and danger to the low-lying districts over which it ran. A great amount of property, both of business firms and of the working classes, was injured or destroyed; and life itself was endangered. One instance was that of a man, who, being floated away on the water, was only saved by clinging to a lamp-post; another was that of a woman who was rescued by her husband, after the water had reached her arm-pits; and in one house, two dear little children who were asleep, in all the happy unconsciousness of infancy, were snatched out of bed by their alarmed mother, just in time to save them, the water having risen to the bed clothes. It appears that this tide is the highest that has occurred within living memory, and it is stated that the probability of its occurrence upon the very day on which it came, was predicted, at the beginning of the year, by a person who makes such matters his study.

This remarkable rising of the waters of the river brought to my mind that highest of all tides which came, as the visitation of God, in the days of Noah, when "all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered,"—and when "all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every

living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." That was a terrible judgment, when "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." That was, indeed, such an overflowing of the waters as never was witnessed before, and never will be seen again; the Lord having promised that "the waters shall no more become a flood, to destroy all flesh." At that time was every spring and source of the waters unlocked; for "the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the floodgates of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." What an awful and overwhelming flood was that, when all flesh, excepting the preserved few, perished in the waters! But its victims were not overtaken without warning; for the Lord had said to Noah, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." So, that He, who in judgment remembers mercy, gave man all that time to repent. Noah, himself, with the wisdom that was from above, heard and heeded the warning which God had given of the coming judgment, "and prepared

an ark to the saving of his house ;” so that, when the flood came, the very waters which were the cause of the destruction of the ungodly, became the means of his deliverance. The flood, which deluged them in its depths, buoyed him, and all that were with him in the ark, towards the heavens, and floated him on to the restored earth, after that “the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.” What a beautiful type of that eternal deliverance which there is in Christ, for every soul that flees unto Him for salvation, in this time of the long-suffering of God, who is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance!” And how blessed it is to see, that the judgment of God, which of necessity must visit “with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,” those “who know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,” is on the side and behalf of all those who have trusted in Christ; because He has borne its billows for them as the sin-bearer on the cross. So that, as the waters of the flood could not touch those whom the Lord had shut in the ark; “there is therefore now no condemnation (or judgment) to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

There is yet another mighty flood about to rise upon this world; not, indeed, a deluge of waters, but the flood of the judgment of God, which shall overwhelm “all that are ungodly,” and that

are rejecters of His grace which is in Christ Jesus. This judgment will be universal, resting upon all the inhabitants of the world, from the beginning to the end of time, who have lived and died in their sins. This grand climax of the ways of God in judgment is thus described in the solemn words of divine inspiration : "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell (hades) delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell (hades) were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the Lamb's book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx.)

See, then, dear reader, that your name may be found written in the Book of Life through your now believing in the name of the only-begotten Son of God ; so that when the terrible sentence of God is pronounced upon every soul who is judged according to his works, and the overwhelming weight of that judgment falls upon all

such, you may not be found amongst them ; but of that blessed company, who shall for ever proclaim the praises of the Lamb, who has “redeemed to God by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

“HERE HE IS, I HAVEN’T LOST HIM.”

FROM one, among the poor dying men at a London Workhouse, came a call to go and visit him. It was only a few months before this, that his son, to whom the Word of God had come home with quickening and saving power, had been taken away to be with his Lord and Saviour for ever, where all is light, love, and liberty. His son had greatly rejoiced in Him who had saved him from sin, death, and everlasting wrath. He was very, very happy in the Lord Jesus, in whom alone is *true* peace and joy to be found. The father had been a witness to the fact, that the entrance of God’s word into his son, had proved to have been light from darkness, and life from the dead. The father was exceedingly fond of his son, whose death made a great impression on him, and being already himself in ill health, it was not long before he had to be taken to the Workhouse, and there to be placed in the sick ward. It was very trying for him, but as he and all his friends were very poor, there was nothing else to be done. He had

always been a steady, respectable man, though he had never attended any place of worship for about thirty years; but then, happily, the favour and love of God, are not dependent on man's going to a place of worship. God is sovereign, and He can and will act in love, when, how, and on whom He pleases. This poor man had been led to read the word of God for himself, and God, the Holy Spirit, made that word come home to his soul with saving power. In that word he read how God had given His only-begotten Son to die for poor lost sinners, even the very chief and vilest of the vile. He read how Jesus had borne the sins of all who believe on Him in His own body on the cross. He read how He had taken, in the place of the believing sinner, *all* the wrath and judgment of God due to the sinner. He read how He had finished His work on the cross, and how God had, therefore, raised Him from the dead, and had glorified Him in heaven. But poor man, he had despised this Saviour whom God had glorified, and this great salvation. He had neglected it for many years. He had turned his back on God and gone on in his own ways, instead of loving God and delighting to do His will. Nevertheless, God had loved him, and now, as he read the word of God and read of these things, he became conscious of his great sin in having rejected the Son of God, and refused His love.

He felt how deserving he was of eternal judg-

ment, and his heart was melted and broken on account of sin ; but, blessed be God, that word which had smitten would also heal, for it told him of the blood of Jesus, God's Son, that cleanseth from all sin, and that there was a free, full, and eternal pardon to every one who believed in Jesus. He did believe in Jesus, and owned Him as his Lord and Saviour, and in believing he found his peace had been made with God ; that Christ in the presence of God was his peace, and so in receiving Christ, by faith, he had perfect peace with God. He knew he was pardoned, and that God for Christ's sake would never remember his sins any more.

The Good Shepherd had for no less a time than fifty-eight long years followed this lost sheep, which he would follow and follow, and never cease to follow, until He had found him and got him on His shoulders, carrying him home with joy : for God does rejoice in the presence of His angels over every sinner that believes in Jesus. It was so with this poor workhouse patient. Jesus had saved and rejoiced over him, and he now was rejoicing in Jesus. It was so as one entered this sick ward, and sat down near this poor man, there were then beams of joy in his face. He was lying with his eyes gazing upwards, and by faith he could see Jesus in the glory. He had one hand outstretched, and his lips were moving as if in prayer. He did not at first know the visitor, but

when he had shouted in his ear, he remembered him, and grasping his hand, looked up with a heavenly smile, and with broken accents exclaimed, "Oh, sir! I am so glad you have come, I have so much wished to see you! Oh, sir! I do love Him so, I do! He has taken *all* my sins, He has not left me a farthing to pay, and Jesus loves me. HE WILL TAKE ME TO HIS FATHER'S FEET, AND WILL SAY, FATHER, HERE HE IS, I HAVEN'T LOST HIM! Oh, sir! Jesus is all my hope! all my hope!" Christ, the full Christ, was indeed his, and all his salvation, hope, and joy.

What wonderful love! Jesus would not give him up. He had loved him with everlasting love: with that love which is stronger than death and which many waters cannot quench. He would never give him up, but would, and did, go on, and on, and on after His lost sheep, until He found it, and then giving it eternal life, put it into His Father's hands, and he shall never perish, and no one shall pluck him from the Father's hand.

Not one whom God has given to Christ, not one whose name has been written from before the foundation of the world in the Lamb's book of life, shall or can be lost; for the blessed Lord Jesus has made Himself responsible to His Father to bring every son of His home to glory. Jesus has undertaken this, and He will never be satisfied until the last one of His lost sheep is found

and safely housed, when He will lay it at His Father's feet, and say, *Here he is, Father, I haven't lost him!* The demands of infinite justice were infinite, but Jesus fully met and satisfied all these demands. Not one sin did He leave on him who believes in Jesus: He bore them all, and His blood cleanses from all. Not one drop of judgment did He leave for him who believes in Jesus to drink, for God's Son drank it all up to the very last drop, so that there is no condemnation to the believer, and he shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. It is God, who being satisfied, now justifies all who believe in Jesus; who then shall or can condemn?

It is a blessed fact that not one whom God gave to His Son shall be lost—*not one!* But reader are *you* one? was *your* name written in the Lamb's book of life, from before the foundation of the world? I fancy you ask, "But how can I know?" that is very easy indeed; there is not the least difficulty in knowing whether God gave you to Christ before the world. Do you ask how? well, I will tell you. Believe in Jesus, confess Him to be your Lord and Saviour, believe in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, and you shall be saved. You have only to take God at His word, and believe what He has written in His Holy Scriptures, you have on your part, only to accept Christ Jesus as God's Son, and as your Lord and Saviour, and what He has completely done on the

cross, and then you shall have eternal life in Christ, and peace with God, whom you shall have and know as your Father, being born of God. Thus believing you shall be saved, and know that from all eternity God loved you. His Son too, loved you, and so much so, that He took upon Himself the whole cost and responsibility of coming after you, and finding, and saving you with a great and everlasting salvation.

Why then neglect so glorious a Saviour, and so great a salvation? you *cannot* escape, if you do the Lord Jesus is coming again and will not tarry. Why then not bow your heart in simple, childlike faith and confess Him now while you read this, yea, this moment, stop reading, look up and in truthfulness from your heart, say, Jesus! Lord, I believe that Thou art the Son of the living God; my Lord, and my Saviour, who loved me and died for me. And then peace like an even river will flow in you, and by faith you shall see your name written in heaven. Be ye then reconciled to God—be ye saved, and then once again there shall be joy in the presence of the angels of God as the Good Shepherd, as it were, lays you down at His Father's feet and says,—*Father, here he is, I haven't lost him.* (Luke xv.)

A VOYAGE TO ANOTHER LAND.

A RELATIVE of mine lately left England, the land of her birth, for the distant colony of Australia; and, if God has prospered her voyage, she has by this time accomplished about half of her passage over the highway of the ocean. She is, I am happy to say, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and one has naturally been led to pray that God would grant her His rich blessing, both on the voyage, and on her arrival at the country for which she has set out. The incidents of the voyage, and the prospect that awaits her in that country, have suggested to my mind some points of comparison between them and those of the christian's passage from the land of his birth, as a child of Adam, to the heavenly country to which he is journeying, and to which he will unfailingly be brought by the grace and power of God.

This young person is gone out to a kinsman of hers, whom she knew in this country, but who has long been settled in Australia, which has now become his habitation and his home. She has also undertaken the voyage in the face of its weary length, and its possible dangers, on the urgent and repeated invitation of that friend, whom she now shortly expects to see. And is not the child of God on his way to meet the Lord, even Jesus the Son of God, whom he has known in this world as the One that in the depth of His love and grace

has died for his sins; and who has revealed Himself to His soul, as He who ever lives, and whose love is without end? He is no stranger to the heart of the one that is born of God, for though the believer has not yet seen Him face to face, he can truly respond to the divine declaration: "Whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (1 Peter i. 8.) And such is the reality of the union of the members with the Head, as now risen from the dead, that they are entitled to say, in the words of the Holy Ghost: "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30.)

And, as this young person has entered on her voyage to that distant land, at the solicitation of her friendly relative, so has the believer entered on that journey which shall land him on the eternal shore, on the free and full invitation of the blessed Lord. We, who believe, have already come through faith unto Himself, and have found the blessedness of our portion in Him, but we still wait to see Him face to face, and have gone out, as it were, to meet Him. But, how often did He entreat us to come to Him, before we yielded to His gracious invitation! At length, however, we were made willing, and came and found rest and peace, both for conscience and

heart, in Himself—the living One, who was dead, and is alive for evermore. And now He is leading us through every danger and difficulty, till He shall have set us down in His own glorious presence, and in His own holy image, to the eternal praise of His love and grace, and the everlasting blessedness of our souls.

Another interesting feature in this case is, that an intimate friend of the relative in Australia, who spent a considerable time in that country with him, came over to England some time since, and gave the young woman full information respecting the friend to whom she is going, as well as many valuable particulars concerning the country itself. Though this is but a feeble illustration, it may yet surely suggest to us the precious fact of the coming and abiding of that heavenly One, even the Spirit of Christ, to whom we are indebted for all that we truly know of Him of whom He delights to speak. It is by His testimony to Christ—the glory of His person—the depth of His love—the finished perfection of His work, when “he suffered for sins, the just for the unjust”—His glorious resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on high—that we have been drawn to this blessed Saviour of our souls—that we know Him as our Life and our Lord, and that we are now on our way to meet Him, whom we shall shortly see as He is, be like Him, and enter with Him into that

place in His Father's house, which he has gone to prepare for us, that we may there dwell with Him for ever. By the same Spirit, too, we are sealed for all the wondrous blessing and glory that await us, and He is also the earnest of the inheritance which is ours in Christ. "Now, he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God ; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. i. 21, 22.) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God : and if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. viii. 14—17.)

The men of this world imagine that the hope and prospects of the believer are dreamy and undefined at the best, and they pride themselves upon their own fancied possession of what they call the tangible realities of sense and sight. But they are greatly mistaken ! The child of God is not going on a voyage of discovery, to *some place, somewhere*, which he vaguely hopes that he may *some day* reach. No ; he knows upon the authority of God's word, by that word being

fastened upon his heart by the Spirit, both to whom he is going, and the place for which he is bound. He is going to be with the Lord, and to dwell with Him in the holy home of that blessed One—in His own heavenly country. (Heb. xi. 8—16.) He can sing and make melody in his heart to the Lord, and say:—

Ours is a fine and fair land,
No fancied, dreamy, air-land ;
A real, rich, and rare land ;
This heavenly land of ours.

It is a holy, pure land,
A bright, unfading, sure land,
More firm than mount, or moorland ;
This blessed land of ours.

It is a cloudless, clear land ;
The Saviour's home—our dear land ;
To faith, a known and near land,
This happy land of ours.

With regard to the incidents of the voyage itself,—the believer has embarked for “yonder shore,” the Lord Himself being the Captain of the vessel, as well as the One who holds the helm. We get a little picture of this in Mark iv. 35—41, where we find that Jesus was with the disciples in the ship. What did it matter, then, if a great storm did arise, and if the waves did beat into the ship? He was there with them, who could rebuke the wind, and could say unto the sea, “Peace, be still; and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.” And what needed it to have concerned them,

as "He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow"? He was there with them in the vessel, and whether He was asleep or awake, His presence and power were enough for every emergency and should have been sufficient for them to rest in. Oh ! that we could stay on Him both in the storm, and in the calm ; as the little girl said to her fearful mother during a thunder storm ; "Ma, why can't you trust Jesus when He speaks loud, as well as when He speaks soft ?" Yes ; we want the faith of a little child, which does not reason, but believes.

Have you ever watched the needle in the compass on board a ship, during a voyage. It points undoubtedly to the north, but in a very trembling way. The motion given to the vessel by the wind and the waves of the sea, imparts a very unsteady action to the needle. Still, with all its vacillation, the secret and sustained power of the magnet keeps it ever striving for the point of attraction. How like this is to the believer ! He loves the Lord ; He owns the attraction of His name ; but the influence of the things within and around him, often makes his aim unsteady. But, after all, how blessed to see the power of Christ to draw one's heart to Himself, notwithstanding all its trembling and quivering.

As points the needle to the pole,
Though o'er the barque the billows roll,

With quiv'ring, yet with steadfast, arm,
Confessing thus the magnet's charm :
So, Lord, to Thee, oh ! may I turn,
To whom my life, my all, I owe,
And Thy great love within me burn,
And rule me, wheresoe'er I go.

Then, there is the end of the voyage, after all its dangers and dreariness ; the mutual recognition, the joyful reception, the happy and unrestrained intercourse of thought and feeling with the beloved one, often heard and spoken of, but now seen face to face, in his own home ! But what a faint picture of what it will be to see the Lord Himself ; He who died for us in His love and grace ; who has watched over and cared for us all the journey through, having loved His own which were in the world, loving them unto the end ; and who, at length, will receive us unto Himself, that where He is, we may be also ! Oh, the unspeakable joy of being like Him and with Him, and of beholding His glory ! And what a day of triumphant joy to Himself, as well as of unbounded blessing to us, when that prospect which solaced Him in the hour of His agony on the cross shall be accomplished ; and He shall declare His Father's name unto His brethren, in the midst of the church sing praise unto Him ! (Psalm xxii. ; Hebrews ii.).

HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL.

FROM the busy scene of toil—
 From the energy of will,
 I am drawn aside awhile,
 And through grace am calm and still.
Stillness is an irksome task
 For a busy labouring one ;
 Therefore, O my Lord, I ask,
 Give me strength to *stand* or *run*.
 If Thou'dst have me not to stir,
 'Tis thy will—I am resigned ;
 Thou art all too wise to err,
 And too good to be unkind.
 When thy ways I cannot see—
 Prayerfully I wait for light,
 Looking steadfastly to Thee,
 Who alone canst lead me right.
 If Thou callest me to part
 With my health, shall I rebel ?
 No ! but cry with lowly heart,
 “ 'Tis the Lord—He doeth well.”
 Oh ! how well for all my time,
 Hour by hour, and day by day :
 Oh ! how well for yonder clime,
 Where unfailing love shall sway.
 For the safety of my soul,
 Lord, no coward fears arise,
 But when pain or troubles roll,
 Satan much my spirit tries.
 Yet it is my heart's desire,
 Thou shouldst all Thy will perform,
 Thou art with me in the fire ;
 Thou wilt bear me through the storm.
 Laid aside from human eye,
 From the daily toil and fight—
 Yet with thankful heart I cry,
 “ 'Tis the Lord—it *must* be right.
 Whatsoe'er my path shall be—
 Whatsoever Thou shalt do—
 Let the thing that pleaseth Thee,
 Also please Thy servant, too !

FAITH'S TESTING DAY.

SOME years ago, a young man who had a little measure of gift for teaching, stood up in the assembly, and for a considerable time went on discoursing on Genesis xxii., when Abraham's faith was so signally tested, when God bade him offer up his son Isaac. The teacher went pretty fully into the question, and spoke largely of the cheerful alacrity of Abraham's faith, in yielding to the demand made upon him; that reason had no place in his heart, or he might have argued: "This is the vessel of the promises through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed; this is the one out of whom are to spring children more numerous than the stars of heaven" (Genesis xv). But, no! no such thoughts had a place in the heart of Abraham, but in simple obedience he responded to the call of God. Neither was there impulsiveness in his movements, for in verse 4 it says,—“Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw *the place afar off*.”

The point the young teacher pressed upon his hearers, was the slowness of the hearts of christians to respond to the heart of God, who in all His dealings with His people had their blessing in view, painful as the discipline might be, or withering as flesh might feel it, when the Husbandman was purging the blight from the fruitful branch in order that it might bring forth more fruit. Many

an one felt the weight of truth of what was brought before them, even though they had issued from young lips that had only sipped the sweets from the word, but had never taken a step in the journey where faith was to be tested.

Our young teacher had a wife and one or two children ;—a wife he loved very dearly, and upon whom he leaned a good deal as more than a help meet for him. Monday morning came, and with it its usual cares and influx of business, and day succeeded day till another Lord's day came round. But in the house of our young teacher of the previous Lord's day, there was lamentation and mourning ; for after a brief illness, during the night, the wife of poor M. had departed to be with the Lord. And how had he responded to this unexpected demand upon his affections ? Poor fellow ! he was prostrate in the dust, and in the bitterness of his grief refused to be comforted. Was ever sorrow like unto his sorrow ? Children were no delight to him ; business no charms or responsibility ; and like Naomi of old, he complained of the Lord as having dealt very bitterly with him.

Alas ! what poor creatures we are when tested ; and yet faith must have its testing day, as Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 3—7).

When the news spread abroad of poor M.'s bereavement, the teaching of the previous week came home to many a heart with renewed power, and many a prayer went up for the poor stricken one, who—unlike Abraham—showed no readiness to give what the Lord asked. It reminded me of what another in similar circumstances said—"It is one thing to talk about faith; it is another thing to be in circumstances where faith is required."

Poor M. bore marks on his countenance for many a long day of the internal conflict he had endured; but afterwards, with what a chastened spirit could he exhort his brethren to faith and patience.

We sometimes sing—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small,
Love so amazing—so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

But should we be equal to the demand, if the Lord came in, and chose the finest cluster upon the family vine? No doubt we should, if we are living in communion with Himself; but may He give us grace to accede to what we sing and say, and live more closely to Him : then faith will be in exercise, and then in the most solemn bereavement, or in the most grievous affliction, we shall be able to say, "It is the Lord : let him do as seemeth him good."

The Holy Ghost in Heb. ii. gives us the inner workings of Abraham's heart, as Genesis gave his outward act. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac : and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called : accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead ; from whence also he received him in a figure."

**GRACE REIGNING THROUGH RIGHT-
EOUSNESS.**

A GENTLEMAN lay dying, not from the infirmities of age, for he had just reached the meridian of life, but from dire disease. Having been well educated, and his position in society having afforded him ample means of "enjoying himself," as the phrase is, he had availed himself of his social advantages,

and had entered freely into the pleasures of the world ; not, indeed, in their grosser forms, but he had lived to himself, with but an occasional thought of God. At length, however, being laid upon a bed of suffering, and knowing that the issue of his complaint must be death, he began to reflect upon the solemnity of his having to meet God ; and he could not look forward to that meeting without serious apprehension.

A christian friend, who cared for his soul, called upon him, and in earnest language set before the dying man the boundless love and infinite mercy of God, as manifested in the gift of His dear Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. He spoke, too, of the willingness of God to receive all who come to Him in the name of His Son, however much they might, hitherto, have rejected His great salvation, and however much they might have hardened their hearts against the reception of His grace. He then urged the anxious sinner to accept without delay of the full and rich mercy of God presented to him, without money and without price, in the precious Person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The gentleman, who had listened attentively to the weighty words and earnest entreaty of his friend, said to him at the close : " I have no doubt that what you have been saying is perfectly true ; but somehow or other it does not allay my anxiety.

I know that I am dying. I am conscious that I am a sinful man, and that I am soon to appear in the presence of God. What I fail to perceive is : how God, who is infinitely holy, can maintain His holiness in its integrity and at the same time show mercy to me, a sinner. If, now, you can clear that difficulty to me, you will be doing me an invaluable service."

The visitor, then, perceiving the real question which troubled the soul of his friend, looked to the Lord to enable him to meet it from His word. He began by pointing out to him the utter ruin of man as a sinner; that "there is none righteous, no, not one;" that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. iii.); and that "as many as are under the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). He also showed that one fault was fatal, for "whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James ii. 10); and, besides all one's actual offences, there is the fountain from which they spring, the corrupt nature and evil heart: so that in himself the sinner is utterly helpless before God, and "without hope;" and that if he die in his sins, and be judged according to his works, it must result in his being cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death" (Rev. xx). Having traced man, as a

sinner to his awful end of everlasting woe, he then endeavoured to show what God, who is love, and "rich in mercy," hath wrought, in order to bring salvation to His rebellious creatures, "alienated, and enemies in mind by wicked works," and altogether unable to deliver themselves from the "righteous judgment of God;" having "commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v.) He then set forth the personal glory of the Son, who was ever with the Father, "daily his delight, rejoicing always before him," showing that "all things were created by him, and for him;" and yet "that he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii.) Then He set before the dying man that God made Christ, "who knew no sin, to be sin for us;" that, as the sin-offering, He bore on the cross the judgment of God against sin, and that that judgment was so fearful, that when He, the spotless Lamb of God, endured it, He cried in the deep agony of His soul: "My God, my God, why hast THOU *forsaken* ME?" He then enlarged upon the preciousness of the blood of Christ, without the shedding of which there could have been no remission; dwelling, too, upon the wondrous fact of His laying down His

life; no man taking it from Him, but laying it down of Himself, having power to lay it down, and power to take it again. (John x.) Then came the glorious theme of His resurrection and ascension to "the right hand of the Majesty on high," He having finished the work which God gave Him to do, in the putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and of the declaration of God of His delight in His Son; and of His perfect satisfaction with the work which He had thus accomplished by seating Him, who had been the sin-bearer, on His throne, and crowning Him with glory and honour.

Thus the evangelist sought to show the anxious sinner that the holiness of God was perfectly satisfied and glorified in respect of sin in the sacrifice of Christ; that the judgment of God, for sin, had been visited upon Him; and that so infinitely precious is that sacrifice in the sight of God that He could now, consistently with His intense holiness, not only showing all grace and mercy to the sinner coming to Him in the name of His Son, but He could be "just" and at the same time "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii.) "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. v. 21).

The discourse, of which this is but an outline,

was blessed to the dying friend of the speaker ; and he soon after departed this life, having “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Dear reader, have you this peace ?

NOT PRAYER, BUT A MESSAGE.

IN countries where the Bible is acknowledged as the word of God, and brought before the people, the devices of the devil are different from those which he practises where superstition is more gross. In the latter case the interception of the Virgin and the saints, priestly absolution, the value of sacraments, penances, &c., are taught, with which things Satan deceives the soul. In the former, the pure Word of God being acknowledged as the sole standard, he has still his contrivances by which anxious souls are turned aside, and the free work of Christ is denied. They are the more cunning, it is to be noticed, because he has really to work in the light ; that is, in souls who do not dispute the authority of the Word of God.

It is wonderful, in this country, with so large a circulation of the New Testament, that so few, even of professed believers, have peace with God according to that text—“Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” What are the hindrances to this ? One is, that prayer is often made with the idea of changing God’s heart towards us ; it being still admitted that none but Christ can

save. It is certain that such an opinion may exist, and the person be—as to doctrine—pretty close to the truth, much nearer than thousands of poor Roman Catholics, with whom you have to sweep away many “refuges of lies.”

But is it not a fact, that with this measure of nearness as to doctrine, there is still no peace?

Observe that we do not say a word against prayer or devotional feelings in their proper place; but Satan sometimes makes use of such exercises in order, if possible, to keep Christ out; for his plan with souls where a certain amount of light exists, is just to misplace truths, that is, to put right things in a wrong order.

What then, is now God's attitude towards man? Has anything been done by Him on behalf of man? Most certainly. The death and resurrection of Christ—that death having settled the question of sins in His sight; and that resurrection (much else being attached to it) being the witness of it. A Man (Son of God, indeed, withal) brought from the lowest up to the highest, is a key to the attitude which God holds towards a sinner. He deals with a sinner according to what that Man in glory is before Him. Perfect content exists in heaven. All the claims of the Lord Himself as to sin have been fully met. A message is sent to sinners on this account by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, who witnesses to Christ's arrival there. “This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear" (Acts ii. 32, 33). "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts xiii. 32—39). "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? . . . or, Who shall descend into the deep? . . . but what saith it? The word is nigh thee . . . 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. 6—11).

It is certain that an anxious sinner will, may, must pray—will call upon God for mercy, but it is not the business of a friend who comes perchance to see him at such a moment to say anything about prayer, but rather, whatever his state may be, to point him to Jesus. When a sinner prays (we are not speaking of the ordinary prayers of a self-righteous person) it must be on account of some weight upon his spirit. If the work of God has begun in him, his prayers can never remove this weight. Christ must be shown to him in His work and in His person. The evangelist comes as an ambassador for Christ because He, in effecting the work, had to go into glory, and we

are left in His place, "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. iv. 20, 21). We repeat, that the attitude of God towards man is one of mercy. This leads to another branch of a sinner's prayer, which takes such a colouring as this: "I know that Jesus died to save sinners, but I can't get it unless I pray for it." Probe this feeling and you will find that this is a prayer for a change of God's mind, as if the cross were not the present measure of God's love—as if God Himself were not on the side of a sinner because of that cross, where His hatred against sin was shown in Christ's death.

This state of mind arises from imperfect views of the connection of God's own heart with the gospel. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The heart of God Himself is not sufficiently known in this salvation, or the full bearing of the cross as having harmonized with all the attributes of perfection of the Godhead in that sacrifice, so that now His mercy shines out in harmony with His other attributes. In such instances as these, even then a to prayer, we see the danger of departing in the least degree from the simple statement that the gospel is a message from the God of peace—a message of love, which glorifies God in the re-

ception of it, and meets much more than the sinner's need. Praise for ever to His name.

JUST LIKE A LITTLE CHILD

I did not like God's word at first,
No pleasure did it bring :
For till my soul did really thirst
I cared not for the spring ;
But when I felt the drying-up
Of everything around,
And saw His hand,—I took the cup,
And sweet refreshment found.
Since I unto the fountain went—
Whence living waters flow—
Such quiet rest, such sweet content,
He's made my heart to know.
And when on messages of grace
He wishes me to run,
My feet are ready for the race,
Just like a little one.
O Lord, thou art my peace and rest
Throughout the desert wild,
I nestle on Thy loving breast,
Just like a little child.
Whatever I may take in hand,
Thy glory be my aim :
I care not to be great or grand
Where Thou wast put to shame.
Until Thou callest me above,
Oh, keep me undefiled,
Still resting in Thy heart of love,
Just like a little child.

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

THIS letter is published in the prayerful hope that it will be an encouragement to the servants of Christ who may not see immediate results in their labours of love and work of faith ; for no less than nine years passed away before this case of blessing was known to him through whom the word was used ; this letter will also show that there are no steps to Christ, but that in the very midst of sin God can, and will, meet us. This is a most decided and practical proof that there is no need to make drunkards teetotallers before preaching to them the Gospel. God is sovereign ; His word is all powerful, and He can and will act how, when, and on whom He pleases.

Barrackpoor,

January 29th, 1874.

Dear Sir,

I have no doubt you will wonder why I have written to you : it is because I feel it my duty as I was much blessed by God's word that you spoke and sent to me. I do not know whether you remember the time when you held some meetings in the east of London, about nine years ago, in a place called Bateman's Row. It was there I got blessed by God under your preaching, but to my sorrow I left the path that leads to life and peace, and fell into the worst of sins—I went to Music

Halls and Public Houses, and at last enlisted into the Army, and still going on in sin and vice and everything that was bad. But thank God, His Spirit still strove with me, but I hardened my heart against Him, and for nearly seven years I went on in sin ; till one night, while lying on my cot, under the influence of drink, these words came home to me : " My Spirit shall not always strive with man," and it made me uneasy in my mind : although under the influence of drink it stuck to me, and I bless God for it. I went and told Him what a bad son I had been. I told Him how sorry I was ; I asked forgiveness for Christ's sake ; I pleaded the promises of God, and I found peace and happiness in believing in Jesus, and now I live rejoicing in my Saviour, and now I can say that God for Christ's sake has pardoned all my sins, and now I can say,—

" O happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away."

I should have written to you before, but I did not know your address ; you will pardon the liberty I have taken in writing to you ; so no more from

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

P.S.—The Lord is doing a great work in the Regiment : there are about twenty men meet every day for prayer ; may God bless us and keep us in the good way. Amen.

EXTRACT.

REMEMBER, it is not *thy hold* of Christ that saves thee ; it is Christ : it is not *thy joy* in Christ that saves thee ; it is Christ : it is not *thy faith* in Christ, though that is the instrument ; it is Christ's blood and merit. Therefore, look not so much to thy hand, with which thou art grasping Christ, as to Christ ; look not to thy hope, but to Jesus, the source of thy hope ; look not to thy faith, but to Jesus, the author and finisher of thy faith. We shall never find happiness by looking at our prayers, our doings, or our feelings ; it is what *Jesus* is, not what *we* are that gives rest to our souls. If we would at once overcome Satan, and have peace with God, it must be by "looking unto Jesus." Let not thy hopes or fears come between thee and Jesus ; follow hard after Him, and He will never fail thee.

ALL FOR JESUS.

WORDS fail me wherewith to describe exactly and fully the blessedness realized by him who can say from his very heart—willingly, frankly, joyfully, '*All for Jesus !*'

To very many, this blessedness, of which we read so much in the Word of God, is not a reality. They read, for example, of 'peace with God' which 'passeth all understanding,' and of 'joy' which is 'unspeakable and full of glory,' yet, they cannot say they possess either the one or the other. But,

leaving the cases of other persons, let me refer to my own. For five-and-twenty years of my life, my 'believing' brought me no certainty of salvation, and no real peace and joy, such as the Apostles described. I revered the Scriptures. I accepted the full range of 'Evangelical Truth'—took my stand upon it, defended it, was jealous of it, and sought by all means to propagate it. My whole energies were devoted unsparingly to the furtherance of christian and philanthropic endeavours. And yet, I felt I lacked the certainty which I was convinced the Christian should have as to his acceptance with God, and the full, conscious blessedness of being 'in Christ,' and so, free from 'condemnation.' This distressed me deeply. I could not account for it. Clearly there was error somewhere,—but *where*? Was it in the Word of God, or in myself? I was sure it was not in the former—it could not be. But, as to myself, wherein did I fail? My *views* were most strictly orthodox. Did I not intensely desire and strive to be right in everything? Was not Jesus my sole hope—His sacrifice my one plea—His great redeeming work my one theme, during a ministry of more than twenty years? Then, why had I not the certainty and the full blessedness? 'Hoping' and 'trusting' did not satisfy me. Reading my Bible, it was clear I should get beyond mere 'hopes' and 'trusts.' *But I did not!* How was this? I could not tell.

Very discomfoting was the state of mind above described. It continued for a long period. At length it became intolerable. Satan availed himself of the moment of my soul's extreme bitterness, by suggesting a strong doubt, as to the veracity of the Bible and its statements. 'Were not learned men writing about its manifold errors, denying the divinity of Jesus, assailing the atonement, and impugning almost every doctrine of the Gospel? *Did I not, myself, find some of its statements misleading?* Where was the consciousness of pardon, of having peace with God, of rejoicing in Jesus with joy unspeakable and full of glory, which is promised? I had better have no more to do with it: it was only a miserable delusion.'

The hour of conflict had arrived. The struggle was severe. 'My feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped.' But, at length, a light came. As with a sunbeam the truth was revealed. I saw that I had to do with *Jesus personally*, and that what He required of me was, that I should really accept Him, and really and fully surrender myself to Him. I fell on my knees before Him. The Spirit helped my infirmities. With all my soul I did, there and then, accept Him—my 'Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption,' my Saviour and my Lord; and I did, there and then, surrender myself to Him, utterly and unreservedly.

Then, the blessing came. I rose from my

knees rejoicing. 'Jesus is mine,' I could exclaim, 'and I am His.' The uncertainty was gone. The doubts and fears had departed. I had passed beyond the 'hoping' and 'trusting'—at last, but surely. And now it was as though Jesus Himself was speaking to my soul, and I could hear His voice. Yes, the blessing had, indeed, come; and *such* a blessing! I found *I had* that 'peace with God' which 'passeth all understanding,' and that 'joy' which is 'unspeakable and full of glory.'

Ever since that day, I have been living a new life. I am so happy! '*All for Jesus*' is my daily, almost hourly, cry; and Jesus is so precious! I cannot describe the sweetness of His presence and fellowship. It is so *real*, so *constant*, so *sustaining* to my soul. I have trials and difficulties, toils and hardships, but they seem as nothing now. The blessing is so great, that these things are 'light,' and 'but for a moment.' Besides, I know that the hand of Jesus lightens the burden: He carries the heavy end of each cross. And, all the while, He speaks so comfortably to my soul—so gently, encouragingly, lovingly—that I cannot but go on rejoicing in Him, whatever the present trial may be.

And He so honours me! I am aware that my talents, abilities, and attainments do not warrant the expectation that I shall be very useful; and yet, I find that the Lord does own my endeavours to serve Him. He often blesses me more to souls

in a single week now, than (as far as I know) He did in a whole year, or in many years, in former times. And so, I am going on consciously, joyously to the home above, asking daily, and about everything, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' 'To me,' I can say without presumption, 'to live is Christ.' And, at every step, I want to prove, by His grace, that my affections, my desires, my efforts,—yea, my very words and thoughts, are '*all for Jesus.*'

And, now, why have I written all this about myself? First, to magnify the grace of God, in so working upon me by His Spirit, as to bring me out into this region of most blessed and heavenly sunshine. And, then, secondly, that many who read it, may be led, by the gracious operations of the same Spirit, to desire to realize similar certainty and blessedness, through a true and full acceptance of Christ, accompanied by such an unreserved and heart-felt surrender to Him, as shall compel them to exclaim, '*All for Jesus!*'

Oh, there are thousands, I am convinced, who are not happy in Jesus, though they profess to believe in Him—say prayers—read the Bible—keep the Sabbath—and even go to the Lord's table. I am brought into contact with such persons every day. My heart deeply compassionates them. They have no sure hope in God. They sigh when I speak to them of their souls; and, when I ask them as to their prospects be-

yond the grave, they can only tell me they 'trust' it may be well with them. Ah! with all their profession, their bible-reading, their prayer-saying, their creed-repeating, their sacrament-taking, and their crying, 'Lord, Lord,' they are not happy—they are not at peace with God—and they cannot rejoicingly say, 'Jesus is mine!' Their experiment of 'another way' is evidently a failure; with all they say and all they do, they are strangers to the blessedness Jesus promises His true people. How is this? Where and what is the root of the evil? There must be something wrong. What is it? Is it not this, they have not yet believed '*with the heart?*' They say they accept Jesus as their Saviour, but it is plain they do not as their *Master*. They affirm they believe in 'Jesus Christ,' but forget that Jesus is *Lord* as well as Christ. In a word, they have not really, fully, and savingly believed in Him—have not truly accepted Him—have not made the surrender, '*All for Jesus!*' Alas for such! How great is their mistake! What a loss is theirs! How they dishonour Christ! How they imperil their own souls! They 'do many things,' but fail to begin at the right place. 'Only let me keep my heart to myself,' they seem to say, 'and choose my own way, and I will *do*—O I will do *so much!*' But the Lord will never give blessing to such. They do not belong to Him. They love the world; and want to carry

on their worldly fellowships and friendships, and to have their 'innocent amusements,' and to take part in the gaieties and pleasures they are so fond of. And so they care not to be altogether on the Lord's side: and if you ask them to be brave—noble—grateful, fully surrendering themselves to Him, with the cry of decision '*All for Jesus,*' they shake their heads, and are silent at once! Like the young man in the gospel, they go away—taking their own course in preference to the only one that can bring them to the sunlit region of God's favour, of Christ's love, and of the heavenly experiences of the true christian life.

O this miserable, blessingless, Christ-dishonouring delusion! It is a parody upon the real discipleship to which Jesus invites them that desire His salvation. It is a falsehood! It says, 'I believe in Jesus,' while it goes on denying Him every day. What is reading the Bible, and going to the sanctuary, and saying prayers, and coming to the Lord's table, but saying, 'Lord, I believe?' And what is the worldly-mindedness, and the gaiety, and the taking part in innocent amusements, and the fellowship and friendship with the world—(alas! so evident and unmistakable)—but the utterance, by the life, of that *other* cry:—'I will not have Him to reign over me?'

Men and brethren! Away with this delusion! Attempt no longer to get to heaven by this 'other

way!" No wonder you have no peace with God, no joy in the Lord, no bright hope of future glory. No wonder you have doubts and fears in abundance! No wonder you are afraid of death and judgment, all that you 'do,'—your 'religion', that you speak about,—is in vain. Your poor soul can find no rest. You are nothing bettered by it, but rather grow worse. Oh, have done with it! Cast it away as 'filthy rags!' Say to it, now and for ever, 'get thee hence!' And come; bow down your soul before the Lord! Be humbled in the dust at His feet! Let there be the cry, 'Guilty, guilty!' Rest *solely* on His finished work of atonement and satisfaction! Come under the 'blood' that alone can wash away a single sin, and that can make you 'whiter than snow!' Then let there be the surrender! Keep nothing back! Have no 'reserves!' And cry—in dependence on Him who commands you to stretch out the withered hand—'*All for Jesus!*'

I appeal to the 'hoping,' 'trusting,' 'doubting,' and 'fearing' professors of religion, into whose hands this tract may come. I know what I am saying. I know the disconsolations of uncertainty. I know the wretchedness of crying for five-and-twenty years, 'Lord, Lord,' without ever truly realizing the preciousness of Jesus, or the blessedness of His pardoning love. I know, too, the unutterable sweetness of finding myself at His side consciously His, enjoying His company, and going

on daily with the light of His countenance falling full upon my soul ; His heart, as it were, beating against me, with His dear, loving words, ever and anon , reaching me, ‘Fear thou not—I *am with thee,*’ and with His Spirit sanctifying, and strengthening me for His blessed service more and more. And, from my heart’s depths, I implore you give up all for Him ! Let the world go ! Let *everything* go ! count it but dross and dung that you may win Christ and be found in Him !

Offer Him all you are and have ! Lay it at His feet ! Keep nothing from Him ! And, with your whole heart and soul cry, ‘*All for Jesus !*’

Then for the sunshine ! Away will go the clouds, the fogs, the mists ! Away will go the doubts, the fears, the misgivings ! Away will go the agitations and tremblings as to death and judgment ! The sunshine will straightway come down upon your heart, filling it with light and with joy. You will be ‘accepted in the Beloved.’ The weary load of sin will be cast into the depths of the sea. You will feel the Father’s arms, as it were, round about your neck. The kiss will assure you that your sins and iniquities shall be remembered no more. And, then, the homeward course, the loving communings by the way, and at length, the abundant entrance, joyous welcome, the everlasting rest !

Shall it be so ? Before God who is waiting to

be gracious, and before Jesus who shed His blood for you, I ask you, solemnly, *shall it be so?* No longer, I pray you, insult the Lord by your half-heartedness! Bring it to an end! Have done with it for ever! And resolve to be true, sincere, fully surrendered, fully consecrated, fully devoted—*'All for Jesus!'*

J.T.W.

“GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD.”

John iii. 16.

These words seem to me to unfold in the fullest sense the gospel of the grace of God. They are indeed beautiful; and what makes them inexpressibly so to the heart of the believer, is that they fell from the lips of that blessed One, whose words were ever pregrant with the deepest meaning. Think then, oh, reader, that these words are the very words of the Lord Jesus 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.” We get in this text the measure of God’s love! Christ Jesus came into this world to reveal the Father; and at the opening of this gospel, we get the cogent text we are now considering. Then the first aspect in which God is revealed in the gospel is love—unconditional, unmerited, and free.

Now, let us look for a moment or two at the

way in which this love of God is manifested in the gospel, what is the measure of it? Even the giving up of His only-begotten Son—"God so loved." Oh! if I want to see how dreadful a thing sin is in the sight of God, I must look at the cross. What was the result of God's giving His Son? why, by wicked hands He was nailed to the cross and crucified; and there, I say, we see the love of God displayed as we never see it anywhere else. The cross of Christ is the measure of God's perfect love, and man's perfect ruin. There was no other way of saving sinners, or God would not have given to a death of shame His well-beloved Son. So deep, dear reader, is the ruin you and I are in by nature—so far are we separated from a holy God—so far have we gone astray—that nothing less than God's gift of His Son, nothing less than the shed blood of Christ can ever take us out of our ruined condition or bring us nigh to God.

Are you not, dear sinner, astounded at that love which has displayed itself so marvellously! Even that "while we were yet sinners," God gave His Son to die for us. Oh! it is love unequalled—love unbounded. A divine mystery that time and eternity will never unravel, that God should choose such objects as us, upon whom to pour forth the inexhaustible love of His heart! Will you not come and take shelter beneath God's banner—love? There is room in His heart for

you. Oh, come! respond to such love as this, by casting yourself at the feet of Jesus. You cannot say, This is not for me; for it is to "whosoever believeth." You have nothing whatever to do in the matter of the salvation of your soul, but to cast yourself down at the feet of the Lord Jesus, owning yourself a poor lost sinner, and accepting Him as your Saviour, and "everlasting life" is yours.

Time is short—eternity is near—how near to the reader of this paper we cannot tell, and the Lord Jesus is quickly coming to take all those who have believed on His name to dwell with Him for ever. Then, let me beseech you to decide for Christ at once. It is a question of life or death—heaven or hell. To reject Christ is to receive just condemnation, but to accept Him is to possess eternal life, to have a hope of glory, and to have a fadeless portion with that ransomed host who shall praise the Lord for ever in the realms of the blest.

Oh! dear reader, before it is too late, embrace this message of mercy—accept the pardon which now is offered you; and then, when the Lord Jesus comes, you shall go to dwell for ever with Himself in the glory, instead of spending, as a rejector of Christ, your eternity in the regions of woe. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved."

THE SAVIOUR'S INVITATION.

YE simple souls, whom sin beguiles,
Why from your Saviour will ye flee ?
Leave Satan's false, delusive smiles,
Be led by Love, and come to Me.

Ye scorers, who my mercy spurn,
And still refuse to bow the knee,
For you my pure affections burn,
Scorn not my Love, but come to Me.

Ye foolish souls, who knowledge hate,
Oh ! when will ye your folly see ?
Receive my words ere 'tis too late,
Be wise to-day, and come to Me.

Come, ye who are with sorrow worn,
Whose life is all a troubled sea,
I love to comfort those that mourn,
Then bring your griefs, and come to Me.

Come, weary souls, with care oppress'd,
Who labour like the ant or bee ;
My bosom yearns to give you rest,
Then cease your toil, and come to Me.

Come, sinners all, of every age,
Of every station and degree,—
The grave, the gay, the fool, the sage,—
All, all are welcome, come to Me.

I am of bliss the Source and Sum,
My springs of life are full and free :
Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come,
Whoever will, oh, come to Me.

GOD'S THOUGHTS ABOUT EVERYTHING.

“WHAT is your thought of that place,” said — pointing to a theatre as we walked together towards his house, early in the morning, at the beginning of the past year. “Oh! about the same as of balls, concerts, readings, s hows of various kinds, bazaars, and so on.” “What is your opinion, then, with regard to them?” “Oh! I have no opinion of my own on them. God has given me His in these words, ‘for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away,’ and if God has thought all out for me; and given His thought in His own blessed word, it amazing’y simplifies everything down here to me, to get His thought of it, and there’s an end of all reasoning at once. My opinion might be one thing, yours another, and some other christian’s another, and we should all reason according to our own liking for the thing, and hence it is that many of God’s dear children will express an opinion favourable to everything of the kind, even to a travelling theatre, and alas! frequent them, too, under the plea of its being a believer’s duty to bring his christian influence to bear on every-

thing of the kind, and so give a better and higher tone to such things. It is lamentable, and my very soul is pained within me to see how God and His thoughts are set aside, while human opinions are readily expressed and freely discussed by christians, and instead of the enquiry, What does God say about it? you continually hear them say, 'my opinion,' 'my opinion,' and all different. I bless and praise God there is nothing I want an opinion on down here, but what God has anticipated and given in His word, and what rest I find to my soul in the very fact." My friend had freely opened his mind to me on several occasions, and though he has taken the ground of a believer he has not concealed from me the fact that his belief is, that it is in discussing various opinions that you get at the truth, which just simply means this, when God's blessed word is in question that He has sent us a letter—the bible,—which is (either intentionally, or because God is so much above those He has sent it to, that He could not make it simple enough for the simple to understand,) so obscure, and with such mysteries in it, that it is necessary, in order to understand it or get at the truth contained in it, to weigh well the conflicting opinions of men, and the truth taught in the book is in this way only to be got at. You may be shocked, as well you may be, but such is, in plain language, the meaning of that oft repeated phrase, used by professing christians too, that

“it is by discussing various opinions that the truth is got at;” whereas the fact is, that if there is one thing more plain than another in that blessed book, where all is plain to the simple, it is this, that instead of the truth being got at by discussing human opinions, it is by putting these all aside, and bowing before God, confessing one’s own ignorance, and waiting upon God in prayer, that the truth is got at. Do you want chapter and verse for such an assertion? “He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” Read also 1 Cor. i. 16—31.

“Which things also we speak not in the word which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” “Let no man deceive himself, if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise: for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain.” Do you want an example in this respect? We get it in Christ. Hear Him in the 50th chapter

of Isaiah, "He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."

If it were ever right for one to reason or express his own opinion, that one was the spotless Christ. Surely God's will was His. Yea! the power and the wisdom too, but having taken His place as the obedient man on earth, He simply used the naked word, when the tempter sought to take Him out of that path, "It is written," "It is written," "It is written."

How beautiful. How perfect. If the naked word was enough for Him, pray let it be enough for you without your reasonings, or opinions, or speculations. "By the WORD OF THY LIPS I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."

Do you say, as many christians are now saying, "But we live in an age of progress, development, refinement, and learning, and what were our minds given us for but to be used in this way, and that everything has so marvellously changed since the book was written, that what would suit that age will not suit this, but there is development, and therefore men must discuss the different opinions on the word, to arrive at the truth." This is truly awful. It is nothing less than shutting God out to bring in man. Man likes to be made something of, and this Satan knows, and whatever else he may be doing in these last days, he surely is the enemy who is at the bottom of all this.

What, has God changed? Is His word so im-

perfect that man can improve upon it? Can you get a fuller development of that which is in itself perfect? Impossible. The thought of the possibility of it is sin. The effects of this insidious evil are everywhere manifesting themselves. Is not God's book an uninteresting dry thing to a fearfully large majority of professing christians everywhere? Sermons, hymns, periodicals, memoirs, are read, but is the bible? I had a tract sent to me a little while ago, written by an intelligent christian. I read it. The object of the writer was to show his readers what the "Church of God" is, and to my sorrow, instead of quoting from God's word, I found nothing of the sort from the beginning to the end, but it was a collection of quotations from a number of human authors. Not one word have I to say against the authors whose names are given in it in full, but why tell us what Mr. so and so says? if God has spoken, tell me what He says. Why not take one to the fountain rather than to the streams which *may* be fearfully polluted? Great men's names are nothing to me, when divine authority is wanting: and when one has divine authority it is best to use that.

Ah! 'tis a broken heart and a subdued will that one needs, and not the variety of opinions of men. Who got God's mind about the blessed Christ when He came among men? Those who bowed to God's word in the matter. Who thoroughly

failed in the matter of getting His mind about Him? Those who could boast of having the word and being the leaders in thought and religion. These were blinded by their own opinions, reasonings, and speculations, and because that blessed One, who did not answer to their forced thoughts, *their proud thoughts must stand and God's Son be murdered by them.* And is it not so now? Is not man's thought first generally?

I have visited many converted invalids, and have found if they were left almost without any help on the word of God, that such are vastly more acquainted with God's mind as revealed in His word, than many who undertake to teach it, and why? Because they read the word and bow to it in all simplicity, while many bring their opinions to the book and get nothing in return.

My friend gave what to me at first seemed to be a sudden turn to our conversation, while in reality it was not so. He said, "Do you know anything about *comparative anatomy*?"

"I don't know that I do."

"Do you know anything about *comparative astronomy*."

"I don't know that I do."

He gave me several of his *comparatives*, and then came at once to the point by saying, "Do you know anything about *comparative theology*?"

"I don't know that I do, and yet if you will explain, I may be able to answer."

Of course his answer amounted to this, that theology like other sciences was only developing, and that the thoughts of the last generation would not do for this, one set of thoughts was set aside by another, and so nothing therefore is certain. When I saw that he was applying the same rule to God's word, I was pained, and it was because I thought such was his aim that I asked him to explain. I said with some warmth, "D—, God's word is enough for me, and if it is not for you, you must answer for that to Him one day. You don't treat God's word even as you like your own treated. If you give instructions, you expect your word to be acted on; but God having spoken, you treat His word as if it were either too mysterious to be understood, or that you had liberty to put what construction you like on it. Really D—, it is very solemn. I am deeply pained to see God and His word treated thus."

We had arrived at his door and we went in. The conversation went on till he handed to me that for which I went, carefully wrapped in paper. I said as I took it, while looking straight in his face, "Have you put the instructions on with regard to the——, and so on, D——?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll take it home and have your instructions acted on. But instead of doing that, suppose I get in a few friends to give their opinion on the matter, we discuss the matter fully, though

knowing nothing of its properties, and instead of keeping to your plain instructions we depart completely from them, and act on thoughts of our own, what would you think or say? And this is exactly the course you are advocating should be pursued towards God and His word, while you would loudly condemn the conduct of one who acted so towards only a man."

He answered, "I must admit the force of that." After assuring him again that I would not trifle with his instructions, but act on them, I left the house, thinking what an awfully solemn matter it was, that the good, loving, gracious God, should not be counted worthy of so much confidence on man's part as we give a fellow creature, and when this ground is taken by those who profess to belong to Christ, it indeed makes the case so much worse. Although I felt compelled to be faithful in dealing with this person, I had not very much hope of his heart and conscience being reached by anything said, for as water rolls off a duck's back, so he has the art of shaking off everything that is said, by a plausible mode of reasoning.

My dear reader, are you an unpardoned sinner? Your everlasting welfare hangs on your receiving into your heart, or rejecting God's testimony concerning the Lord Jesus. All arguing and reasoning on the subject, only the more effectually keeps bolted and barred the door that shuts you in in righteous condemnation. Can anyone by reason-

ing find out how a serpent-bitten Israelite could be cured, and the effects of the poisonous bite stayed in their course by looking at the serpent of brass on the pole? Certainly not! But bring in God, and all is settled at once. Can anyone by reasoning find out how the work of the blessed One on the cross should have so met all the claims of a Holy God, and settled for ever the question of guilt for all who believe, that when by faith they rest in that glorious work, they are justified from all things? Impossible! But see it as God's way, and know 'tis His word that declares it, and all is simple, and possible, for that brings in God, and with God all things are possible.

You say, what was the power of reasoning given us for, if not to use? I answer, it most certainly was not given to be used in direct opposition to Him who blest us with it, which you really do, if you begin to argue and reason on the plain statements of God's word. Reason may soar a few feet high, but God's word is as high as the heavens. Yea, the mightiest of man's powers are but *created*, but God is the *Creator*.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, is God's testimony, and to receive this testimony is salvation.

Let me warn God's people everywhere against the speculations, reasonings, and the variety of human opinions of the present day.

Man the creature is presuming to arraign God

and His word at his bar. "There can be no eternal punishment," say they, "*because we as parents would not treat our children so, and therefore, it is not consistent*" with a God of love. Is not this man arraigning God at his bar, and laying down rules for His action with His creatures, and that if He does not act according to such rules, he shall reject the word that asserts to the contrary, though it is God's word ! Can you imagine anything more daring, more awful ; *God and His word brought to the bar, and man turned judge !* Blessed God, if I had no other proof of Thy patient grace, here is a marvellous one !

Believer, beware of the rapid currents that are hurrying men along into the total rejection of God, and to man being put up in His place on earth.

Beware, I say. What is believed by professing christians in the present day, is indeed wonderful, and all they want are some great leaders, and thousands would arrange themselves under their various banners.

I praise God for bringing me back to His simple word. O, how sweet to have that in the present day of danger, and increasing darkness, and selfwill. Perhaps you say, "Yes, all of us have the bible, but there will always be differences of opinion on it ;" I hear this repeated so often that it is quite old. All I can say, beloved friend, is this, if we all let the word judge *us*, instead of our *judging it*, if

we let it form our judgment, instead of bringing our judgment to it, there would be no two opinions existing: but so long as believers have their "opinions" on it, of course they will differ. I say it in testimony for God, and would that those words were seen by every believer on earth, that since I was led to let God's word judge me, instead of bringing my opinion to it, the sweetness, preciousness, and simplicity of that word surprises me; and what has been made known to my soul of the ever blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through this precious word, I cannot possibly put into words, and God Himself knows how deeply bowed down my soul is in love to, and sorrow for, those dear children of God who are occupied with human opinions, instead of drinking from the ever fresh and precious fountain God has given. They are the sport of every thing that robs them of their true place and character on earth, and what new phase of belief or unbelief may possess them to morrow, no one can possibly foreshow. Some expect the millennium, others don't believe in such a period at all for earth; some think it is nigh, and that bible societies and mission societies will soon usher it in, while others who believe there will be such a period because the word of God declares it, nevertheless from an unscriptural mode of measuring things, believe it is far, far off yet. Some are boldly asserting, that the wicked will be at death, like the beasts which

perish : others are as bold in asserting, that in the end, not one soul of Adam's race will be lost ; and others again are being ensnared in the meshes of that awful thing of Satan's, namely, "Spiritualism ;" and the uncertain state of mind many are in about these things, is manifested in the way they ask what you think of this, or of that.

I repeat, all is clear and sure in the word, and those who let the word judge them, instead of their judging it, all is plain, but till they do so, all is uncertain, and unrest is the result to one's own soul, besides the dishonour done by such to the ever blessed God.

On all these things the word of God is as clear as possible. And if it were bowed to, there would be no two opinions about them.

If any man will (or wish to) do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.

Christ slept in the storm, but the disciples who were not in the secret of God, were afraid they would all perish. They who take God's word and only that, are very calm in the midst of the storm of evil doctrine, &c., raging around, for they have God's mind on it all. He who has God's naked word, has been *forewarned* of the evil before it comes, and having also been *forearmed*, he is ready with the "word" when it comes, and knows how to act. Oh, that God's people knew the value of the word of God, especially for this present evil day.

Every thing is shaking, and every thing, however imposing, that has not God's naked word to rest on, must, and will fall.

May God lead you, beloved reader, to see the importance of having a "Thus saith the Lord" for all you are exhorted to receive. And whatever you have got hold of, however old it be, if you have not the plain word for it, you had better let go now, for something infinitely better, than to hold to the end by it, and than have it torn from you, leaving you to suffer eternal loss.

J. C.

THE BRIDGE OF SAFETY.

THE high tide, which was expected to visit us on the 18th of April, came in accordance with the prediction; but, happily, did not reach the height of that which occurred a month previously, and which occasioned so much suffering and loss, especially to the poorer classes. Still, the expectation of its arrival caused much fear and alarm to numbers of persons who resided in the district which it was anticipated it would visit; and many and varied were the means taken, in order to avert the dreaded calamity.

The occurrence of the first of the high spring tides on the very day that had been foretold, gave to every one a fair ground for expecting that

the second would also visit us at the time which was announced, and which in fact, came to pass. May not this well remind us of what is said in 2 of Peter, iii. chap., where we learn "that by the *Word of God*, the heavens were of old, and the earth, standing out of the water, and in the water : whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished : but the heavens and the earth, which are now, *by the same Word* are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men?" God had announced to Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," that because of the wickedness of man He would bring in "the flood upon the world of the ungodly," and destroy man from the face of the earth. And although, in these last days, there is a willing ignorance of this stupendous fact in the early history of man, and an endeavour to treat it as a myth; yet the record of its occurrence stands in all its fearful solemnity, upon the page of the immutable and infallible word of the *Living God*. Thus, then, not only was that great flood of waters foretold by God, through His servant Noah ; but the overwhelming event itself came to pass, to the destruction of all upon whom it fell. And, upon the authority of the same word, we know that a future and more fearful judgment will, in God's own time, fall upon sinful man, as declared in the passage above quoted. But as God, in His mercy, ever gives warning before the execution

of judgment; so He “now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day in 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.)

A few days before the expected visitation, a warning of the coming tide was given from house to house; and, though that was so far well, yet the warning in itself afforded no means of deliverance from the coming calamity. How like this is to the law! It tells us, in plain terms, that, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” (Gal. iii. 10). This is a solemn word; and as “there is none righteous, no, not one,” it would by itself, leave the anxious sinner in despair. Law tells us that the consequence of not answering its demands is death; but it gives us not even a lift of the hand to help us to fulfil its claims, nor a single plank to aid us in stemming the influx of the coming judgment. Its very majesty is awful. It exacts without mercy; and in judgment gives no quarter. (Exodus xix., xx.; Hebrews xii.) Its alarming voice may, however, by God’s blessing, be the means of turning the consciously condemned sinner to Christ, who was “made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Happy is it for that soul, whom the

terrors of Law drive to Him, who blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." (Coloss. ii. 14.) "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." (Gal. iii. 22.)

At the entrance of a certain court, not far from the bank of the river, where several poor people resided, there was placed a thin plank, in the vain hope that it might prevent the entrance of the water, but so wretchedly inadequate was it as a means of protection, that it could be plainly seen that if the water overflowed, it would rush irresistibly into the miserable dwellings of the poor creatures. Such are the shifts to which poverty is compelled to resort! The absolute insufficiency of this means of averting the threatening danger, is not an inapt illustration of the total inadequacy, not to say absurdity, of the means on which men rely in order to meet the just judgment of God. They will trust to the smallest shred of fancied self-righteousness, or to an occasional emotional feeling of natural reverence for the name of God, which even the heathen may experience. In others, the reliance is the assumed outward observance of duties towards man; as in the case of the young man, in the 10th chap. of Mark, who in reply to the Lord's challenge as to the performance of those duties, as required by the law, complacently

said, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." But, however lovely might have been the morality which he exhibited, he shrunk from the edge of the word by which the Lord tested the state of his heart, and so he went away sorrowful. The case of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, after their fall, is to the same effect. They had sinned, and consequently "the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." The fig leaves might cover them up from each other, and they might seek the covert of the mercies of God, in order to hide themselves from the Giver of those mercies, but when He called them into His presence, they knew, notwithstanding their covering, that they were naked before Him, and were consequently afraid. The things in which men trust, out of the devisings of their own heart, as a ground of hope for acceptance with God, are indeed many and various; but they one and all fade away before His heart-searching word, which is "quick

and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight : but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv.)

The women who occupied the basements of the houses in the court, came to the resolution that, as they had no hope of help from any quarter, they would leave their furniture where it was, and when the tide came, would go with their children to a neighbouring bridge, and there remain until the water had subsided. Was not this a sensible resolve? Have you, poor sinner, made as wise a decision, as regards the salvation of your precious soul? Mark! the dwellings of those poor women were in the basements; and they had no hope of help from any source. They dwelt in the bottoms of those wretched houses, and refuge utterly failed them; they were, therefore, helpless, and they were hopeless. And is not this your condition in the sight of God? But have you been brought to a sense of this in your own soul, by believing His testimony concerning your state? It is well exemplified in the case of the man sick of the palsy, recorded in Mark ii., who was so helpless, that he was borne of four, and let down on the bed on which he lay, at the feet of Jesus.

What a strengthless and pitiable object! But he was just such a one as Jesus could bless; and so, He met the first need of his soul, by saying, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Yes; the first thing that a sinner needs is the forgiveness of his sins; and this he obtains by believing in Him: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." But, in addition to the forgiveness of his sins, Jesus imparted strength to his helpless limbs, in the power of which "immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all." Thus it is that Christ Himself becomes the strength of the believing soul, giving him power over those very things by which he was formerly led captive in the chains of Satan.

But notice another thing; the poor women determined to leave their property where it was. Now there can be no doubt that it was of value to them; but of what worth was it, in comparison with the saving of their lives? So they prudently resolved to leave it to its fate. And "what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul: Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" As, in the case of a storm at sea, when danger is imminent, orders are given to lighten the ship by throwing the stores overboard, if peradventure the lives may be saved; so should a soul take heed that when the seed of the word is sown, in

the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God, he be not choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and thus perish, even though he is listening to the words of eternal life.

To what a place of safety had these discreet ones resolved to flee, far away from the dangers of the overflowing tide ! The noble Bridge spanned and stood high above the dreaded waters ; and once upon that, they might defy the utmost rage of the tide. And, how vast a gulf has Christ, by His death and resurrection, reached over for the sinner ! Yea ; as the foundations of the Bridge were fixed below the swelling waters, so has Christ, by going down beneath the waves of death, under the judgment of God, for sin, opened a way by which a sinner may escape from the wrath to come, find an immediate and abundant entrance, through the precious name of Jesus, into the presence of God ; there to abide for ever, where neither stormy tempest, rising tides, nor sorrow or loss of any kind can ever enter.

To enable passengers to pass upon the Bridge referred to, a small toll is demanded ; but God claims not the payment of one mite from the sinner to enable him to enter, by Christ, into His presence. Nay ; if the smallest payment were tendered to Him, it would be utterly refused, for His grace is “without money and without price.”

Have you, dear reader, accepted of the full and free salvation of God ? If not, you are condemned

already, because you have not believed in the Name of the only-begotten Son of God. But even now, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

T.

THE BIBLE.

LIVING and *unchanging* record,
Of vast purpose wisely wrought,
By Divinest power sustained,
With Eternal wonders fraught.
Creation and Redemption's story
Here is fully, sweetly told ;
And the marvels of thy pages,
All the love of God unfold.

Kings have trembled at thy warnings,
Mighty men have known thy power,
Helpless ones have learnt thy sweetness
In temptation's darkest hour ;
And the men of *boasted* wisdom
Nought in thee discover still,
Where the child, whose soul is trusting,
Finds revealed *the Father's will*.

Finds here gems of God's *own setting*,
Treasures pure as they are bright ;
Sees the darkness of the journey
Cheered by God's unclouded light.
Gladly then our hearts do witness
To the strength thy lines afford ;
And with rapturous joy proclaim thee,
Everlasting Word of God !

A COMMON BUT FATAL DELUSION.

"You don't show much respect to travellers," said I, in a friendly tone, to a ploughman who did not lift the plough out when he came to the path which crossed the field, but cut through it, leaving nothing but the fresh ploughed land to walk on.

The strange voice brought the horses to a standstill as if they knew by instinct that my voice, strange to them, was the signal for a little rest.

The man, a regular "chapel-goer," who well knew me, assumed a very religious attitude, nodding and shaking his head, and bringing his hand down on to the plough to give emphasis to what he said, turned quite a preacher. "We are pupparin' the land for seed, sir. We must puppare the ground, or else 'taint no good to sow the seed, you know, sir, if we don't puppare the ground."

"Oh yes, I know, but I was speaking about the path, but I suppose if you did not break it up every year it would get full of weeds and rubbish, and rapidly spread, and so get into the land and become troublesome!"

"We must puppare the land, or else 'taint no good to sow, sir; the land must be puppared."

As I could not get him to speak about the path but only about preparing the land for the seed, I gave up, and let him have his own way, guessing at the same time what he was coming at.

"You know, sir," continued he, "we must puppare the ground afore sowin' the seed, 'tis no use to sow afore, and that, sir, minds us of another sowin'; 'taint no use to go to hear a sermon preached if we dont puppare our hearts for it afore we go. I said to a man the other day, 'I'll tell you something you don't know.' He said, 'What's that?' I said, said I, 'You may go to church,' said I, 'and' said I, 'you may hear a good sermon, but' said I, 'if you don't puppare your heart afore you go,' said I, 'tis no good the sowin' the seed.' That's what he ha'nt heard afore; he ha'nt been spoken so to, Sir."

"There is a great deal in what you say, friend, of course the ground must be prepared for the wheat, but with regard to ourselves, God says we are all alike guilty before Him. He is also very plain about the remedy, for He says there is no salvation but alone through the work of the Lord Jesus. He also says a man must be born again. It is very well for one who is saved to seek God's blessing on what he is going to hear, but what God wants of a poor guilty sinner is that he should come as he is to Him, without a thought of his preparing his heart for God."

"Quite right, sir," said he, and so whatever I said on the question of religion, I could see he was willing to assent. I could make no progress, and so we parted.

As I walked along to the sick ones I was going

to see, my thoughts were a good deal on the conversation we had had, and I was pained when I thought of how skilfully Satan had been able to use religion to blind the soul to God's way of salvation, for instead of going to Church or Chapel to find out how they can be saved, poor lost sinners make it their Sunday sort of business to be as religious as they can, and make a merit of preparing their hearts to hear properly. There may be a good deal of sincerity in this, yes, and so there may be and is in heathen worship, and the blessed God knows how to meet everything and how to deal with everyone, but no more can a man be saved by a religious profession, than can a man by the worship of idols for, "*Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

The poor idolater may not have heard of the bible nor of Jesus Christ at the cross taking the sinner's place and receiving from God the punishment due to the guilty, but how positively awful and inexcusable are those who regularly attend the preaching of the Word, and in whose hands is God's plainly revealed will, if they substitute a religious profession for Christ's finished work, and this, alas, is what the majority of so-called religious worshippers are doing in this country.

Are you one of them? If so, what can you say when brought face to face with the Judge at the coming day?

God in His word has made a full and clear

statement of what man is as seen by Himself. "Enmity," "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts." "Without strength," "sinners," "dead in trespasses and sins," "without God." His heart—"deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

What He says, too, in His word about the full provision for man's need, which He Himself has made, is as plain and clear as it is blessedly simple, coming down as it does to the very lowest of Adam's ruined race, who will accept it.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "Enemies reconciled to God by the death of His Son." "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him *all that believe are justified from all things.*"

Ah, dear reader, it is this preparing, the ploughman talked about, that is so fatal to thousands. Have not you, too, tried to become as religious as possible, and yet in your own soul you do secretly feel there is something more needed before you

can stand in the presence of a holy God? Yes, I can answer for you, for I tried it. You are not satisfied, you have not peace with God. Ah, no! the only way to get that is *God's* way—"Being justified by *faith* we have peace with God." Give up all thoughts from this moment of being anything in yourself, or of doing anything for yourself, but bow and accept what God *gives*, for the claims of His throne are met, and He is glorified about sin. Cannot you make the poet's words your own:—

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come!"

J. C.

EXTRACT.

MANY have not the courage to go on in God's warfare, because they hold to something which is inconsistent with the light they have received. Perhaps, alas! they lose the light which they have not acted up to, and Satan is able to bring their mind under the darkness of his good reasons for staying where they are, without conquering more territory from him, though they are uneasy, perhaps bitterly hostile, when light reaches them from without, which threatens to awaken conscience again.

GIANTS AND GRAPES.

Numbers xiii ; Deut. i.

How slow we seem to apprehend
That God *means* what He *says* ;
That He is our unfailing Friend,
In bright *and gloomy* days.
His might, yea, He Himself is ours—
Then shall we fear our foes,
Who meet us with their mighty pow'rs
Our progress to oppose ?
Though *Unbelief* may spurn and scorn,
And even *talk* of flight ;
Faith has no heart, no time to mourn,
When order'd on to *fight* !
Though Satan marshal all his hosts,
And vent his utmost rage,
The *Mighty God*, His people boasts ;
His word, their faultless *guage* :
And by *that* measure, what is man ?
Or ocean's raging flood ?
A giant's but a little span,
And *only* "flesh and blood."
Since nought of human strength *avails*,
We will not fear, *nor* trust ;
The very nations, in His scales,
Are only grains of dust.
The word is sure—"Yours is the land,"
Then shall we fail to win—
Although oppos'd on ev'ry hand
By Satan, death, and sin ?
Faith thinks not much of brazen *gates*,
Nor towers, though strong and tall :
The mightiest city but awaits
The *ram's-horn-blast*, to fall.

The true and loyal-hearted ones
Lean on a mighty arm,
And in the sight of *Anak's sons*
Are fearless, brave, and calm.
The fight is fierce, the foe is strong,
And earth with hell allied,
But faith has its victorious song—
“The Lord is on our side.”
Then courage, soldiers of the cross !
Shall *giants* make you quail ?
Yours is a bright, triumphant course,
Because *God* cannot fail.
When Unbelief for *Egypt* starts,
And talks of *casting stones*,
Then *Eschol grapes* shall cheer our hearts
And silence nature's groans.
The faithful heart His grace recruits,
When pressed by Satan sore :
The figs, and grapes, and luscious fruits
Bespeak His boundless store.
Can Satan, then, our hearts seduce
From yonder glorious One,
While drinking of the *precious juice*
Which flows from what He's done ?
Since Jesus died—since Jesus lives,
We've richer fields in store ;
And *better*, sweeter fruits He gives
Than *Eschol* ever bore.
E'en now the Holy Spirit brings
From *resurrection* fields
The life, and peace, and “better things,”
The cross of Jesus yields.
Since ev'ry stronghold's overthrown,
And sin is put away,
We'll follow Christ, and Him alone—
Faith always wins the day !

REGISTERED ;

Or, how may I KNOW that I AM saved ?

IN visiting one of the villages of Oxfordshire, calling from house to house, it happened that at one cottage a woman, full of deep earnestness, ran up to me saying, "Oh, sir, are you the gentleman that has come to register my baby?"

"No, I am not," I replied.

"I thought you was, sir, for the gentleman said he would come to-day, so I were expecting him."

"No, I am not he ; but I have come to know if you have been registered?"

"Me ! me, sir ! do you mean me?" she said, with great astonishment.

"Yes, truly ! I do mean YOU."

"Really, do you mean ME ? me, myself, sir?"

"Yes, I really do mean you, your very self. I have called to ask you if YOUR name has been registered?"

"Yes, sir, it has," said she, interrupting me.

"In heaven?" I added.

"Oh sir ! I do not know that."

"Well, that is what I want to ask you. Now, is your name written in the Lamb's book of life, for it is only they whose names are found there can go to heaven?"

"But how may I know that? We cannot see

the book, and much less can we see our names therein."

"That is true, we cannot with our natural eyes see our names written in the book of life. Indeed the natural man cannot know anything of the things of God, because they can be only spiritually discerned. Therefore we *must* have a spiritual nature, we must be born of God, we must have the Holy Spirit in order to see our names in God's book of life. There is, however, no difficulty for anyone who has believed in Jesus and been made a new creature in Christ, to know if he is going to heaven. Yea, it is the privilege of every child of God, not only to know, but to rejoice that his name is written in heaven. The Lord Jesus told His disciples not to rejoice that evil spirits had been made subject to them, but that their names were written in heaven. (Luke x.) The Thessalonian christians knew that they had been chosen of God, and, therefore, they were happy in Christ, and were able to endure very heavy afflictions for the sake of the truth; and they were continually waiting for the return of the Son of God from heaven." (1 Thes. i.)

The Holy Spirit of God writes to God's children, saying to them, These things have I written unto you that ye might know that ye *have* eternal life, (1 John v. 13), and the true believer's joy and privilege is to respond and say, We *know* we are of God. The believer has a divine nature in

him, that does ever by the Holy Ghost rise up to God, as made known to him in the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven.

Every one knows what he likes. A boy knows if he likes a game of play, and why does he like it? because he has a nature in him that does so. Does one love dress, or money, or pleasure? well, the reason is, simply because one has a nature in him that does so. But have I a nature that loves God, and that seeks after God, that loves His holy word, His doctrine, His ways, and will? Now if I have real and holy desires after the Lord Jesus, then surely that is of God, and not of mere nature, and so we *know* we are of God, and the whole world lies in the wicked one. Human nature never can love true, divine, spiritual worship. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and is, and can be, nothing else; but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and loves the Lord Jesus Christ HIMSELF, the glorified Son of Man in heaven. "The carnal mind is at enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, so that they who are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. viii.)

Thus it is quite clear we may, and, indeed, we ought to know whether our names are written in heaven, and we ought to be able to rejoice and thank God that they are there. The Spirit of God would have all true believers to give thanks unto the Father.

“ Giving thanks unto the Father, which *hath* made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who *hath* delivered us from the power of darkness, and *hath* translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we *have* redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” (Col. i. 12—14.)

But again it may be asked, How may I know that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life? Well, how did the Thessalonians know it? Was it by their frames and feelings, by their experiences? No, certainly not. Blessed as they may be, and doubtless are, in their proper place, their existence is no evidence that he who experiences them is saved. There may be abundance of warm and happy feelings apart from Christ. Many a heart has been filled with joy, but, alas! time has proved that after all, they were but dead, while they seemed to live—stony-ground hearers.

The writer knows an aged woman in the country, who for many years had passed for a very wonderful christian. Ministers, and other christians of all denominations have been in the habit of visiting her to learn of her, and to hear her remarkable experiences. Alas! it was her experiences, and not Christ, that she ministered to those who visited her; and now she is on her death-bed, the Lord has (happily indeed) come in, and taken away all her experiences, frames, and feelings, and the like, and now she finds that there

is nothing whatever to rest upon but Christ. But she is at present without hope, and miserable indeed. And what makes her case the more sad is, there seems to be no power to lay hold of the simple gospel, and simply to believe on Jesus the Christ of God, because her efforts are to get back her experiences, and not to confess Christ. She is taken up with herself instead of her Lord and Saviour. She is saying to herself, "Oh, that I were as in months past!" instead of looking to Jesus now, as a present Saviour. Thus it is seen that confidence in mere frames and feelings, apart from Christ, will never do, they are no grounds for peace whatever. They will never stand the test of a dying hour.

The early christians knew they were elected of God, because the gospel of God had come home with the power of the Holy Spirit. They believed that Christ Jesus is the Son of God, and that He laid down His life for lost sinners. They believed what God told them, that His only-begotten Son had borne all their sins, and had received the full amount of wages due on account of their sins, even eternal judgment. And in thus believing what God said, and confessing that Jesus was their Lord and Saviour, they had peace with God, and were delivered from the fear of death and eternal condemnation.

Now the question is, Have you, my reader, really in your heart believed in Jesus Christ, the

eternal Son of God ? No doubt you do believe in your head, but the question is, Is it with the heart you believe and confess Jesus as your Lord ? It is to be feared multitudes say, Sunday after Sunday, I believe in the Lord Jesus, and yet they are not saved, because the heart's affections do not go out towards Him whom they profess to believe in. Christ is not really in their hearts, they do not mind going to a place of worship on Sundays to hear a sermon, but they do not like to have the question put home to them in a personal manner, "Do you love Jesus?" There is really no joy to them, no sweetness in the name of Jesus. It makes them uncomfortable when it is pressed on them. He has no place in their hearts.

Now reader, do *you* care a bit for Christ ? Do you delight to hear His name, and is it a joy to you to bless and praise Him ? Do you go to a place of worship because it is respectable to do so, or because you love to meet with the children of God to offer up spiritual praises to Him who hath loved you, and given Himself for you ?

Well then, is it asked, How may I know that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life ? the answer is, simply, Do I heartily believe in Christ as my Lord and Saviour ? "He that believeth on the Son of God HATH everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) When we believe indeed in truth, the Good Shepherd gives us eternal life, and He puts us safely in the Father's hands, and

says to us, You shall never perish, and none shall pluck you from my Father's hands (John x. 28).

Well then, dear reader, is *your* name written in heaven?

SOUGHT AND FOUND.

THE Lord Jesus Christ in coming to this world of sin and evil had one great and glorious mission—one great object—one great aim—and that mission, that object, that aim, was salvation. He did not leave the glories of that upper sanctuary and become poor without some great object. He never would have left the riches of glory, the joy of heaven, and the association of angels, to come to associate with sinners if it had not been for some great end, and that great mission was to save, to seek and to save that which was lost—to seek the lost, and to save the lost. In one sense we might say, the Lord Jesus had only one mission, for whatever other glories surround the cross they are the glories of salvation; and the glories that surround Him in His life and resurrection are all secondary to the one of saving the lost.

These terms, while they are so dear to the believing heart, may feel repelling to others; but let us not rob the cross of its glory by claiming anything for Him but what the Apostle said—

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world *to save sinners.*” (1 Tim. i. 15.)

And what are we, gathered here this morning in the presence of our common Master and Lord, but a congregation of sinners? and yet, while we may all acknowledge this, there are those here that by faith in Him who has come, who lived and died, and rose again, can rejoice that they *are* sinners saved by grace, for, disguise it as we will, we are here to-day either as ‘sinners *saved*’ or sinners *lost*—sinners saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. The great mission He came for has been fulfilled for us in the salvation of our souls; but there are others here who cannot call themselves trophies of the Cross. For these He came to “seek and save the lost.”

There are two words—saved and lost—simple words, yet they bear such a very different meaning to our hearts, and may be illustrated by an anecdote of a poor woman whose son was on board the *Cambria* when that vessel was wrecked. The poor woman mourned for her son continually, crying, “Lost! lost! lost!” and wringing her hands day and night, she walked the floor, crying, “lost! my son is lost!” This continued for some time; health failed, and reason was almost dethroned, when one day she received a telegram containing one word, “*Saved!*” It was from her son at Liverpool. What a different feeling in that mother’s heart as

she said, "My son is saved! saved! saved!" I would there might be a telegram down from the Glory Land to some poor heart here to day, breathing by the power of the Spirit that sweet word—saved—saved by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. How many mothers are here? I know not. How many fathers? I know not—who (while their child may not be lost upon the rocks of some unfriendly shore) may have children, sons and daughters, lost—away from God—away from Christ—away from the associations that cluster around the Cross; or there may be fathers and mothers here who are themselves away on the dark hills of sin and unbelief, like sheep gone astray—lost—away from the shepherd—fallen into the pit, and cannot get out of it—poor, wandering, homeless souls.

Our hearts are moved with pity when we see wanderers of earth and homeless strangers. Our hearts are moved, but let them go out with love and pity for those for whom Christ died, who have no home for their souls—no home, rest, joy, or peace, for their hearts. If there be such an one here to-day, to *you* I bring this message in the name of my Master whose I am, and whom I serve. He came to seek and to find, and to save from the pit and the miry clay. Are you there? In the "horrible pit," in the "miry clay," trying to get yourselves out? It is a vain struggle—a vain endeavour; it takes a strong arm. You need

Saviour to take you out, and the Lord Jesus Christ is such a Saviour. He comes to save you. He *would not* be a Saviour if He only came to seek and to find, but He is *mighty to save* to the uttermost those who trust in Him. He not only gets down to where you are, but He raises you up out of the pit. In this He is a Saviour. In *Psa. xl. 1, 2* we have the recital of the *old-fashioned* way of saving souls. The Psalmist is telling us of *his own personal experience*. Read in the Acts and see what it was that stirred the people in that day. It was Paul's simple recital of the dealings of the Lord with his own soul. He does not declare merely what Jesus came to do, but what the Lord had really *done* for him.

The world may be full of opinions about it. There is but one fact—*What He has done*—and, my friends, the Church will never have power to prevail with God and with man until there are men and women who *can* and are willing to testify that they are souls saved by redeeming grace.

“He brought *me* up out of the horrible pit. . . He set *my* feet upon a rock, and established *my* goings.” Here is a personal claim, personal experience, while we may be free to acknowledge a great deal of praying after a fashion, without the experience that should not deter those who have a real experience from testifying what the Lord has done for them. He saves by His grace; we try by some power of our own to save ourselves—to

do something to merit it. It is impossible to keep a debit and credit account to try and bring the Lord out in debt to us—on account of our good works to make Him give us salvation at last. This will not be done by the Creditor up yonder—"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) If salvation were of works we should boast of what our hands have done: "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." (Tit. iii. 5.) Salvation is a free gift, and may be illustrated in this way:—

A poor woman passing through the garden of a king saw some beautiful ripe grapes hanging in bunches. She thought of her sick child at home, and thought, "Oh, if she had but some of them they would make her well." She went to the gardener and offered to buy some, but he refused, and drove her away. She went home sorrowful, and as she looked at her sick child she thought of the grapes, and scraped together all the money she could, and brought it the next day to the gardener to buy some of the grapes. Again he refused, and was sending her away, when a lady passed and asked what it was all about; and on hearing from the gardener she ordered him to give some to the poor woman; he obeyed at once, for she was the king's daughter. The poor woman overcome with gratitude offered her the money, but no, she would

not take it. She said "The grapes are yours ; my father is a king, not a merchant, and would not sell them ; they are yours, on condition that you accept them as a free gift."

Just so with salvation. My Father is not a merchant. He is a King, and He gives like a King ; take salvation as a present. We say our Father is a King, not a merchant. He does not seek payment. *He gives*, and saves those who will receive the great gift of heaven.

But some may say that is too easy—too simple. One great difficulty in receiving the Gospel of God's dear Son is because it is so easy. It is humbling to receive from another what we cannot give anything in return for. After we receive salvation we can work, for *we have* peace with God. Vain is the endeavour to work for peace. We must first join the army before we can be drilled ; we must be brought into the covenant relationship. If we don't know our Master we can't do the work of our Master. All is grace from beginning to end. We are "justified by faith, and *have* peace with God." (Rom. i.) The righteousness of God is imputed to us ; we have peace by being justified. The peace that comes by faith is *an everlasting peace*. The peace that comes by works is ours to-day, but gone to-morrow. Not so the peace He gives—"The peace of God which *passeth all understanding*." (Phil. iv. 7.) We could understand peace, which was the result of works

or of merit, but “the peace of God passeth all understanding.” This is the result of faith in Christ’s work, love, and sacrifice. It is a lasting peace which the world knows not of. When we have this peace, then it is He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, so that God has created us in Christ Jesus unto good works. (Eph. ii. 10.)

After salvation, after peace, and joy, and a Saviour’s smile, then we realize that we are created unto good works. First, made children of our Father; then we are to work as dutiful, *obedient* children, not only a work of faith but a labour of love. Faith works by love.

It is necessary to refer to this for fear we should fall back to the old idea of salvation by our works. We must not rob the Cross of one bit of its glory. I have not time nor strength now to dwell upon this great salvation; but just a few thoughts of its simplicity, so that those who are away from Christ and lost may receive them.

The Lord Jesus saves by His death and resurrection. He is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep, in order that we poor lost sheep and lambs who are away from God—away from Christ, might be saved. He has loved us so well that He died for us—died that we might live. This was His great mission—salvation. He saves by death and resurrection. The law of nature and of grace teaches that there must be death before life. The resurrection life in Christ, the death of the old

man, the crucifixion of self before the life and joy. We must *accept* salvation through Him alone—the sacrifice. Even when we sit down at the daily board to our meals we are reminded by the food we partake of, that before our life could be sustained there must be death. The spring time tells us of it. Without this death there could be no life. Jesus compared himself to a corn of wheat. “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.) Here we see death and resurrection. A few weeks ago I saw a handful of corn. It had been grown from some which had lain for 3,000 years in the tomb of an Egyptian monarch. As long as it lay there, there was no fruit. It was sown, then two results took place ; it died, decayed ; then there sprang up fruit—death, then life. The Lord Jesus represents Himself as the corn of wheat. He must needs die. He did die, and from that death there sprang up life and fruit. Without the death there could not be the Spirit coming out of the ark of grace and love. “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father He shall testify of me.” (John xv. 26.) This is as though Jesus said, If I had not died you would not have the Spirit. He is sent by the intercession of Jesus. Let us not turn lightly away from the scenes of agony, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He died and now because He

lives we *shall* live also ; for so sure as Christ was raised from the dead, *so surely* shall those who believe be raised, and live, and reign with Him. The Lord often took the things around to give us lessons from. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people." (Psa. cxxv. 2.)

Not by the hills, but by *His own eternal existence*, He guarantees the eternal life of the believer : "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv. 19.) He passed down through the valley, and rose the third day—the guarantee of our life, our resurrection, our well-being with Him.

We are lost sinners, and as unsaved sinners we need to be saved and reconciled to God by the death of His Son. He died as a sacrifice to bring us to God. It may be explained thus :—

A young man who was a rebellious son, ran away from the restraint of home, and brought his mother with sorrow to the grave. He heard she was dying, and hurried home in time to receive her forgiveness. He took no notice of his father, but the dying mother raised her hands, and as they stood, father and son, on either side of the bed, she took the hands of each in one of hers and drew them in her own. So the son was reconciled to the father who had never ceased to love him, and now received him gladly. (Luke xv.) Figures at best are imperfect. This is one feature of the Lord Jesus Christ. While He takes the hand of the

Father in one of His own, and with the other He takes that of the lost sinner, and by death He makes peace.

Will we not come by faith, and take the hand stretched out to save, and be saved from wrath through Him who bore the wrath and judgment and justice of God against our sin?

One more feature. "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life." (Rom. v. 10.) Now the believer has life, peace, and fruit. Now we have a living Saviour, and we have seen Him saving the lost. Our salvation is secured by His life. We behold Him as a Prince and Saviour—a living Saviour. No longer the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary. They will never be repeated. The sacrifice on the altar has been made *once for all*. Now we have a living Saviour, *present* salvation, an *eternal* salvation—Jesus—to save from sin, and to keep us from sinning—a redeeming Saviour and a keeping Saviour, "kept by the power of God" (1 Peter. i. 5), secured in the everlasting arms. Here is the secret of the believer's rest and peace, because he knows he is secure—*kept as secure* as the throne itself is secure—kept by the hand which must fall powerless before the weakest believer that trusts in Him can perish.

The Sun of Righteousness Himself must be blotted out before one of these little ones shall

perish. The fountain itself must be dried up before one of the little rills that flows from it cease. His hand must become weak like our own were He to lose hold of us.

So we have in Jesus not only a redeeming Saviour, but also a keeping Saviour—one who will keep us in life and in death—who will yet “present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24.)

If there be one reader whose soul is unsaved, it was for *you* He came—to save you.

Just as thou art, without one trace
Of love, or joy, or inward grace,
Or meetness for the heavenly place,
O *guilty* sinner, come !

Thy sins I bore on Calvary's tree,
Thy stripes, thy due, were laid on me,
That peace and pardon might be free,
O *wretched* sinner, come !

Come, leave thy burden at the cross,
Count all thy gains but empty dross,
My grace repays all earthly loss,
O *needy* sinner, come !

Come hither, bring thy boding fears,
Thy aching heart, thy bursting tears,
'Tis mercy's voice salutes thine ears,
O *trembling* sinner, come !

“The Spirit and the Bride say, Come ;”
Rejoicing saints re-echo, come ;
Who faints, who thirsts, who will, may come,
The Saviour bids thee come.

TERTIUS.

"I, TERTIUS, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord" (Rom. xvi. 22). This salutation occurs near the close of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, and is introduced in quite an exceptional way; for, so far as I remember, there is no other instance where an individual, other than the inditer of the letter, directly addresses the saints in His own name, though the instances are numerous in which the Apostle conveys the expression of the love and interest of others in the saints with whom he is communicating. In this Epistle several saints and servants of Christ are thus mentioned. (See verses 21, 23.) Again, I am not aware that Tertius is named in any other place in the Scriptures, than in that now before us. Is there not, however, in this single and simple introduction of his name into an epistle which was dictated by the Holy Spirit Himself, something from which profit and instruction may be derived? Surely, there is; and may God guide us in our search to discover what it is.

It is a blessed truth that by "one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." So also is it, that "now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him." And blessed, too, is the further truth, that "God

hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that, miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." (See 1 Corinthians xii.) What do we learn from these Scriptures? Well, much more than we can dwell upon at the present moment; but this blessed fact is surely discernible in them: that God has, in His infinite grace, constituted the members of Christ one body, of which Christ is the living Head, the formative and binding power being the one Spirit. This body is composed of many members, each of which is set in the body, as it hath pleased God. Every member is, consequently, set or placed in that part of the body where it hath seemed well to God to place him. As well might the hand, for instance, in the natural body pretend to be an eye, an ear, or an arm, as for any member of the body of Christ to assign to himself a different place in the body from that in which God has set him. If God has set me as a hand, such I am, and such I must remain; nothing can alter it. And, rightly understood, this is a great blessing; for He has placed me in that position in the body where I can glorify Him, and be of service to the other members of the body. And let us not suppose that we must necessarily occupy a prominent place in the body in order to be of service; for it is written that "much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are neces-

sary." For instance, as respects the natural body, suppose my occupation is that of constant writing, and the little finger on my right hand by some means becomes injured, I scarcely know what to do so as to continue my employment. I soon find out the value of the little finger by the loss of it, and though I may, after a time, manage to make use of another in its stead, it is a poor shift after all. It is true that the little finger cannot perform the service of an arm or a foot, but on the other hand, neither can the arm or the foot do the work of that humble member of the body. It is as necessary as the others, and for its own special work it surpasses the rest. Oh ! that this truth were more clearly seen and acted on by the various members of the body of Christ. How serviceable we should be ; and how happy in our service ! If I am conscious that the line of things in which I am engaged is that which is according to the mind of Christ, and consequently measured to the ability which God has given to me, what matters it what the work is ? The drops of rain which fall into the river, though small in themselves, all contribute to its fulness, and add to the strength of its flow and the power of its fertilization.

As regards gifts, "are all apostles ? are all prophets ? are all teachers ?" Certainly not. But is there nothing for a saint of God, whose heart is fresh in the love of Christ, to do in His precious

Name, except by those of whom these questions are asked? Far be the thought! Paul, indeed, was an apostle, and could say, "In nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing;" and as we know, he "laboured more abundantly than they all." Christ gave them this honour, and let us honour Christ by showing our appreciation of His servant to whom He committed so much, sustaining him in faithfulness and devotedness to the end. Now, though Tertius might have been but a dwarf by the side of such a giant in the things of God, he was, nevertheless, useful to that one who was thus specially set apart to complete the Word of God. It was but an humble service that he is here shewn to us as rendering, but he was in the current of the Spirit of God in His use of His chosen vessel at that time; and there can be no doubt, I judge, that in acting as his amanuensis he was doing a service for him better than he could have done it for himself. It is not, however, that point merely which I would notice. Was not the service, humble though it might be, service to Christ? And had not Tertius the privilege of connecting the work on which he was engaged, with Christ Himself? All have not five talents committed to them, but he who had been faithful with the two which he had received, was rewarded by the Master with the same words of approval, as he who had been faithful and diligent with the greater number committed to him. Oh! that we were all single-eyed

and true-hearted in any little service that we can render in the Name of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

It appears to me that Tertius was in the true spirit of his privilege, in saying, "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle." He seems to have counted it an honour to have been used as a penman in the communication of the wondrous words of God addressed to the saints at Rome. The true honour of the servant is to do, with a free heart, the thing that Christ has given him to do. It is a wretched thing to be aiming at things which He never gave us to do, and leaving undone the things for which He has fitted us, and for the performance of which He holds us responsible. And that service for which He has given us the ability, if we are doing it in communion with Himself, becomes us in the doing of it. There is an ease, a freedom from restraint, and an adaptation of the vessel to the service, which is apparent to others, and glorifying to the Lord.

One's object in drawing attention to the case of Tertius is not to magnify the particular service which is connected with his name, but to encourage each of our hearts, that we may seek to fill up whatever sphere the Lord may have placed us in; not passing it by, or despising it, because it may be of an humble character, but looking to Him for grace to do it heartily and devotedly, as unto Himself. "As every man hath received the gift,

even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth : that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." T.

NINE YEARS OLD.

WHILE waiting on the Oxford platform for my train, a little boy came near me whistling away very mer rily. "Well, my little man," I said to him, "what makes you so happy this morning? do you know your sins are put away?"

"Yes, sir!" was the prompt reply: "they are all put away by the precious blood of Jesus!"

"Where did you learn that?" I asked; not expecting so ready and so happy an answer from a little school-boy of nine years old.

"Mr. W—the minister taught me that from the word of God, and I know they are all washed away in the blood of Jesus."

"And are you really happy through that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are your parents christians?"

"Mother is, sir; my father ran away, and we are left alone."

The train coming up, and taking leave of the boy, I praised God for His grace in making a

little heart happy through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and what He had done upon the cross. Surely out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He has ordained praise.

I could see it was not the lesson learnt by rote, alas ! too often the case, but the child had life—divine life—for he had Christ. The word of God was believed in with all a child's simplicity, and again God was honoured : He had a place in a boy's heart and affections which is denied Him by many a man—many a woman.

It is refreshing to one's heart to get so happy, so clear an answer to such a question. How rarely it is, even among professing christians, to be able to say, their sins are all washed away in the precious blood of Jesus ; and yet how clear is the scripture on such a point—He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ *hath* everlasting life ; that for him there is no judgment, no wrath, no condemnation, because the One he believes in has atoned for sin—has taken the cup of wrath and drank every drop, so that the believer is privileged to say, "There is, therefore, *now* no condemnation." (Rom viii. 1.)

Oh ! for more real, simple faith in the living God, who has done such great things for us—who, in order that we might not perish, but have everlasting life, gave up His only-begotten Son to death, even the death of the cross.

"I'LL WAIT TILL I'M BETTER."

A SERVANT of Christ when on a visit to a town not many miles from London, was staying at a friend's house, and whilst there, a person came to the door, and asked for some one to go and see a sick man, evidently lying on the bed of death. He immediately went, and whilst on the way he heard an account of the man he was about to visit. It was something as follows:—

He was the husband of a woman who had been a notable sinner—yea, a terrible sinner; but who, through the grace of God, had been led to believe on Him who is the Saviour of sinners, even Jesus Christ; and she, having so much joy in the Lord in consequence of having so much forgiven her, was exceedingly anxious that her husband might also enjoy the happiness of possessing eternal life, and of knowing the pardon of all his sins. She used often to speak to him in a very simple manner—that it was only to believe in Jesus, to come as a poor lost sinner, and accept what God had to give—even eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ, bidding him trust in confidence for peace to the finished work of Christ.

All seemed, however, in vain; he would say in a boasting manner, "He," speaking of the Lord Jesus, "hasn't done much for me, that I should think of Him;" and such like things; thus despising the proffered mercy of God. But now he

was laid on a bed of affliction, and although naturally a strong man, he became as helpless as a babe—even now he did not want to hear about Christ—had no thought of dying yet, and said he would wait till he was better before he talked of such things.

When the visitor reached the house, the poor man was lying in a state of great exhaustion and was gasping for breath. He was so ill that he could scarcely bear to hear the sound of the human voice. When asked about his soul, he replied, "I'll wait till I'm a little better, and then I'll think of these things." But in spite of this the visitor spoke to him in tender tones about Jesus who came down into this world and died upon the cross on account of sin; and how that all who believe on Him should be saved, no matter how vile a sinner he might be, if he would trust in Jesus, as a poor ruined sinner, he would be saved.

All, however, that could be got from him was, "I'll wait till I'm a little better."

Alas! he never got better, in a few days he died. He had entered upon eternity, and what an eternity for him!

Dear reader, are you saved? do you know that if at this moment you were to step into eternity you would spend it with Christ in heaven? oh, if not—if you are still unsaved, let me entreat you to delay not a moment in coming to Christ! *To-day*

if you will come to Him you may be saved—*to-morrow* may be too late. You may be a strong man now ; you may now be enjoying the pleasures of health ; you may have riches ; but your health may not last, and your riches may take to themselves wings and flee away ; oh ! trust not to anything short of Christ. Do not say you will wait till you are different from what you are. This poor man put off and put off until it was too late. Will you be like him ? You may be saved if you like now, but *to-morrow* you may be for ever amongst the lost ones. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” is the message to each sin-burdened one now ; but if you die in your sins you will have to listen to those terrible words—“depart from me.”

J. A. B.

EXTRACT.

AN old and suffering Scotch woman was asked by her minister on her dying bed, “What, if after all your prayers, and watching, and waiting, God should suffer your soul to be lost ?” She quietly replied, “Ah, dearie me ! is that a’ the length you have got yet, mon ?” and then continued, her eyes sparkling with delight, “God would hae the greatest loss. Poor Nannie would but lose her soul, and that would be a great loss indeed, but

God would lose His honour and His character.
Haven't I hung my soul upon His gracious
promise, an' if He brak' His word, He would mak'
Himself a liar, and a' the universe would rush
into confusion."

SINGING FOR JESUS.

"With my song will I praise Him."—Psa. xxviii. 7.

Singing for Jesus, our Saviour and King,
Singing for Jesus, the Lord whom we love ;
All adoration we joyously bring,
Longing to praise as we praise Him above.

Singing for Jesus our Master and Friend,
Telling His love and His marvellous grace ;
Love from eternity, love without end,
Love for the loveless, the sinful and base.

Singing for Jesus, and trying to win
Many to love Him, and join in the song ;
Calling the weary and wandering in,
Rolling the chorus of gladness along.

Singing for Jesus, our Life and our Light,
Singing for Him as we press to the mark ;
Singing for Him when the morning is bright,
Singing, still singing, for Him in the dark.

Singing for Jesus, our Shepherd and Guide,
Singing for gladness of heart that He gives ;
Singing for wonder and praise that He died,
Singing for wonder and joy that He lives.

Singing for Jesus, oh, singing with joy !
Thus will we praise Him and tell out His love,
Till He shall call us to brighter employ,
Singing for Jesus for ever above.

*From "Under the Surface," by
Frances Ridley Havergal.*

DANGEROUS!

AT one of the watering places on the southern coast a young friend of mine had been staying for a short time. He was fond of bathing, and being a good swimmer might often be seen breasting the white-crested wave far away from shore. On one occasion, however, he sought a more solitary spot than usual, where bathers seldom resorted, because of the well-known character of the sunken rocks that abounded there. In order to prevent accidents to strangers who would be unacquainted with the coast and its unseen dangers, the authorities had caused a board to be placed there, with the word "DANGEROUS!" painted thereon in large letters so that no one might be deceived. My poor friend, however, disregarded the warning. He had made up his mind to bathe there, and the caution as to the unseen dangers might be heeded by more timid people: he was a good swimmer, and what had he to fear? Ah! those who had sounded its depths knew the treacherous character of the rocks that lay beneath that oft-times calm surface, and had raised that friendly board to warn strangers who might be tempted to plunge into such dangerous depths. It was disregarded, and from a high point of rock that jutted out a little way into the sea he boldly plunged. Alas! it was a fatal

plunge, for he never rose again alive. Some time after, the clothes were found near to the board that warned him of his danger; and in a few days the body of my poor friend was seen floating upon the waters. From the appearance the body presented, it would seem that, as he plunged in, his head must have struck upon a rock, and instantly stunned him.

As in natural things so also in divine things—in spite of admonition and warning, the unconverted, for the most part, go on in the way of danger. Indeed, the greater the danger, oft-times the greater the desire to plunge therein. The Word of God is clear and explicit as to the course which a man who is at enmity with God is pursuing, and what it ends in, that it is destruction. But God does not let a man go on thus unwarned, for He willeth not that a man should perish, but that he should turn to Him, and be saved.

Many a time, and in various ways, is the truth of God brought to bear upon the conscience, yet how it is fought against and repelled every christian can bear testimony to, as each, in some way or other in his own time, resisted it and tried to repel its convincing and converting power, until by grace brought to bow as a poor lost sinner at the feet of Jesus, and with thankfulness has accepted pardon, life, and peace at His hands who laid down His life to procure them, for those who were lost and far away from God.

I have known a text learned at a mother's knee in childhood, but which had been forgotten and buried beneath the mass of rubbish which youth and early manhood had gathered, to rise up at some unexpected moment in the heart when a fatal plunge was about to be taken—that little text came before the mind in such a striking manner, that it resembled the board on the rocky coast with its warning note, "DANGEROUS." The warning was heeded, and the young man I refer to was saved. He was about to plunge into a sea of pleasure, to strike out boldly into the world's great ocean, all unconscious of the shoals and treacherous rocks that lie beneath the calm surface of things below.

Satan has his varied allurements, suited to the character and taste of every one he seeks to seduce. Sometimes it is the unruffled scene of quiet life for those who are content with "smooth sailing," who find all their enjoyment in things that minister for the day and the hour—whose is the language, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;" who would not have their quietude ruffled by so disturbing an element as eternal things. The soul is occupied with its well-filled barns, and its only anxiety is—"how shall I dispose of my increasing store? I will pull down my barns, and I will build greater ones." Am I speaking to such an one? Do let me ask you to look at the board which the Gospel rears before your eyes with its word,

“DANGEROUS,” thereon. One of old plunged into such a sea, and worldly prosperity was the rock he struck upon to his destruction. Solemn words were those which rang in his ears, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee ! then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided ? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God ” (Luke xii. 16—21). Oh, ye who are in ease and quietness, and content therewith, see how you are being lured on and on with the desire of possessing that which death will one day rob you of, and you shall not know who will gather. Take heed to the warning word. The world is an unsatisfying portion, as all will find who plunge therein. The *lawful* things are often the most dangerous. It is when the heart has got Christ, that it has a treasure that no robber can steal. Far better to be disturbed now by the sense of the non-reality of present things, and the nearness of eternity, in order that the heart may get Christ and with Him eternal life, than to be broken in upon by death, and taken away from all that the heart holds dear, to the blackness of darkness for ever.

But there is another man who would scorn this kind of life. He is a man of spirit, and full of vigour. He has great thoughts, and a mind that seeks to do something great and grand, that would achieve a name and a fame, and to make himself famous among the sons of men. For him the

“barns” and the “possessions” have no charms. He must plunge into a boisterous sea; the more risk, the greater the charm for him. In vain he may have been warned, the board with its strange word is despised. Alas! how oft, when too late, he finds himself among the breakers, he has struck upon a rock, and all is over. I remember one who who was in the steam-ship, the “London,” who was going to foreign lands to make his fortune. “He *would* go,” was the solemn utterance of those who mourned over the hopeless young man. Many a time the loving hand of a christian mother had pointed her self-willed boy to the “board,” and the dangerous course he was taking; all his young hopes and prospects were buried with the fatal wreck in the remorseless ocean.

Another on the same vessel, who had made his name among the sons of men, was seen, a little while before the ship went down—as the captain gave up all hopes of being saved, to pace the deck with a lowering brow and compressed lips. What did his hard-earned fame avail him now? He had grasped at the fruit of this world’s vine, and found the fruit, beautiful to look upon, was as ashes to his taste. Had not he seen the board which mercy had reared? No doubt of it. God has not left Himself without a witness. “The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; while the simple pass on and are punished.” Be prudent, unsaved reader, and hide yourself in God’s refuge.

The refuge is near to you—no energy is needed, It is, “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

The bird, seeing the coming tempest, instinctively flies with eager wings to its nest ; but the sinner, alas ! too often scorns the note of warning, and braves the blast, and he will surely find not a tree to shelter him in the day of wrath.

Some who have hidden themselves in the refuge which grace has provided have been seduced from their simplicity in Christ, and by the artifices of the enemy have turned aside after some fleeting vanity or vain pursuit ; and when the heart has found how unsatisfying everything is apart from Christ, it has had to take up the mournful words of the poet :

“ What peaceful hours I once enjoyed—
How sweet their memory still !
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill.”

And what shall the wanderer do in his extremity ? Shall he in his despair of urther and further away ? Let him take heed to the word which tells him of the dangerous path he is pursuing—and turn to Him who says, “ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John i. 9.)

How calm and beautiful the ocean is at times, as it is stretched out before our gaze. Vessels of

all sorts are there ; the man-of-war ploughing its depths, and causing a path of foam—the little skiff floating upon the surface as light as a feather. So is the world as a scene of pleasure. Harmless and innocent seem its amusements at first, but in too many instances it has been a shipwreck for the one who has sought to plunge therein. Blessed be God, many have been rescued ere too late—'tis a greedy vortex that would swallow up both body and soul. A christian's heart is made to ache as he sees the blind votaries of pleasure led on by Satan, his willing slaves. What can we do in such a case? We can raise the friendly board—may-be the warning word will catch some eye—and cause some feet to turn from the dangerous paths to Him whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and whose paths are peace.

A christian once gave a tract to one of those poor creatures who parade the streets of London. It was a simple tract telling of God's love to the lost and undone, and of His willingness to save—however deeply their souls may be dyed in guilt.

The poor creature shewed her contempt for the tract and the giver, by crushing it up and throwing it on the ground, and stamping on it with her heel. But she had not gone far before something induced her to turn back and pick up the crumpled tract. When she reached the wretched place she called her home, she tossed it upon the mantel-

piece ; a companion in sin, took up the crumpled paper and read it. God blessed it to the soul of the poor young woman, and when next she saw her companion, related to her what God had done for her soul, the result of which was that the one who had crumpled the tract wept bitterly, for she confessed her misery, and the two left the wretched house as soon as possible. They found christian friends who took them by the hand and rescued them.

The two young people found—or rather were found of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Here again a friendly hand raised the board with its significant warning, and two were rescued from the sunken rocks that threatened them with destruction.

Fellow-christian, thousands are going on to destruction ignorant of their danger, *you* know it, will you not raise your friendly *board* and warn them, and yet more, point them to God's place of safety—Christ ?

If amid the thousands who read the Ambassador one soul is led to Jesus—*our Board* with its warning word will not have been raised in vain—and to any one who reads this, and is yet unsaved—we warn such, that to go on for a day—yea, an hour, without knowing salvation by Jesus Christ is

D A N G E R O U S.

POLL PEG.

WHERE is happiness to be found? This is the question the gay and the young are asking, and they seek for it in the pleasures and amusements of this life, and turn away disappointed. Is it in the abodes of wealth? Is it in the shady glen, or is it in the bustling city?

Let us enter a dark hovel near the village of Desford, in Leicestershire, and see if we can find an answer there to the question of tens of thousands of seeking hearts. Here are the bare beams with gaping crevices that cannot exclude the weather. A table and some broken chairs are all the furniture, except what seems intended for a bed, though it looks too uninviting to court repose. In this wretched room sits a very old woman, almost motionless, scarcely clothed, and her white hair hanging uncombed over her shoulders. Ask her how she is. "Very ill," she replies, "my poor body is ill; but I am well, very well." "Are you in pain?" "Yes, always in pain but not such pain as my Saviour suffered for me—what is pain or poverty? they signify nothing to me; or what is all the world when compared with the love of Christ?"

But poor Poll Peg could not always have said this. For the greater part of her life she had lived without Christ; it is true she had become familiar with the language of Scripture, and knew

the promises and threatenings it contains, but she did not heed them. Her first earnest religious feeling was once when walking alone in the fields ; she bethought herself of her hard fate—a youth of toil, an old age of want and misery—and if she must go to hell at last, how dreadful was her portion. Struck with the appalling thought, she knelt down beneath the hedge to pray—the first time, perhaps, that heartfelt prayer had gone up to heaven from her lips.

A dream she had about this time, in which she believed heaven and its happiness were promised her, also made a strong impression upon her mind. With a heart deeply impressed with the love and mercy of her God, she could now rely fully and undoubtingly on her Saviour. She lived six or seven years after, but time made no change in her feelings. She passed these years in the extreme of poverty, dependent on the alms of some few persons who knew and visited her ; she passed them in pain and helplessness ; mocked and insulted by her husband and sons, and insulted often by her unfeeling neighbours, who came to laugh at her devotion and ridicule her hopes. “I wish every poor sinner could feel as I do at this moment,” she would say ; “Oh, if they did but know the happiness there is to be found in Jesus Christ !” I tell them all what He has done for me, and some of them mock me and make game of me, but I don’t mind that, it

only makes me stronger in it, my blessed Lord was mocked and made game of. I can remember the time when I was dark and ignorant as they are, but yet I always had a desire after religion; I never could mock and make game at it."

When I was a child I had an uncle who used to talk to me about Jesus Christ; I always loved to hear him, but then I was quite dark, I did not know Him." "But He knew you, and fixed His love upon you," it was remarked. "Oh," she said "if He had not I should have been lost many and many a time; once I was nearly drowned, and if my Lord had not kept me then, my poor soul must have been lost, for I had no knowledge of Him. I tried to live as well as I could, according to my notions then; I was fond of visiting the sick, and hearing anybody read, but it was just like anybody reading a little story book, or a chapter and thinking no more about it. I never could fix anything till this change came, and then everything seemed fixed for me: my prayers were put into my mind just the same as if my Lord had been here to teach me, and He is always putting such happy thoughts in my mind. I often think what a poor uncomfortable creature I was in my undone state, always mourning and repining. I worked hard and fared hard, and was afraid of going to hell at last; but now there is no complaining; if my body was ten times more afflicted than it is, I would praise my blessed Lord. When I

am in pain and can't sleep I keep calling to Him ; my husband asks me what I am about, and tells me to hold my tongue, but I keep calling on."

"And your words may soften his heart." "Oh ! yes," she replied, "but they will be of no use without His Spirit, I can do nothing myself. I tell them all what He has done for me when they will hear me ; but when I see they don't like it I drop it, and pray for them."

On some remarks being made about the wretched state of her cottage, she said, "What does it signify ; if it is a poor place it is a happy place, and I have a better home to go to when my Lord pleases to take me. I am quite ready, but am willing to wait His appointed time. I am rarely off, Jesus Christ is with me, and what is my pain compared with what He suffered for my poor soul ? I desire to praise Him from the very bottom of my heart, and not only now and then, but always ; I would not part with the happiness I now have for all the riches in the world : they would be no more to me than a bit of chaff. I had some girls come to see me last night, and I set them to sing : you can't think how it rejoiced my heart to hear them, I could have kept them all night, it was so delightful, it seemed to lift my soul to heaven. But what will it be when I get there ? My daughter reads to me sometimes and I love to hear her : I could sit up all night without being tired."

“About a year ago,” said the daughter, “I little thought my mother and I should ever be so happy. When I first thought of my own soul I felt very much for her for fear she should be lost: I used to read to her, and was afraid she did not like it.”

Once she said, “I have been a deal worse this day or two, but quite as happy as ever. I always say, when I am weakest then my blessed Lord is strongest. Bet went to our parish yesterday to ask for some relief, but they are not willing to allow me any: they say, if we can’t do without we must go there. When she told me, I said, I don’t mind what they do with my poor body, my soul is safe. I don’t fear them that can only kill the body, but I fear Him that can kill the soul. My Lord has appointed this rod, and He knows what is good for me. I know He will never leave me, and He is more than meat or drink to me. I was so bad yesterday when Bet was gone, I thought I should not see her again. I prayed to my Lord to keep her steadfast in faith, and that she might grow stronger and stronger in Him. I have never had any fear but once, and then it seemed as if something told me I was not right, I must go back, it was no use for me to try: then I thought of my Saviour being tempted in the wilderness, and my fears were all gone in a twinkling, and ever since I have been stronger and stronger. I once remember a neighbour talking to me about

a Christian life being a happy life : I thought then I never could live a Christian life, I felt there was something wanting that I had not, but now I know indeed it is a happy life : many people vilify me, but then I think my Lord was vilified, so I don't mind it : many people say they can go to heaven without making such a fuss and being so righteous as me, but I say it must be a *sincerity* thing, it isn't saying a word now and then, but the whole mind, heart, and head must be in it : blessed be my Lord, He keeps me steadfast to Him : if anything draws my thoughts off they come back again in such a hurry."

"Nothing ruffles me now or puts me in a pet, but before this change came I had a comical fiery temper. I wish my poor old man did but know what I enjoy, but when I talk to him about my Saviour it only makes him curse, and I cannot bear to hear him. I believe I must pray for him and not let him know. My son, too, grieves me very much, he takes no notice of what I say to him : when I see them going on in such a way, it makes me humble to think what their end will be if the Lord does not change their hearts."

"I have had a great many people come to see me lately, I love to have them come that I may talk to them : my Lord teaches me what to say, what poor ignorant creatures we are without Him ; some people came in last night thinking to talk me down, but they confessed at last that I was

right. They began with talking about the hard times, and said that many would be starved to death. I told them that was poor faith, did not God manage everything? They almost made me in a passion, I don't mean to say that I was out of temper, but I talked loud, they had just been to the meeting and thought they knew everything."

"I had a long holding last night with my husband's sister, who is ill, but she is very awkward: she said she wanted something to eat and drink, and good support for her body, as for her soul it must be with that as it happened, for she was no scholar; but what a poor excuse that will be: it is not a scholarship that will bring people to heaven: I am no scholar, but the Lord has fixed the knowledge of salvation in my heart. It is not what I have learned out of books, but what He has taught me by His blessed Spirit. I tell all who come to see me what the Lord has done for me, and if it is His will, it may be the means of making them seek Him, too."

"Bet has had so little work to do lately, and everything is so dear, that it makes her seem almost cast down; but I tell her it is wrong, the Lord will take care of us. We had no bread to-day, but we had potatoes, and I always return Him thanks, whether He sends us little or much."

A little before her death she called Bet and the other children to her and said, "I shall not be so long with you as you may think, my time now

will be very short, don't delay the great business of salvation, you don't know that you have a day or an hour to live to an end, and delays are dangerous: the thief on the cross was saved at the last hour, but you don't know that you shall be saved at the last hour."

"I now begin to think my time long, but I am no ways discontented, only I long to be with Christ in heaven, but He has fixed the time and that is best."

"THE GREAT POT."

Read 2 Kings iv. 38—41.

Recollections of a Gospel Address.

ELISHA, the man of God, comes to Gilgal, when there was a dearth in the land. He is God's representative in the land, and as such is there to minister to the needy ones. The sons of the prophets sit before him—the attitude of needy souls who can do nothing, but who expect all from Elisha. It is Gilgal, too—the place which typically speaks the language of Phil. iii.—no confidence in the flesh. But there is Elisha, the man of grace, ready to minister from the fulness of Him whose representative he is, to those who will take the place of the needy ones. What a picture of man's condition in the world—the place of dearth, utterly unable to procure anything that

will satisfy the craving of the poor heart; but unto the place of dearth Elisha comes, and the command is, "Set on the great pot." How like to God that is when ministering to needy souls. He is a great giver—He will not be narrowed up—He is not straitened, and He gives liberally. Was not Elisha acting in the spirit of His great prototype of the 9th of Luke, when He took compassion of the needy multitude and made them sit down before Him on the grass, and fed them till all were filled?

When God acts in grace to His needy creatures the command is to the servants, "Set on the great pot;" and if famished souls come desiring to be fed, He sends them not away empty.

Elisha's command is to his *servant*. The needy ones are not asked to help in the matter of providing the food, all they have to do is to receive what the giver was ready to impart. But no sooner does he begin to act than man must act, too. So we read, "And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not." (Verse 39.)

The prophet gave no command for him to go out. It is just the activity of man that cannot sit still, but must bring his "lap full." And what does he do by this? Why, just what man ever does—he spoils all. He gets the wild gourds

from the field—"the field" is the world in type. (Matt. xiii. 38.) The world can only produce a wild vine, and the fruit will be of the same character.

How like this is to man when turning religious, instead of turning to God—in all the restless activity of the flesh, wanting to bring his lap full, making God his debtor. Now God has more than a lap full for a poor empty sinner—for he who by faith receives Christ as God's salvation as a free gift, receives blessing of an eternal character, as Jesus says in John xvii., "This is eternal life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" and again it is written, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32.)

Oh, dear unsaved one, give God His proper place. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Come to Him with an empty lap and it shall be filled—not with wild gourds which spread death, but with the bread of life, of which if a man eat he shall live for ever. You are not asked to help in the matter of setting on "the great pot," or providing the meal, that is God's part, and He will not give His glory to another. All that man does, when he does anything, is to gather wild gourds. Will they satisfy? will all the works of the best of men do good? All have sinned—there is none good, no, not one. So then salvation is for

him who worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, *his* faith shall be counted for righteousness. If you are seeking to do something to commend yourself to God, it is like the one who went into the field. His *intention* may have been good enough—and his zeal great, but it was not according to knowledge. He went for herbs—things that would have given a sweet savour—but in his ignorance he brought the wild gourds, and spread death and dismay. Like one going to visit an anxious soul on a death-bed, and instead of taking a full Christ for an empty sinner—instead of helping the soul to rest on the finished work of Christ—he sets him doing, repenting, and praying, things perfectly right in their place, but fraught with disaster and dismay when misapplied. Ah, yes, this is the unsent one with *his* lap-full. Why, he has never sat at the feet of Jesus himself as a needy one. If he knows not God's way of salvation for himself, how shall he minister it to another? A morsel of the bread of life to a hungry soul is better than a lap full of wild gourds—the best the world has to give.

When it is poured out, what does the heart find? it is “death in the pot.” Yes, it is a scene of death, and nothing but husks for the poor prodigal. But is not the man of God equal to the occasion? Yes. “But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was

no harm in the pot." (verse 41.) Is not this again a beautiful picture of what God did eighteen hundred years ago? Death was reigning—His creatures were under its power. The wild gourds had done their direful work. Disobedience brought in sin, and sin when it is finished brought in death, and so death passed upon all men. There was no hope of man in any way. If he was to be saved, God must do it in His own way, and by His own power, and so He sent His Son to die the just for the unjust to bring us nigh to Himself.

Elisha himself casts the meal into the pot—he will have no help in the matter from another—the meal was the antidote to undo all the mischief which man had done. So Christ is God's antidote—not to cure sin, for it cannot be cured, but to put it away; so we read, that Christ hath appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

I sometimes hear people singing—

"I lay my sins on Jesus."

Ah, that important "I" must be doing something. If your sins are gone, it was because God laid them on Jesus, not you.

It was God's Christ who came into the scene as the Workman who only could, and who did finish the work which His Father gave Him to do. He destroyed death—put it out of working order—and him that had the power of death, that is the devil.

"Can you tell me what I can do to be saved,"

was the soul-stirring enquiry of a dying one to a servant of Christ ?

“No,” said he, “I can’t; but I can tell you what another *has done* in order that you might be saved. Christ has finished the work of redemption and atoned for sin, and God says to a poor helpless, hopeless sinner, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.’ ”

She had been trying, so to speak, to set the great pot on, and another had brought her wild gourds, for a stranger-hand had meddled with a ploughed-up conscience, and sought to appease the famishing soul that hungered after Christ with the wild gourds of legality. But they wrought death, and not deliverance.

God saw the craving of a poor heart after Himself, and sent a servant with the glad tidings of His grace and mercy to minister pardon, and peace, and life through faith in the precious name of His dear Son. The man of God—the one who knows the mind and thoughts of his Master—was able to lead a troubled soul to find settled peace—peace with God, through faith in Christ Jesus.

Poor busy worker, you who are trying to work out your own salvation by reformation, by law-keeping, or dead works of any kind; you are but gathering wild gourds which will never satisfy. Oh, take your place at the feet of Him who fills the hungry with good things. There will be no lack of bread—there is bread enough and to spare

God will have His house filled, but not with unwilling guests. He will indeed make His people willing in the day of His power, but it is by subjection to His word.

So to the end of the chapter: the man of God knows how to reckon upon God—and though His servant may have little faith as to the quantity to feed so many, the word is, Give the people that they may eat. He has his “Thus saith the Lord,” for his stay. That is sufficient, he has no fear that the supply will run short. No; he reckons upon the heart of God, and draws from His boundless resources for the needy ones in the place of dearth. “Thus saith the Lord, they shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them and they did eat, and left thereof, *according to the word of the Lord.*” (Verses 42—44.)

Plenty have fed at that board, but still there is abundance—“they left thereof.” Oh, poor hungry soul, come then, to Him who not only gives bread, but who is Himself the Bread of Life, and having Him you shall never hunger, and believing in Him you shall never thirst. Hasten, I pray you, ere it be too late, for one day the door will be shut, and knocking will be in vain then. God comes to you by His servants in the place of death to meet your need. He bids His servants to spread abroad the tidings of the finished work of His Son, that all who believe in Him shall be saved from Satan, wrath, and judgment.

True, man may want to “help,” but all his helps only go to mar what God is doing, and where this is the case, He raises up one and another who seek to know His mind and to do His will, (for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him,) who have always the “meal” at hand—Christ: a full Christ for a famished sinner is what they have to offer. They have had enough of the wild gourds of a wild vine, and what they want to spread before the hungry sinner is the “the loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husks thereof.” It is food—food of God’s own providing, and He is a great giver—a liberal giver—and seeks for empty laps that He might fill them, not only enough for themselves, but as Ruth found when she got into the fields of Boaz at harvest-time, some also for the poor widow at home. c.

How sweet and sacred is the place
With Christ, within those doors,
Where everlasting Love displays
The choicest of her stores.

There every heart in happy song
Is drawn to praise the feast,
While each would cry with thankful tongue,
“Lord, why am I a guest?”

“Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
“To enter while there’s room,
“While thousands make the wretched choice,
“And rather starve than come?”

’Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced me in;
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perish’d in my sin.

A GOOD SHAKING.

WHILST travelling by railway recently, a christian fell into conversation with a man who confessed himself to be an infidel, and on being asked by the latter if he were insured, replied, "Yes, up above!" and spoke of his faith and trust in the Purger of sins who is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. The young man, who rejoiced to call himself a free-thinker, smiled contemptuously at the other's superstition. However, our christian passenger was not ashamed to confess his Master by whom he had redemption, even the forgiveness of sins, through the riches of God's grace.

It was but a little while afterwards, when, to the terror of most of the passengers, a collision took place. It happened to be of a slight character; but though not fatal to any one, most of the passengers got a good shaking, and were, in some instances severely injured.

Timely assistance was rendered to those who needed it, and in a little time the train pursued its journey. The christian and his companion, though their systems had received a severe shock, were able to resume their journey. The poor young infidel looked pale and terrified, and yet could not help expressing his thankfulness that it had ended no worse: and, looking to his companion opposite, quietly remarked, "I think, after all, it is best to be insured 'up above.'"

Poor fellow! what a hollow, wretched foundation he was resting on. So hollow, so wretched, that it would not stand a shake in a railway collision. Brought to the border-line of eternity, and face to face with eternal realities what did his poor thoughts do for him? It might have been a merciful collision in order to reach the conscience of a poor rebellious worm. Certainly a good shaking proved the worthlessness of all his own narrow thoughts. Bold enough these men are in health and strength, but if sickness come, or they are brought suddenly face to face with God, how the cheek is blanched, and the poor heart quails at the thought of having to do with Him whose grace they affect so to despise. But there is grace enough in the heart of God to bring a poor boasting infidel to His feet, to accept the mercy he stands so much in need of.

WHAT SHALL I DO?

(From "What shall I do? or, Rest for the Weary." By J. C.)

POOR troubled, weeping one, what would you not *give* to obtain that peace to which at present you are a stranger? You have wept, and prayed, and afflicted yourself in various ways, and still, may-be, you are as far off as ever.

Perhaps you were told to pray and wait, and so you have, till your load has become unbearable,

and it seems as if it would crush you. The language of your troubled heart is, "No one ever feel as I feel." You are filled with fears by day, and are afraid to close your eyes in sleep at night, lest you should awake in everlasting separation from God.

You have wondered why God made you, and have said, "Oh, that I had never been born! Oh, that I were *some one* else, or *something* else, rather than *who* I am, and *what* I am! There is hope for every one upon earth, but not for me. If I had been somebody else, I could hope. If I had been a dog, rather than one possessing an immortal soul, I could welcome death; but as it is, I am afraid to live, and I am not prepared to die. Oh, what shall I do?" Ah! my dear friend, I know all about it. These were once my very words; this exactly my case. But, blessed be God, it is not so now. Now, I can praise Him and long to be with Him. But the secret of this long and continuous distress of mind is brought out in the very question, "What shall I *do*?" This is what I said—What shall I *do*?" And it was not till I saw that I had *nothing to do*, for that it was all *done*—that I had peace. One day while, with a broken heart, I was reading in the gospel by John, I came upon these words, "Then said they (the Jews) unto him (Christ), What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" I cannot tell you what I felt. There seemed to be a whole

world of thought passing through my mind between this question and the answer. "Oh," I thought, "now for the answer, and from Christ, too—that will do, whatever it is. Oh! what did *He* say in answer?" I read, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." I do not attempt to describe what I felt.

My dear friend, it is ALL DONE, and you have *nothing to do*. I was one day sitting by the bed of a poor dying woman. After speaking a word or two, so as to ascertain what she thought of her own bodily state, as to whether she had any hope of getting better; and finding that she had none, I said, "What about the eternal state?" "Oh, well, I am doing all I can!" "That is a bad sign," I said, "for all your doing is of no avail. Suppose you were a debtor, and I this morning called and paid the creditor every farthing, and brought the bill receipted with me, and offered it to you what would *you* have to *do* towards paying it?" I think she saw that she would only have to take it and be thankful. I then told her of her ruined state by nature, and of her complete helplessness as to satisfying God; but that ONE on the cross had so fully *done* it, and had there so fully atoned for sin, that there was *nothing to do*—it is all *done*.

Whether she saw and believed or not, I cannot tell, but I want you to see and believe this, and then you will be happy, too, as I am.

HOLD FAST TILL I COME.

BE calm, ye saints, those scenes of dread,
Those judgments sore that must ensue—
The desolations that shall spread
Shall never reach forth unto you.

Before those dreadful vials are pour'd,
And ere the solemn trumpets sound,
We shall be safely with the Lord,
And with Himself in heaven be found.

What proofs of love, and grace, and power—
How rich the blessing Christ assures—
"I'll keep you *from* the trying hour ;
"Hold fast my word—the crown is yours !"

The crown of life ! the victors' palms !
The city with its streets of gold !
But sweeter far, a Saviour's arms
Shall *there* His much-loved Bride enfold !

As moment after moment rolls
Be diligent to serve the Lord,
And carry forth to precious souls
His holy, life-imparting *word* !

That *word* which sets the soul at large
From Satan's power and Satan's claim :
That *word* which gives a full discharge
And gathers to the Saviour's name.

Have faith in God ! though scenes of trial
Be yours the rugged journey through :
Can ye not stand *a little while*
For Him who stood in death for you ?

Strong is the foe, and dark the hour,
While rebel heads are lifted high,
Oh ! reckon on the grace and power
Of Him whose coming draweth nigh.

NO THOROUGHFARE.

I STARTED for a long journey. I was in great haste, for like most men of business, I did not start till the last moment, as time was precious, and one is apt to catch the spirit of the age in which everything is done at extreme speed, or else one seems left behind, or is out of breath in trying to keep pace with the fast-flowing current.

I was like a man who is about to die, and who has put off the concern of his soul to the last moment, and now everything is done in a hurry. Business, pleasure, the cares of this life, have been too absorbing to allow time to think of the future, as to how it will fare with the poor soul, but now it *must* be met, the journey *must* be entered on—and who can tell him the right way of entrance?

It was a long distance I wanted to go, and it became a question in my own mind whether I could reach the station in time; so in my haste I called a cab, urging upon the driver the necessity of speed, as it was important I should catch a certain train. We were soon proceeding at a brisk pace through highways and byeways, and I was high in hope that I should reach my destination in good time, when the driver, having left the direct route, turned down a side street, hoping by a short cut to save time. But to my great mortification, just as we got to the top of the next turning we were brought suddenly to a stand-still;

the way being obstructed by a rude board hoisted on a pole, on which were the words—

“NO THOROUGHFARE!”

We had to turn round, and after all go the direct route, and but for increased speed I should have lost my train.

“No thoroughfare,” thought I; “how many a poor soul after long, weary, and toilsome journeyings in all sorts of round-about ways in their efforts to get peace with God, find that great obstruction, and have to turn away; and yet pursue a course which only brings them to another point, where there is the same obstacle to further progress. And this must be so if Christ, and by Him salvation, is not the starting point. It will only end in sorrow and mortification, for, sooner or later, the poor seeker after peace (I mean he who is seeking it according to his own thoughts, and not according to God’s) is sure to find out his mistake. Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life;” “Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.” How many miss the starting-point and go wrong all the journey, and hence the confusion of mind, the trouble of soul that always follow as a consequence. How few of even real christians know what it is to have perfect peace—the peace God gives, as the fruit of faith in His own beloved Son—the peace which follows a child-like belief in Him “who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification:”

so that they can say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. v. 1, 2).

There was a man stationed by the board, not only to prevent any one passing, but who was ready to point out the direct path to the disappointed traveller.

That's just the attitude the apostle Paul seems to be taking in the epistle to the Romans. He is there the man who has raised that significant board with its solemn warning—its forbidding front. He is there to point out the right way; but he will have no compromise. Man is met there in every shape: the religious man and the dark heathen, the would-be law-keeper and the despiser of grace. Christ is not in all their thoughts, the fear of God is not before their eyes, and "*the way of peace have they not known*" (Rom. iii. 17). And while he stays the man who in his folly would dare rush on to judgment, he holds forth the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Does the natural man think that he can approach God because of any fancied goodness in himself? he is soon brought face to face with that terrible prohibition, "No Thoroughfare," in the words, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" that old nature is corrupt with its deceitful lusts; and a corrupt tree can only bring forth

corrupt fruit. It is a startling truth to bring to bear upon a natural man; say, one who has lived a blameless life according to a human standard. He may, like Naaman in the second book of Kings, be a "mighty man of valour" in his way—done much for king and country—won many victories, and brought home many trophies of his triumphs, and yet be a leper—a poor sinner, all unconscious of his real state before God; perhaps very religious, thinking that he is doing God service, and like that same apostle, has to make the discovery that he is "doing many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Man is too proud to bow, to confess that lowly but also highly-exalted name; but he will not be saved unless he does so, for God has sworn that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; and He has stopped every avenue: there is no bye-way to heaven. How am I to get there, do you ask? God says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;" for He is the sent One of the Father to finish His work. "*The Father loveth the Son*, and hath given all things into his hand." "Yes," says the ransomed sinner—he who is washed in the blood of Christ, "and I love Him too, I love the One whom God loves—and I love Him because He first loved me."

Don't look within, dear unconverted reader, nothing good comes out of that heart of thine.

I was walking by a road, another time, where the well-known board was raised, and while looking down the street which the pick and the mattock had laid bare, I observed many things which I had not seen before, nor which I little conceived to be there, when I had gone down the same street previously. But its hidden things were made manifest. Ah, thought I, that is just how the seventh of Mark puts it when speaking of the human heart. He who thus spake was the *Truth*, and He lays bare all the secret springs of action—the ruling motives which sway us as men through that deceitful and desperately-wicked heart, as Jeremiah speaks of it. You might as well expect good from those sewer-pipes, that I saw ran along the street, deep down in the earth. Man's thoughts are “evil only, and that continually;” and what is to be done then? It reminds me of what I saw down there; there were water-pipes also running beside the sewer-pipes. The latter were to be “flushed,” and no sooner was the connection opened up, than the pure current from the reservoir rushed in with great power carrying all before it, cleansing and purifying the pipes; and so long as the connection with the reservoir was kept up, the hitherto unclean pipes held a body of pure water. They were the same pipes, but the contents—oh, how different! So with the heart before and after conversion. It is the same heart, but when the “water of the word” has been let

into it—when the stream of life which flows from Christ, the Fountain of life, has gained access—then, and then only is it cleansed and purified; and while the connection with the Divine Reservoir is kept up it will have sway, as the Psalmist says, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I may not sin against thee.” *To think the thoughts of God* is the privilege of the christian. We little know what is in the heart until the *pick* of truth lays it bare—until the “hammer of the word” breaks the rocky surface in pieces, and brings to light the hidden things.

Is my reader one of the many thousands who are trying to get to heaven by the way of Sinai? Ah! there’s a very stern man there guarding every avenue, every way of approach; it is the *man Moses* with his terrible board, whereon is written the law with its solemn curses against every one who would tread that thoroughfare, and yet is unable to continue therein: proclaimed too, amid the thunders of the mount of God. No, no, poor sinner! bounds are put around it to prevent the unsanctified foot treading there, “And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.” (Heb. xii. 20.) “No Thoroughfare” that way; turn away then at once, ere it be too late: turn to Him who says, “*I am the door*: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” No doubt of it, no gloomy uncertainty—“*he shall be saved*,” saved by God’s

salvation—saved everlastingly from sin, Satan, wrath, and judgment. What a wonderful thoroughfare is opened up to faith—the way into the holiest made manifest—boldness to enter into the holiest of all, by the blood of Jesus.

There's a sweet little pathway that leads up to God,
Where none but His own blessed people have trod :
Where the waters of life everlastingly flow
By the pleasantest tracks that a sinner can go ;
Ev'ry step of the way is with blood sprinkled o'er—
The traces of One who has gone on before,
To open a way.—Do you wish for the clue ?
'Tis faith in a Saviour who suffered for you !

Have you ever felt the power of God's word like
a mighty pick laying bare your heart ?

I remember what a breaking up it was with me
when I came in contact with it ; and until then
I had no idea of hidden lusts and a host of things
lurking there.

Its truths are indeed as a terrible blade,
That penetrates marrow and joint :
Ah ! well I remember the havoc it made,
When first I contested its point !
What slaying of *self*, and laying all bare
The purposes closely concealed :
The heart with its lusting, the mind with its care,
And wretchedness, fully revealed.
What struggles for freedom, what longings it brought,
Producing the deepest remorse—
But bringing the culprit, detected and caught,
To God by the way of the cross.
And now, through the blood of the crucified One,
From terrors of hell I am free ;
To rest my salvation on what He *has done*,
Is unspeakable blessing to me.

So we get it in the 4th of Hebrews—"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Are you like many who are putting it off till the day of judgment—hoping all will go well with you? if so, it shows you have not been with God yet about your sins. The cross of Christ settles the question: on the ground of judgment there is no help: as another has said, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

LOOKING UP.

SOME years since a Christian was passing through a town in Ireland, and coming to a house of business where resided a fellow-believer in the Lord Jesus, he called to see him, and asked him how he was getting on in the things of God. His reply was, "I am looking up." This little sentence was overheard by a young man on the premises, whose conscience was at once stricken, and he said within himself, I am looking *down*.

The Lord from that time began to deal with him, and he had no rest until he was brought to Himself, to know the joy of looking up to Him, and praising Him, for thus, through His grace, having delivered him from this present evil world, and bringing him out of darkness into the marvellous light. It was no longer, "I am looking down," but, "I am looking *up*," looking unto Jesus, the One who has saved me from my sins, and brought me to God.

How is it with *you*, dear reader? are you one of those poor unhappy ones who are looking down, like the beasts that perish? If you are, may you be aroused to your *true* condition, and not be satisfied until you have by faith looked to Jesus. There is no peace to those who are looking down. The unbeliever looks down, the believer looks up. The unbeliever is like the troubled sea, that cannot rest. He may say "Peace! peace! but there is no peace." If you have up to this time been grovelling down here, why go on? Jesus bids you look up to Him, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." Look and live—they go together, you cannot have eternal life without looking to Jesus, and you cannot look to Jesus without having eternal life. The bitten Israelite could not cure himself, he was as to himself in a helpless condition. The serpent of brass was Jehovah's remedy, and the words from Jehovah were, "And it *shall* come

to pass, that every one that is bitten, *when* he looketh upon it, *shall* live." He might look down at himself and his fellow creatures around him, and see what terrible havock *death* was making on all around, nothing but death, and no remedy when he looked down. The word of Jehovah, the living God, was proclaimed in the camp, and that word believed in was immediate deliverance from death. Hear the words in Numbers xxi. 9, "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and *it came* to pass, that if a serpent had bitten *any* man, *when* he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." All his feelings, all his doings, all his contrivings, all his imaginations were of no avail. The *Remedy* was outside himself, and the moment he believed the word, that moment he looked, and that moment he lived. *You* are (if still unsaved,) in the same condition. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." You may look down on all here, on yourself, and on your belongings, and while to nature all may be pleasing and prosperous, God's sentence has gone forth, and pronounced *death* upon it all. Nothing but death! death! death! you must look above it all. The *Remedy* is *outside* yourself, and it is *yours* the moment you believe, and look to Jesus the Saviour of the lost.

"Life is found alone in Jesus,
Only there 'tis offered thee ;

Offered without price or money,
'Tis the gift of God sent free ;
Take salvation,
Take it now, and happy be."

It has been said, and that truly, "If you want to be miserable, look *within* ; if you want to be distracted, look *around* ; if you want to be happy, look *up*." Jesus Himself said. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." He has been lifted up on Calvary's cross, just as the serpent was lifted up on the pole. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." "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." Can any language be more simple ? Can the blessed God, the loving God, the giving God, speak to the sinner in more unmistakable words ? He says, If you believe in my Son, my gift, *you shall not* perish, but have eternal life. The word in the wilderness of old was "*Look and live* ;" the word *now* to the poor bitten sinner, the poor lost sinner, the poor hell-deserving sinner, the poor down-cast miserable sinner is, "*Look and live*."

"There is life in a *look* at the crucified One,
There is life at this moment for *thee*."

Eternal life is the portion of all who believe in

Jesus, of all who receive God's testimony concerning His dear Son, of all who set to their seal that God is true. All ! all is new, death for ever in the past, *life for evermore*. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "He that hath the Son hath life." If you have, through grace, looked up to Jesus once on the cross, bearing your sins, and the judgment due to you a guilty sinner, but *now* in the glory on high, you are now privileged to *live* to Him in this death scene, this poor dark world, and to look *for* Him, who is coming to receive all who have looked *to* Him to be *with* Him, and *like* Him for ever and ever.

R.E.K.

THE CRIER, AND HIS CRY.

WHO has not, when in a country town, or at some watering-place, been made aware of the presence of the crier by the sound of his bell? However busy people may be, at that signal they leave their work, and hasten to the doors and windows of the houses to listen to the announcements which he has to make ; while the traveller and pedestrian check their speed for a few moments for the same purpose. The crier, then, acting upon the information which he has received, acquaints us that some child, or property, *has* been lost, and proclaims the reward which will be given to the person who shall restore the child to its parent,

or the property to its owner. Or, may-be, he announces that punctually at such an hour, the "Queen of the Ocean," or the "Crest of the Wave," will start from the pier-head or the beach, for an hour's, or two hours' sail. Or, he informs us where goods of presumed first-rate quality can be procured, and the wants of purchasers attended to with civility and punctuality.

He then moves on to other places, there to repeat the various announcements with which he is entrusted; his hearers returning to their various occupations, either to forget what they have heard, or to act upon the information which they have received.

If men have their criers to announce matters concerning themselves, God has always had His own messengers to proclaim the good news of His love and grace to poor lost sinners. Let us turn to Isaiah xl. and see what the Lord there told His crier to do. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye to the heart, [margin] to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." These were the comforting words that His crier was to say to His ancient people, who had been blessed by Him above all the nations of the earth, but who had so fearfully departed from Him. What precious words for them to hear! and which shall be

blessedly fulfilled, when "there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant, (saith the Lord) unto them, when I shall take away their sins." John the Baptist was a very special crier in the name of the Lord; and what was the nature of his testimony? Let us hearken; "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Vers. 3, 4, 5.) This testimony, evidently, not only applies to the first advent of the Lord Jesus to the earth, but also to the results of His death and resurrection, to Israel and all flesh, in the day of blessing that is to come. The words which follow (in verses 6, 7, 8,) are full of instruction. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry?" A most important enquiry. The crier is but a channel, a messenger, a servant; and his obligation is to utter that which is committed to him. He should wait upon the One who sends him to know *what* he shall cry; for he is not left to give utterance to that which owes its origin to his own mind. The answer in the instance before us to the all-important question is:

“All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” “All flesh,” that is, all that is not of the Spirit, is grass. What a picture of the vanity of man in his distance from God! Grass is very pleasant to the eyes, but it soon withers. So does all flesh, when “the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it.” But besides the grass, there is the “*flower*” of grass; all that is choice among men—civilization, fame, honour, wealth, power, with all that they account as worth and goodness. But all fades and perishes when touched by the Spirit of God. Such is man; but in the midst of all this withering and fading of human things, how blessed is the contrast that “the word of the Lord endureth for ever.” “And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” (1 Peter i. 25.)

The case of the prophet Jonah is very instructive upon this subject. He was a crier distinctly called of the Lord; and to his message he had no need to ask “What shall I cry?” for he had clear instructions from Him who sent him. Those instructions were: “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.” But, instead of fulfilling the mission assigned to him, “he rose up to flee

unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." A pretty crier, he! to turn his back upon the place to which he had been sent, and to refuse to utter the cry with which he had been entrusted. If a crier appointed by some town-council or municipality dared to act in such opposition to their directions, he would be immediately dismissed from his post, with no prospect of recovering his position, or of redeeming his character. But not so with the Lord; for as He says in Isaiah lv.—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." He therefore set the elements in motion, and prepared the creatures of His hand in order to arrest His servant in his downward course, and to bring him back to his post. What a God He is with whom we have to do! To this end, He "sent out a great wind into the sea,"—"prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah,"—"sustained him in the

fish's belly three days and three nights"—exercised his soul whilst there—and then, "spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." Having done all this, "the word of the Lord came unto Jonah *the second time*, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord;" "and he cried and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." A solemn cry, but it had the blessed effect which it was intended should be produced; for the people of Nineveh believed God, and humbled themselves under His mighty hand. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not." He is, indeed, the God of all grace. He bore with, and brought back His unwilling servant; and He also spared Nineveh, "because they repented at the preaching of Jonah." Truly, as Jonah said, "I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil." And then, mark His continued patience with Jonah, by means of the "worm," the "gourd," and the "vehement east wind," in order to bring His angry judgment-loving servant into fellowship with Himself, in His own long-suffering mercy and grace, towards His sinful creatures.

In John vii. 37, it is written, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, (of tabernacles,) Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." Dost thou, dear reader, thirst for salvation, for satisfaction, for pleasure, for happiness? Then, hear and heed the voice of the Son of God, bidding thee to come to **Himself** and drink. (See John v. 25, and Rev. xxii. 17.)

The Lord and Saviour from on high,
 Exalted on the throne,
 The Son of God, who came to die,
 And did for sin atone ;
 Now welcomes all—the vilest, worst—
 That none from **Him** may shrink,
 And sweetly cries, "If any thirst,
 O come to **ME**, and drink !"

Thou seekest pleasure, thirsty soul,
 And cravest draughts of bliss ;
 The dregs thou drainest from the bowl,
 But joy dost ever miss ;
 The living waters round thee burst,
 Thou'rt on their very brink :
 Then heed the cry, "If any thirst,
 O come to **ME**, and drink !"

May the reader not be like those who hear the voice of the crier, and then turn away and forget what has been said ; as those of whom we read in **Matthew xxii.** who having been invited by the King to the marriage-supper of his Son, "made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandize." But, may he

hearken to the voice of "Him that speaketh from heaven," giving this blessed invitation ; "Who-soever will, let him take the water of life freely."
T.

GOD'S WAY OF ESCAPE.

WHILE staying for a little needed rest and change at the sea-side this summer, I more than usual desired a little quiet one evening, so I set off for a long walk on the sands, in order to get away from the noise and excitement of the pier and parade.

When I had got about two miles out, I came upon a nice spot for a rest, so I sat down on the clean grass to take in the cool, refreshing sea-breeze.

I was not seated long, before four children came peeping over the bank, from a cottage almost hid from view. I felt God would have me speak to them ; so after a minute's friendly chat to make them feel quite at ease in my presence, I said to the eldest, a boy of twelve, "Do you go to school?"

"Yes, s'r."

"What school?"

"Sunday, s'r."

"Well, what do you learn there?"

"Learn to read, s'r."

"Do you learn anything about Jesus there?"

"We reads out'r the bible sometimes, s'r."

"Do you know what Jesus came to do?"

"Forget, s'r."

"Don't you know how He died?"

"Don't know, s'r."

"*Don't* you know how He died?"

"Forget, s'r."

"How long have you been to Sunday School?"

"Not long, s'r."

"How long? a year?"

"Yes, s'r."

"More than a year?"

"No, s'r."

"You say you are twelve years old. You must have been to Sunday school longer than that?"

"No I aint, s'r."

"How is that?"

"'Cos I kept cows, s'r."

"What, on Sundays?"

"Yes, s'r."

"Do you know whether we are good people or bad people?"

"Good, s'r."

Wishing to know whether he ever had any thought or idea of God, I asked, "Do you ever *say* your prayers?" knowing it was no good to say, "Do you ever *pray*?" He said, "What, s'r?"

"Do you say your prayers when you go to bed?"

"Yes, s'r."

"Well, what do you say?"

"Our Father, we church in heaven."

“What do you say it is?”

“Our Father, we church in heaven, s’r.”

“What else?”

“Forget, s’r.”

“Do you know all that prayer ‘Our Father which art in heaven?’”

“Not all on’t, s’r.”

Poor little fellow, I felt for him, and desired guidance from God as to what to say, so as to get a right thought into those four little dark hearts; for he had two younger brothers and a sister leaning on him, looking up to him with apparent pride at the clever way their spokesman answered; for if I asked either of the younger ones a question, they looked up with a smile into his face with confidence that his answer for them *must surely* be the right one, so that they did not speak at all, so I said, “Well, dear boy, *we are not good* people; the great God who made all this great sea, and this grass we are sitting on, and everything in the world is *good*, and we have sinned against Him; He that gives us food to eat we have sinned against—that is, we have done the things He tells us in the bible we should not do, and we have not done the things He tells us we ought to do, so we are all sinners—bad people, so God pitied us, and loved us, and sent Jesus to die on the cross for us, and so to suffer *for* and *instead* of us; and now He wants us to believe what He tells us about Him in the bible, and come to Him, and if we do, and

believe what God says about Jesus, He will pardon us and take us to heaven. If you owed anybody a penny, and I paid it for you, you would not owe it; and that is what Jesus did; and if you believe what God says about Jesus, you will not be punished."

They all listened while I spoke, but when I got thus far the oldest looked at his brothers and sister, and said, "I want my supper," and jumping up, off they all scampered, and were out of sight in a second or two, and I got up, too, and walked towards the town, lifting up my heart to God, to cause the word to enter their little dark hearts.

I can imagine many a child, and grown up persons, too, saying to themselves, or to others, as they read the preceding lines, "What ignorance of the boy not to know more than that." Yes, truly, so it is, and one wonders at such a state of things in this land of bibles, Sunday schools, and so on; but, dear reader, perhaps you are in a more pitiable condition than this poor lad of twelve; "Oh! no," say you, "I am sure I am not, for I do know all that prayer, and have from infancy, and I certainly know we are all sinners, and I know too, *how* Jesus died, and *what* He died for, and that is more than he did, so I know I am not in such a deplorable state as that poor ignorant boy." Well, now, let us see, *don't throw this down, and say I have had enough of that; no, don't do that, Satan may suggest such a thing to you, but a friend begs you not to*

do so ; you say you know you are a sinner, and you know Jesus died to save sinners ; “ Of course I do,” say you ; well, now to the point, *Have you come as a poor burdened lost sinner to Jesus, and made Him your Saviour, so that His death availed for you*—so that you can say, *I not only know this, but I am saved through that death ?* “ No,” say you, “ I cannot say that quite, but I hope to one day.” Now I don’t want to be hard on you, but I wish to be your friend, my reader, and so I will try to illustrate your true state and the lad’s, as narrated above. Two persons are smitten with the same fatal disease, one knows but little of the certainty of its ending fatally, the other knows all about it. One has heard something about a remedy, but his knowledge in the matter is so scanty, that it may be said, he really knows nothing at all about it ; the other has been fully instructed about the physician, and has been told the particulars with regard to the nature of the remedy, and not only so, but he has frequently conversed with those who were once in exactly the same circumstances, and they all begged him to lose no time in applying the remedy, but he never does. So both die. Now if you hold man responsible for his death, under these circumstances, WHICH OF THE TWO IS THE GREATER SINNER ? If you could follow them to the other side of death, and punish them for their sin in this matter, ON WHICH WOULD JUSTICE DEMAND THE GREATER PUNISHMENT TO BE INFLICTED ?

As in God's presence answer this question now, and take your true place. The poor boy in this narrative scarcely knew he was a sinner, and knew but little or nothing about Jesus, and the way of salvation ; you do, you say, know both, and although you know it, you are still without the remedy, you only "*hope to be.*" Oh ! if you die as you are, would not justice demand that you should be treated in the judgment very different from this poor boy ; "*He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.*"

To know there is a ladder put to your bed-room window, when the house is on fire is *one thing*, but *immediately to descend by it*, from the burning room to the solid ground is *another* ; the fact of your knowing the ladder is there, and your refusing to quit by it, makes *you* responsible for all that *after* comes upon you, and the fact of your knowing that Jesus died for sinners—that He is the way of escape from the wrath to come, is *one thing*, and your accepting Him as your Saviour, and so making Him your way of escape, is *another* ; and the fact of your knowing there is such a way of escape, makes you responsible indeed for all that must hereafter come upon you. Now tell me, dear reader, is not your case more sad than that of the poor boy's, as here narrated ? There is not a child of Adam who has heard of God's way of salvation as made known in His word, but is as responsible to accept it the minute he hears it, as

a man is responsible to escape from his burning house, the moment the ladder is pointed out to him. You may talk about "election," "God's sovereignty" "God's counsels," "God's plans," and so on, if you will, as an excuse for your wickedness in remaining where you are, but would a man in a burning building talk so? Would a drowning man talk so? Or, would any one putting a ladder up to the bed-room window of a burning house, begin to talk to its inmates about God's purposes, or would he cry, "*Escape at once by the only possible means, or you are lost?*" If you throw out a rope to a sinking man, would you coolly talk to him about God's sovereignty and God's purposes, and so on, or would you cry, "*Seize the rope and you are safe?*" and when you have got him safe ashore, you would have time together to praise God for it all. Ah, my dear friend, if you are coolly making these excuses (as many do), you cannot give a greater proof that you do not want to bow to God: you love opposition to Him, and out of your own mouth you will be judged; and if this is the doctrine you hear preached to a poor sinner, you may be sure that preacher has missed his way, or *God's way rather*; tell him to rescue the poor drowning creature, and then talk of his rescue being planned, if he will; tell him to snatch, if possible, the poor wretch from that burning pile, and then talk after, if he will, of God's sovereignty in the matter.

I press it on you, my dear unsaved reader, you are in danger of hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. FLEE FROM IT! Do you say, "*Where?*" "*How?*" I'll tell you. Jesus took the place of the guilty, He bore the punishment due to sin. God's claims are all fully met. He is fully satisfied. He wants no more.

Do you ask, "For whom was all this done by Jesus?" Hear God's answer. "*Whosoever believeth;*" "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am *chief*." "By him ALL that believe are justified from all things."

Just take two scriptures of the many that one might give to show that you are responsible at once to comply with God's terms. "Be it known unto you . . . that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him ALL that believe are justified from all things. . . . BEWARE, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye DESPISERS, and wonder, and perish." (Acts xiii. 38—41.) The other scripture is in Acts xxvii 22—31, part of which I will here transcribe. "There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night, the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I BELIEVE GOD, that it SHALL BE even as

it was told me . . . And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, *Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.*"

Very solemn this, my reader. He who says, "By Him ALL that believe are justified from all things," says to the very same persons, "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you . . . Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." He who says, "There shall be no loss at all of life," says also, "*Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.*" And He who says, "*He that believeth shall be saved,*" says also, "*He that believeth not shall be damned.*"

J. C.

ALWAYS HAPPY.

CHRIST is our true and steadfast, our only steadfast Friend ;
 He undertook to save us, and that unto the end ;
 He bade the light to enter, the darkness to depart,
 That peace, in rich abundance, might flow into the heart—
 The peace of His own presence, the spirit to sustain,
 That no disturbing element might enter there again.
 And now I wait for Jesus, as one who longs to start ;
 No guilt upon my conscience, no fear within my heart ;
 No gloomy doubts or terrors do now my spirit seize,
 For God has, by His Spirit, divested me of these.
 Brought nigh to God, my Father, without a cloud above ;
 He's fitted me for glory, who saved me in His love.
 O sanctifying knowledge ! O truth, divine and clear !
 Unto His praise I own it, *I'm always happy here !*

To serve Him, if He pleases the vessel so to fill,
 To minister His goodness to those rejecting still.
 I see poor man around me in darkness, and I yearn
 To let my little taper more clearly, brightly burn,
 Though but a broken vessel, e'en this sweet comfort brings,
 Because the light of glory so shines through broken things ;
 And thus the broken pitcher is not the thing in sight,
 For those who are in darkness, do but perceive the light.
 And oh, how deep the darkness, in which poor sinners lay,
 They need the *truth* to guide them, to Christ the living way—
 The way *from* death and darkness, the *way* to life and light,
 The fountain-head of blessing, and infinite delight,
 To Him the weary sinner may come without delay,
 And find in Him a treasure when all has pass'd away ;
 When all that man is seeking has crumbled into dust,—
 And all proved *worse* than worthless in which he plac'd his *trust*.
 The Prince of life and glory, in grace came forth to save,
 And for the slaves of Satan, *Himself* He freely gave.
 How many eyes are watching, for that first streak of light
 That ushers in the morning, to burst upon their sight.
 I know 'tis but a little, the interval between
 The present time of suffering, and ent'ring on that scene
 Of unimagined blessing—where no rough blasts can fall :
 Where Christ is all the glory : where God is all in all.
 The radiance of the glories, which clothe yon bright abode
 Throw back their beams of brightness upon our present road :
 Thus many a way-worn pilgrim, and many a wearied saint—
 Whose hands are hanging feebly, whose heart is growing faint,
 Speeds on again with courage, while drawing nearer home,
 And with the Spirit crying, " Lord Jesus, quickly come !"
 There will be fullest blessing, and such as shall abide,
 And every holy vessel be full and satisfied :
 But are our hearts more fixed on what love will then award,
 Than with the deeper longing : " for ever *with the Lord* ?"
 There will be scenes of glory, the robe, and crown, and palm ;
 And *rest*—and after warfare, how sweet will be the calm—
 The calmness of His presence : but this *my joy* shall be :
 To be with Christ for ever, who gave *Himself* for me !

From " He gave Himself for me." G.C.

MY CLOTHES DON'T SHEW THE DIRT.

I HAD taken some youths, in whom I was interested, out for a day's holiday. We had been examining an ancient building, and boy-like, every nook and corner was peered into—no part of the interior but what was scrutinized, even the roof must be searched, for the sharp eyes of one little fellow discovered a trap which led into it, and soon the whole group had searched for curiosities in this out of the way part of the building. The search over, and once more descending into the light, a terrible discovery was made, the holiday clothes had suffered not a little in penetrating the dark corners, and not a little brushing was necessary for those who were drest in dark clothes. There was one boy, however, who laughed right heartily at the trouble his companions were taking, when he seemed to settle the matter with himself by a superficial brush, while exclaiming, "*My clothes don't shew the dirt.*"

One may learn from a child; and the boy's observation led my mind into a train of thought in connection with the walk of a christian. That many walk in a manner that is inconsistent with their high vocation is too often painfully brought before us. The apostle wrote to his beloved Philippians, "for many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." (Phil. iii. 8.) But with some this is soon appar-

rent, and if we are walking in communion with Christ, we shall soon discover where the heart of another is, for communion is so sensitive a thing that the slightest contact with a foreign element breaks the link. Then, again, with others, the course is so subtle, so deceitful, that it may be far worse than the former one, and yet not be so easily detected : in other words, "*his clothes do not show the dirt.*" I think the dust and dirt which my young companion had gathered perhaps exceeded that of the others, for he had rummaged about pretty well, yet his garments did not manifest it. So now and again I find with some who profess the name of Christ, who walk and act in a manner, by many considered harmless, yet if brought to the close scrutiny of the light, it is manifest in a moment.

It is a day when one has to be on the alert to keep the garments unspotted by the flesh ; to be walking before the Lord to all well-pleasing, then there will be a sweet unction to Himself. For my own part, I would say, let my garments be of such a texture, that the slightest spot may be easily seen by myself, and surely to see it, is to hate it, and then to be freed from the defilement ; but how can this be done, but by taking heed to the word ? the word that gave me life, will also keep me clean, and cause me to grow. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." Oh ! to be

more in the light as He is in the light, and to have the garments clean in warp and woof. The whiter the garments, the more easily they catch the dirt, and the more easily is a little spot discoverable to one's own eye, and to the eyes of others. So with one who knows himself accepted in the Beloved, *without a spot* as to his standing before God; sins gone; washed in the blood of Christ; judgment over—because it has been borne by his Surety; wrath exhausted—for the Just One has suffered for the unjust, drinking the cup of wrath; every demand paid—every accusation met—and every tongue silenced. I say, to one who knows all this as true of himself, because he believes on the name of the only-begotten Son of God; and because GOD says it is true of him, what sort of conduct becomes him in his every-day life, as to his conversation and his general conduct? The more we get acquainted with the heart of Christ, the more unworldly we shall be, not to please somebody else, but as it were, against ourselves. He will draw the affections to Himself above, thus there is a conformity to Him, and a moulding of the heart and ways, so that the world may be conscious that the garments are of such pure and white materials, that if there were *a bit of dirt upon them*, it would be seen directly. “If ever a man will go to heaven, that man will go there,” was said of one whose walk was a sweet savour to those around him: a *living* gospel oft speaks more powerfully

than a spoken one ; and the world has a keen eye to discern the slightest spot upon a christian's garment.

Will you, dear unconverted reader, let me scrutinize your garments a little, by the powerful microscope of the truth ? Don't shrink from the scrutiny ; it is not done for curiosity, but to help you to discover the real state of the case, and to have such a view of self as to make you loathe it, and to accept the " best robe " which God gives to a poor sinner who wants to get rid of his wretched rags of self-righteousness. But it may be your thought that you are, after all, not so bad as I want to make you out to be : well, friend, it is not my thought or my opinion, but God declares a man who is unsaved is in danger of eternal judgment, and calls you to come to Him, and accept pardon, peace, and life—even everlasting life through His Son Jesus Christ. You may not be a sinner in a moral sense ; not like that wretched man who spends his all in drunkenness, and brings his wife and children to beggary : no, perhaps not ; his clothes shew the dirt plainly enough—no mistaking the thing there ; but then, not unlikely, you are drest in such things as hide a good deal ; yea, perhaps they may carry more dirt than does the man with that loathsome looking apparel ! who would like to be classed with such ? None ; but there may be more hope of him than of you ; don't turn away offended,

I pray you; only I sometimes find a man enclosed in such a case of morality, that nothing but a heavy blow can break the crust to get at the conscience beneath. Whatever may be the texture of the garment in which you appear before others, you cannot escape the eye of God. He sees right down into the very core of the heart—knows the ruling passions and guiding motives; and what is all the painful exercise of soul through which so many have to pass for so long a time? because they will not see eye to eye with Himself. May you discover the real character of the garments in which, as an unsaved sinner, you stand before a holy God, and owning this, bowing in heart before Him, “telling Him all the truth,” you shall hear from His own word, as true of you: “Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. (Zech. iii. 4, 5.)

Clad in this robe how bright I shine,
Angels possess not such a dress :
Angels have not a robe like mine,
Jesus the Lord's my righteousness.

"I SEE NOW!"

It was a lovely evening in the summer of 1872, when I arrived at the village of G—, in one of the Midland counties. A lady met me at the Station, and begged that I would go at once and see a young woman dying of consumption in one of the cottages. I went, and after making a few general enquiries, I began to speak to her about eternal things. She was in a most anxious state, and eagerly listened to what I had to say. On asking her one or two questions, I found that since her illness she had spent her days and nights in prayer, in the hope that if she only prayed enough, God would have mercy and be reconciled to her. She thought that God was against her because of her sins, and if she prayed, sorrowed, and repented to the uttermost, His anger would be turned away; and so, poor soul, she employed the many weary hours she lay awake in this vain and hopeless task.

I sat down by her bed-side, and opening my bible, quietly pointed out that "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins," (1 John iv. 10,)—that He seeks the sinner, and "gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John iii. 16); and instead of our having to beseech Him to be reconciled to us,

it is as though He did beseech us to be reconciled to Him. As the 20th verse of 2 Cor., chap. v. was slowly read, she looked earnestly upon me, and asked whether those words were really there.

I assured her they were, but not being satisfied, she wished to see them with her own eyes. So raising herself a little, she took the book, and passed her fingers along the lines, and read them. "I see now!" said she, sinking back on her pillow, and pausing. The light had indeed dawned upon her, and she saw that God was for the sinner, not against him; and that the gospel revealed a seeking God, already reconciled, and who, in grace, besought the sinful and rebellious to be reconciled to Him.

She fell asleep a few weeks later; not, however, without giving abundant testimony of her faith in Christ. She learned that the death of the Lord Jesus, which had satisfied the righteous requirements of God's throne, had also met her deepest need, and that while "The wages of sin is death: the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.) Simply relying on the Saviour, she found the peace she had sought in vain so long.

Have you, my reader, peace with God? or do you think, as this dear young woman did, that it has yet to be made by good works, bitter tears, long repentance, and sincere sorrow for sin? It could *never* be made so, nor is any one ever asked

to make it. Jesus has already made peace by the blood of His cross. He is our peace (Eph ii. 14), and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts xiii. 39).

The Lord Jesus Christ has died for sinners, ungodly and without strength, so that God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. The atoning sufferings of the Lamb have met all that divine justice claimed, and by virtue of which God in the gospel makes Himself known as One who yearns over us in love, calls us to be reconciled, and is ready to justify us from every charge. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) "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. 21.)

WAITING FOR THE CARRIER.

It was as one went forth sowing the precious and incorruptible seed of the good news to lost sinners, of God's great and eternal salvation, that he saw a poor labouring man, sitting on the bank by the side of the road. It was a very hot day in August, and he was truly tired, for he had been bearing a heavy burden on his shoulders, which he had just put down, and was resting himself.

“Well,” said the missionary, “that is indeed a heavy load.”

“Yes, sir, it is; I am waiting for the carrier.”

“Oh, indeed! and he will take it all away, will he?”

“Yes, sir; here he comes now.”

And so up came the carrier, who soon put the poor man's load at the back of his cart, and went away; the labourer freed from his burden, then passed through a gate into a large field, with his load carried away and behind him, and his face homeward.

The man with the gospel could not but feel how much this is just like what the Son of God does to the heavy-laden ones who are troubled about their sins, and who then believe in Him.

If you, dear reader, would like to know what great, blessed, and wonderful things the Lord Jesus does for sinners who believe in Him, if you will read on to the end of this, and there are not many pages, you shall have some idea what it is; may be you may be led to believe, too, and find true peace and joy in so doing.

There can be no question but that we all have sinned, and done many things we ought not to have done, and have left undone many things that we ought to have done. We all need, then, one who will take them away from us, because we cannot undo the sins we have committed. Man does not like God's presence because he has sinned

against Him, and like Adam and Eve, would run away from Him. But still God loves us, though we by nature hate Him and His only-begotten Son, who came all the way from heaven to carry away our sins.

God, you see, would do us good, despite our wickedness, and His Son has come to tell, and assure us, and to shew us by the most complete proof, that God has a will and a desire to do us good, and to give us the greatest, the best, and fullest favour, and this though our sins have been so many and so great. Yea, it was our sins that brought Him from heaven, because He so greatly loved us, and He would not give up His purpose of having us as the companions of His own Son in glory. It was God's purpose to people heaven with a company from amongst mankind. This purpose He would not give up, and in order that He might have us in heaven, because we could not put away our own sins, He sent His Son, His well-beloved Son, and on Him God has laid the sins of His people, and all who truly from the heart believe in Jesus, can with joy, peace, and thankfulness, say—

Our sins were borne by Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God ;
He took them all and freed us
From the accursed load :
Our guilt was borne by Jesus,
Who washed the crimson stains ;
White in His blood most precious,
Till not a spot remains.

Thus then, because God so loved us, He sent His beloved Son, that on the cross He might bare our sins in His own body, and redeem us to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth all who believe from all sins, and nothing but the blood of Jesus can do it.

He has been the true scapegoat who has taken away our sins; they have been sent into the land of eternal forgetfulness; they have been put away as far as the east is from the west; and God says to those who believe, "Thy sins and thine iniquities will I remember no more."

Dear reader, do you know this pardoning God? for who is such a pardoning God like He, who forgiveth all our iniquities, sins, and transgressions, and shows us nothing but love, love, love—no end of love, when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour? Why turn away from One who loves you, and wants to do you nothing but good? "God is love." But you may say, I shall sin again. True—no doubt you will, and so will all, more or less, even the best of men, so long as the evil nature is with us; but then, Christ Jesus is in the glory, loving us still, caring for us, and is our continual Friend and Advocate. He cleanses us moment by moment, and presently will come again from heaven, and take those who believe away, and present them to Himself a glorious church, having neither spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

What more can you want than this to meet your hourly defilements? What more could God in His love do for His believing children? Reverently, I repeat, what more *could* He do? His love has done, and continues to do, its very utmost, blessed be God.

Now, dear reader, will not your heart say, Amen! *Blessed be God?* “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, . . . be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.”

But the poor labouring man, being relieved of his heavy load, passed through a “gate” into a large field, and just so it is with the believing sinner, who has looked to Jesus. The true christian gets into a new place as soon as he believes in Jesus. He who was dead in his sins, and has had his eyes opened to see that Jesus the Son of God *has* died for him and put away his sins, he not only knows pardon, but he is made alive with Christ the Life. This life gives him a nature to know God, and to understand God’s thoughts and ways; the love of God, too, is given to the believer, and he then loves God, and Jesus, and God’s children, and all the things of God. He is a new creature, and has new thoughts, desires, feelings and motives. Moreover, the Holy Spirit of God is given to him, and so he becomes one Spirit with the Lord. His thoughts, feelings and desires, are directed by the Spirit of God that dwelleth in him, and

he finds there is nothing in this world that can minister to the desires of the new man in him. He is born of God, born from above, and so his thoughts and desires are heavenward, and to meet the need of this new creation, God has opened the heavens, yea, heaven itself, the holiest of all, where Christ Jesus the Lord Himself is, and the Spirit of God in the believer directs him in spirit and soul into this place of fulness of joy and peace, light and love, life and liberty, righteousness, holiness, and purity.

* Reader, what a place for your spirit to dwell in! What could love do more for the unbeliever than it has done? Nothing! God *is* love. God *is* infinite in love, and He could do no more than He has done. Love delights to have its objects near to itself, and God delights to have those He loves near to Himself, living and abiding in Him and His love. God, who once dwelt within curtains, has torn them down, and the heavens, the holiest of all, is now open, and free to all believers. When Jesus died, He opened the way into the very presence of God, and by His blood cleanses believers from all their sins, and in His life and resurrection they were quickened, and received with Him into a new and large place of perfect freedom, where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore, where all is love, and God is love.

I know a dear old christian in Kent, of whom it

is said, "He dwells in heaven, and comes down to take his meals," and it is the believer's privilege and blessing, to dwell in spirit in the presence of God, in the holiest of all. (Heb. x. 19.) Our bodies are of course on earth, and will be till Christ comes again and changes them into the likeness of His own glorified body. (Phill iii. 20, 21.)

But such is the redemption in Christ, which He has obtained by His death on the cross, that the believer is redeemed from sin, death, and judgment, self and the world, and brought—made nigh to God (1 Peter iii; Eph. ii.), and in spirit he is made to sit in the heavenlies, his life being hid with Christ in God.

Again, dear reader, suffer me in all kindness to ask you, is not all this a wonderful salvation, and could God do more for those He loves, and for whom His Son died? even if you still refuse to accept this great salvation, you must admit it is very marvellous, and that love could do no more. It is indeed marvellous, infinite love, and it is, it must be true, that God *is* love. But yet, see again our poor labouring man, now lightened of his burden, leaving it all behind, carried away, has his face homeward. It is just so with the true christian, his sins are all forgiven, they are behind, he is *himself* quickened and raised, and so brought into this large place, even the heavenlies, his face is upward and homeward. He

gives thanks to the Father, that He has made him meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. The blood has made him whiter than snow. In spirit he is already at rest, at home in the Father's presence, and by faith he beholds Jesus in the glory, crowned there with honour and glory, and as he sees the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ he is changed into the same image—from glory to glory. No less a person than the Son of God is the portion for our hearts and minds, and in Him all fulness dwells, and He is the ALL of the believer. Wisdom, Righteousness, Life, Peace, Joy, and Hope, in a word every spiritual blessing is the believer's in Christ. He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? What could love do more? say now, dear reader, what could it do? If you will not have it, say, could it do more than it has?

And one word more, the believer who through Christ has his sins behind, and gone for ever, who has been in spirit brought to God in Christ, in the holiest of all, and who lives in, with, and by Christ, he can rejoice in tribulation and in all his troubles, because he finds they only drive him closer to Jesus, in whom he finds his *all*, and so he can still rejoice. Well then, reader, what is there better than true and practical christianity which is the only thing that gives us solid and

lasting blessing, joy, and peace in the presence of God?

HAPPIER THAN EVER.

"I CANNOT understand, for the life of me, why you're always so happy," said a friend, when conversing on the subject of full assurance by faith, and the peace and joy consequent thereon.

"Well," I replied, "because I've taken God at His word as to everything that He says about me as a sinner and as a saint: as a sinner, when I looked into the mirror of His truth, I found I looked black enough, but looking at the black patch on my face did not cleanse it away, but the 'water of the word' did; and God says I am clean every whit, and I can't help *feeling* clean also; and as a saint, He has such an immense deal to say about me, not only down here in my journey home, but 'for a long while to come,' that I never feel tired of hearing about it, reading about it, and pondering over it, and thus I become happier than ever. I am nearer home than I ever was—nearer than when I first believed."

I can understand a poor beggar, ragged and penniless, suddenly finding himself heir to a vast domain, having a dreamy sort of bliss—a feeling akin to doubt whether after all it is a waking reality. It is happiness, albeit it is a change-

able kind of feeling with him, when suddenly put in possession of his fortune ; but years afterwards, when he has been living on it, enjoying it, using it as his needs suggested, he must be much happier than when first he found himself a wealthy man ; that's just my case, through grace ; and years have added to my sense of His love and goodness, and a richer experience of his unwearied care over me, notwithstanding the wilfulness and waywardness now and again manifested on my part ; and then His desire is that my heart may know and value, and use in any and every way, the "unsearchable riches of Christ," so that I may not be barren or unfruitful. I am constrained to say, the more I apprehend His mind about me, that I am happier than ever, and this, too, in spite of the struggles without and within, in the endeavour to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this evil world, and while oft-times, as we say, the wolf is at the door. The more I am tried, the more room for faith to shine ; the more Satan and the world may tug at one's heart, the more real dependence will it bring out ; and it is not till I have got to an end of my own resources, and brought to a knowledge of God's vast and infinite stores, that I can be happy, and the more I know of His heart the happier I am. I know saints who can trust Him with an unwavering faith on the matter of their soul's salvation, yet in the dark and cloudy day, when trouble is near,

hope seems fled, and faith has lost its hold over the heart, as though God had forgotten to be gracious, forgetful of the interest He takes in all that concerns us. Precious it is to listen with an ear of faith to such heart-cheering, soul-reviving words as the Psalmist was inspired to pen for our comfort : "blessed are all they that put their trust in me, they shall never be confounded"

"I MUST CHANCE IT!"

"My dear fellow, it would never do for me to think of those things. It would make me miserable, and I should not be able to get through the business of the day." So said a young man to the writer a few weeks ago, when seeking to press upon him the importance of giving heed betimes to his soul's salvation.

"But you do not expect to live for ever ? and the matter must be considered some day," I replied.

"True," said he, "but I'll tell you my thoughts about it. I hope, before I die, I shall have a long illness, and then I intend to think of these subjects, and make my peace with God."

"But should you be called away without a moment's warning," I answered, "think what your state would then be."

"I know it," he rejoined ; "but I must chance it as thousands do ;" and so our conversation ended.

Perhaps you, my reader, are one of the thou-

sands which this young man spoke of, who are going to chance it. If so, pause and listen !

Is it a matter of such little moment, that you are going to chance whether you are going to heaven or hell ?

You are playing dice with the devil. The pleasures of the world and your precious soul are the stakes. You may enjoy the former, and yet be saved on a death-bed, but, humanly speaking, there are a thousand chances against you. Are you going to risk it ?

The Bible tells but of one man who found salvation in his dying hour, and that was the crucified thief. This one case only is given that none may presume too much on God's long-suffering grace.

Had you invested your fortune in merchandise, which you were going to ship to some distant port across the seas, would you not insure it, so that you might not be ruined if the ship went down ? and is not your eternal salvation of more value than many fortunes ?

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ?" Can you answer the question ?

You will have to meet God ere long. If you stand before His bar unsaved, you will be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxii. 13).

"I cannot meet God," said a dying lady to a preacher. "Madam," replied the preacher, "but you must." "Hide me, oh, hide me from God," she said, clutching, as she spoke, the coverings of the bed and drawing them over her face, as if to screen herself from Him.

And *you* must meet God, too. Is eternity, with its unending happiness or woe, such a trifle that you can afford to treat it with indifference? Can you contemplate unmoved the terrible position of those who die without Christ? And *you* are without Christ now, and their portion would be yours, were you now to die.

Will you not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved? Take the place before God of a lost sinner—it belongs to you, and then claim the lost sinner's Saviour. Jesus is His Name; oh, trust Him—turn to Him now! He receiveth sinners, yea, the very chief. Let nothing hold you back. He has died for sinners like you. Your sins are great, but the value of His blood is greater. Why will you die? Why should the avenger of blood smite you down? The city of refuge lies before you; its gates stand open day and night. Loiter not—flee! and enter in. "By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved," saith Jesus (John x. 9). The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7).

Will you listen to this appeal, or shrug your shoulders, and calmly looking the consequences of

your rejection of Christ in the face, say, "I must chance it?"

THE NORTH AND SOUTH WIND.

(Solomon's Song, iv. 16 ; and v. 1.)

O, north Wind, awake !
Thy pleasure now take,
And pour o'er My garden thy rage ;
Yea, shake to the root
Each plant that bears fruit ;
Let nothing thy fury assuage."

" And, come, O thou south,
With odorous mouth,
And on My choice plants do thou blow ;
Beneath the soft balm,
And genial calm,
Their sweet-scented spices will flow."

'Tis thus, that the Lord,
Whose Name be ador'd !—
His ways, to our blessing, e'er suits ;
Both north, and south wind,
By Him are design'd
To make us yield freely His fruits.

Oh ! may He so sway
Our hearts, that we say,
" Come, Lord, to Thy garden, and eat,
The soil is Thine own,
The plants, Thine alone ;
May the fruits to Thy palate be sweet !"

What joy to His breast,
When those He hath bless'd,
Are bringing forth fruit unto Him ;
And, happy are they,
Who welcome the way
Which He takes, both to train, and to trim.

T.

A SERIOUS CHANGE.

Two young men were just leaving the workshop after their day's work, and accompanied each other to the end of a certain street, when the younger of the two asked his companion which was the way to the theatre, and invited him to go with him.

"No," said William R., "I cannot go with you, for I am going to chapel; that's the way to the theatre, however," said he, pointing in another direction, and so they parted.

Alfred H. was a stranger in the large town where he now worked, having but lately come from his little country town. He found things so different to what he had been accustomed, and being no longer under the eye of his parents, who had brought him up carefully, and as he was now earning plenty of money, he felt a desire to enter fully into the enjoyment of the world, where there were so many opportunities of doing so.

William was a religious young man, but he never spoke about the things of God to Alfred.

On this occasion he did not even try to draw his young companion from the theatre, and lead him to better things. Alfred went, but did not find the pleasure he expected, for the words, "I am going to chapel," seemed to ring in his ears, and aroused his conscience. "What a difference," thought he; "and I am at the theatre." That spoiled his pleasure, and that night was a sleepless night, for text after text came to his mind; (he had been a Sunday scholar in his youth), the light began to enter, and he discovered himself to be a poor wretched sinner.

He was for a long time very miserable, and found no one who could give him a clue to the way of peace, until a neighbour one day asked him if he would have a tract. It was one of the C.S. tracts. He read it again and again, and by the help of the friend who gave it him, and who helped him over his difficulties, he found peace with God, and knew himself a saved soul, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few years passed, and what a change in these two young men. William had plunged not only into worldliness, but was going on in the way of transgressors, and soon found how hard such a way is. It had never been more with him than chapel-going. Christ had no place in his heart, and of course as soon as Satan came with his temptations, he fell, and the last I saw of him, he was pursuing his evil course.

But a serious change, and a blessed change, had come over the life of Alfred. Through God's grace he had become a follower of the Lord Jesus, and in life and conduct bore marks of conversion to God, and the desire of his heart seemed to be to win sinners for Jesus—so the first was last, and the last first.

One is glad to see the outside of the cup clean, but if that be all, what a wretched condition to be in before Him who can see the *inside*, and knows the abominations that lurk in every chamber of the heart. Could He dwell there? No, He must have a holy habitation for His dwelling-place, a place cleansed by the blood of Jesus. A house in our neighbourhood has been “done up,” and cleaned. It looks nice to the casual observer, but I would not live there for any money—I know somewhat of its interior, and its occupants.

FRAGMENTS.

“THE religion of Jesus Christ is altogether a practical thing. Just consider how we are taught anything else that is practical. It is not by hearing or reading about making shoes that a man becomes a shoemaker, but by setting to work and making them.”

“WE have seen that through every order of beings, in things inanimate and things animate,

in the natural and the spiritual world, in earth and in heaven, the law of self-sacrifice prevails. Everywhere the birth of the spiritual requires the death of the carnal. Everywhere the husk must drop away, in order that the germ may spring out of it. Everywhere, according to our Lord's declaration, that which would save its life, loses it, and that which loses its life, preserves it. And the highest glory of the highest life, is to be offered up a living sacrifice to God for the sake of our brethren. This is the principle of life, which circulates through the universe, and whereby all things minister to each other, the lowest to the highest, the highest to the lowest. This is the golden chain of love, whereby the whole creation is bound to the throne of the Creator."

WHEN we are full of heavenly love, we are best fitted to bear with human infirmity, to live above it, and forget its burden. It is the absence of love to Christ, not its fulness, that makes us impatient of the weaknesses and inconsistencies of our christian brethren. Then when Christ is all our portion, when He dwells with us and in us, we have so satisfying an enjoyment of His perfections, that the imperfections of others are, as it were, swallowed up, and the sense of our own nothingness makes us insensible to that which is irritating to individual feelings and habits.

HOLY delight in God, having Him always before the face, leads to perfect delight and joy in God, when His presence makes it full. Faithfulness, internal and external, to God, in the midst of an opposing and perhaps oppressing world, leads to righteous recompense of glory, and God's presence in righteousness. Both are perfect in Christ, and through Christ the portion of the saints.

THERE is nothing so unreasonable in *the world* as the walk set before us in the Word—nothing which so exposes us to the hatred of its prince. If, then, God be not with us, nothing so foolish, so mad ; if He be with us, nothing so wise. If we have not the strength of His presence, we dare not take heed to His Word ; and in that case we must beware of going out to war. But having the courage which the almighty power of God inspires by His promise, we may lay hold of the good and precious word of our God : its severest precepts are only wisdom to detect the flesh, and instruction how to mortify it, so that it may neither blind nor shackle us. The most difficult path, that which leads to the sharpest conflict, is but the road to victory and repose, causing us to increase in the knowledge of God. It is the road in which we are in communion with God, with Him who is the source of all joy ; it is the earnest and the foretaste of eternal and infinite happiness.

SUNNY THOUGHTS ON CLOUDY DAYS.

AMID the pressure of the times,
My heart still keeps a singing,
In spite of such discordant chimes
As Satan's ever ringing.
Can I do less than praise and sing,
With such an expectation ?
To be an heir, a son, and king,
Is cause for exultation !
I thank Him much who died for me,
From Satan to deliver,
Who gave me life, in grace so free,
So worthy of the Giver.
But daily trials and troubles come,
And oft heart-piercing sorrow,
And disappointment, when from some
A little help I'd borrow.
I've quite enough to bear *to-day*,
Without *to-morrow's* troubles ;
And when I make the Lord my stay,
His blessing always doubles.
Well, there's my trouble, and my care,
What human heart can share them ?
I take them to the Lord, in prayer,
For He alone can bear them.
I know full well His time is best,
For going or for staying,
He bids me 'watch,'—that's where I rest,
His precious word obeying.
And onwards as the moments skim,
Through business hours and leisure,
In heart and soul to wait for Him
Is my delight and pleasure.
I'm weak as tow that has been burnt ;
The flesh !—there's no good in it ;

The lesson through His grace I've learnt—
 No trusting self a minute !
Man thirsts for silver, gasps for gold ;
 Prefers the *shell* to *kernel*,
And will not on the Lord lay hold,
 And with Him—life eternal !
And yet how soon he passes hence,
 With sins, and cares, and errors,
And if allowed a brief suspense,
 Death's but a ' king of terrors !'
I like to close my eyes at night,
 (His peace my spirit keeping),
While thinking I may take my flight
 Perhaps while I am sleeping.
And blessed will it be to slip
 Away from earth's poor pleasures,
And yield the solemn guardianship
 Of closely-guarded treasures.
And when at morning I awake,
 With strength renew'd for labour,
I'm glad there's time allow'd to take
 Good news to friend and neighbour.
And has not FAITH a boundless scope,
 Link'd with the gospel story,
When thinking of that ' blessed hope,'
 Of Christ and coming glory ?
His precious word I never doubt,
 But trust it more than ever,
And in my life would bear about,
 With more of faith's endeavour,
The priceless gift of endless life
 Unspotted, free from leaven ;
And patiently amid the strife
 To look for Christ from heaven !

THE CARRIER WAITING.

As I was one day going through the City, I was thinking over a paper in the last month's *Ambassador*, entitled, "Waiting for the Carrier." I could not but feel with the writer, that wherever a waiting soul was to be found, Jesus would be sure to pass that way, and relieve the poor, heavy-laden sinner of the burden upon his conscience, and upon his heart, too; not, indeed, lend him a *helping hand*, but take it up altogether in His own great grace and goodness, and set him at liberty, so that he should know if he but accepted forgiveness at His hands, that he not only had *relief* from that which caused him to groan, and perhaps say, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" but he should also know he was livingly united with the Deliverer, and be able also to exclaim with a joyful heart, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I was thus musing over the varied actings of our God in grace, and the unfoldings of His heart and purposes towards poor man, when my eyes fell upon a busy scene before me. There was a great crowd of people, carts, waggons, and vehicles of all sorts, thronging and occupying the path and road-way in front of a large building. Every one in that throng seemed bent upon gaining admittance to the doorway, while porters and clerks were equally busy in loading the waggons.

I saw at a glance it was a carrier's warehouse. Thither came the parcels from all parts of the vast metropolis, to be conveyed to all parts of the kingdom, and to various parts of the world. There were the stupendous packages that came from the stores of our merchant princes, the goodly bales from various commercial houses, and the little brown-paper parcel of the youth sending something home. But what struck me so forcibly was, the other attitude of Christ to that presented in the previous article, that it was the *Carrier waiting* for whosoever would bring their parcels; there was no fear of their being turned away, for the company was equal to any emergency; indeed, they laid themselves out for it, so that the fear was, rather, that they would not be able to use all the means at their disposal. Does not this strikingly illustrate that blessed of all attitudes of Christ, when *He waits for the sinner* to come to Him? and He says, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Now, my reader, are your sins of such a character, that if they could be packed up they would make an immense bale—and so heavy that you could not truthfully say,

"I lay my sins on Jesus?"

and that being the case, are you afraid it would be too heavy for Christ to deliver you from it? Ah! if such be your thoughts, let me assure you that you have wrongly estimated both the willingness and the power of the Lord to release you

from that which must sink you to endless perdition, if you are not freed from it. As He waits in the highway, and along the streets and lanes of the city, for the poor way-faring, heavy-burdened traveller, He says, "Whosoever will, let him come." I can testify to this, for he delivered me from a ponderous bale of sins and iniquities, and not only so, but brought me into living connection with Himself many a year ago; and very different to the carriers I refer to, He bore the whole load away, "without money and without price;" and knowing Him as I do, I am only too thankful to run upon His errands of mercy, to tell any wearied one what He did for me when He laid down His life, and bore my sins in His own body on the tree; and it is my joy to point them to the One who not only bore away our sins into a land of forgetfulness, but who also carries all our cares and sorrows, as he says, "Cast thy care upon me;" and again, "Roll thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

Another truth pressed upon me, as I saw at a certain moment *the doors were shut*, and after that all applications were in vain: the waggons were kept till the latest moment for all comers. And will not this be true directly, "when the Master of the house riseth up, and shutteth to the door?" Surely it will; and knocking will be in vain afterwards. Therefore, how necessary to heed the voice of the Lord, who says, "Behold, now is the

accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." For my own part, I am looking for the moment of His coming with great joy ; for then He who took away the tremendous bale of sins that had accumulated for years, will take me away also.

How patiently He waits for man ! yea, not only waits, but will even go to *meet* the poor laden one, to deliver him from his great burden. How beautifully simple, yet how gladdening sounds the good news : He that believeth on the Son [of God] hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment.

Now suppose a sinner wanted to know how to be saved, if he were really anxious, he would not have to wait, but would receive an immediate answer ; for it needs but the lifting up of the eye of faith to Christ ; or the desire of the heart going out to Him, would bring Him nigh directly, for He is nigh to all them who call upon Him.

I was visiting a poor neighbourhood, and going into one house, found a young man dying of consumption. I sat down and spoke to him of the Lord and His finished work, and he told me just before I knocked, he had cried out to the Lord in his agony, as he saw he was dying : "O Lord, send some man to shew me how I am to be saved." He got an immediate answer : he no sooner expressed his desire for the Carrier, than He was at the door in the person of His servant ;

and it was not long ere the youth found his load of guilt gone. He believed what God said about that blessed One: that if any one believed on Him he should not perish, but he should have eternal life.

A few weeks over, in which he experienced a present peace and joy as the fruit of faith, and he departed to be with Christ.

What are you waiting for, my reader, *Jesus* or *judgment*? It must be the one or the other. I can say with many another christian, *Jesus* waited patiently for many years for me to come to Him, and since I came, and found in and with Him not only forgiveness and eternal life, but a daily growing acquaintance with His heart, and also a true knowledge of myself, I now wait for Him, not with the "hope deferred that maketh the heart sick," but with the patient waiting for Him who gives grace to labour for His name's sake, and not to faint; whose coming will be the ushering into surpassing scenes of glory, it is true; but the chief joy of which will be the meeting-time and greeting-time with Him, "who loved me, and gave himself for me."

THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH.

NOTHING can surpass the fulness and freeness of the Love of God, as manifested in the gift of His only-begotten Son; that "whosoever believeth in

HIM should not perish, but have everlasting life." The freeness of the grace, too, is declared in the gospel, unto every creature under heaven. The commission which the Lord Jesus gave unto His disciples, on the eve of His ascension ; "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," also expresses the unlimited extent to which it was His gracious mind that the message of mercy should be proclaimed. The parable in Luke xiv. of the certain man who "made a great supper, and bade many : and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden Come ; for all things are now ready," is likewise a declaration of the character of the unconditional grace of God. Thus we might proceed from scripture to scripture to prove that they all combine to shew the unbounded love and grace of God towards a sinful world ; but we will content ourselves with the full and closing testimony contained in the last chapter of the Revelation : "Let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

That is a very remarkable word in 2 Corinthians v. 20, 21, in which the Apostle Paul says, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us : we pray 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." The passage to which we especially refer is, "as

though God did beseech by us." This is a marvellous expression of the grace of God ; that He should allow His servants to take the attitude of, *as it were*, beseeching His rebellious creatures to be reconciled to Himself ! The parable of the Father's reception of his repentant and returning son, in Luke xv., is also a blessed illustration of the manner in which God receives a poor sinner, who comes to Him in the name of His only-begotten Son.

There is, however, one aspect of the message of the gospel, to which, perhaps, we are not accustomed to give due heed. That aspect is shewn in many places in the word of God, and amongst others in Acts xvii. 30, 31, where it is written, that "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent : because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom HE hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that HE hath raised HIM from the dead." It is recognized among men, that a king's invitation is a command. If, for instance, a monarch desires the presence of a subject, though it may be simply that he may have the honour of dining, or of conversing with the king, this request is said to be couched in the language of a command ; so that the honoured subject is in fact commanded to appear before his sovereign. And this is as it should be, considering the relative position of the two parties. Such an

invitation is not like an ordinary request from an equal, or a fellow-subject, with which one may not feel bound to comply if it should interfere with any previous engagement which we have made. No; the claim of the sovereign would, to a loyal subject, be paramount; and he would consequently feel himself bound to subordinate his previous arrangements to the commanding invitation which had superseded them. Though this is but an illustration, it may help us to understand the important and impressive character of the free and unconditional presentation of mercy and grace to the sinner in the gospel. It is made on the ground of the blessed fact, that, "all things are now ready," through the perfection of the work of Christ in His death for sin upon the cross, and God's raising Him from the dead, and seating Him at His own right hand.

Observe, that the *command* of God, in the passage which we have just quoted, is just as wide as the *invitation* of the gospel of His grace. Let us look at each of the words contained in the momentous sentence. First of all, it is GOD who speaks. This of itself ought to arrest the attention of every one. If, while passing along the streets, one were to see a placard upon a public building, headed "A PROCLAMATION," and saw that it was issued by THE QUEEN, one would, I think, be induced to stop a few moments in order to make oneself acquainted with its

contents; and would without difficulty distinguish it from the many other placards of an ordinary description. Well, then, when GOD speaks to His sinful and rebellious creatures, let ALL listen to what He says! He NOW commands! yes, at *this* very time, *this* day, *this* hour, *this* moment. It must be something, then, of great importance, that it should require such urgent attention. Yes, it is; and of so grave and obligatory a character, that He issues a COMMAND to "ALL men EVERYWHERE." It has been said that God gives His commands to His believing people; and that He presents His mercy to the world, in the gospel. This is true, so far as those commands relate to the doing of His will, and the walking in His ways, in the power of the life which His saints have in Christ. But here is *one* command which is given to *all* men. It is to every creature which is under heaven. It is to the innumerable dwellers in each of the four quarters of the globe. To come nearer, it is to the inhabitants of Europe; and, nearer still, to every individual in the country in which we dwell. Yea; it comes to our very door, for it is addressed to all in the town or village in which we reside, including THYSELF, beloved reader, whosoever thou art; rich or poor, learned or ignorant, young or old, moral or otherwise, if thou hast not bowed to it with the obedience of faith. And what is the command? "To REPENT."

We might here anticipate that one might ask, What is repentance? We will not, however, undertake to define it "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth;" but there need be no difficulty to the anxious soul, who is willing to be instructed by means of the various statements and illustrations which are contained in the scriptures. We can, however, now only refer to a few. In Luke xv. 7 we read of there being "joy in heaven," and "in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." In the same chapter we see an instance of repentance in the "younger son," who after having come to himself, and having reached his father's presence, said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." The testimony of the Holy Ghost to the Jews, by Peter, on the day of Pentecost, terminating with the solemn statement, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," pricked the hearers to the heart, so that they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts ii.) The testimony, too, which the Apostle Paul declared, that he had taught publicly, and from house to house, was

“repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts xx.) That, too, is a blessed statement in 2 Peter iii., that “the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Though these passages may not precisely define what repentance is, yet they, with the many others which are scattered through the word, are abundantly sufficient to teach and satisfy the soul that is really desirous of knowing and tasting the salvation of God. We may, however, safely say that “repentance towards God” involves the bowing of the heart to His testimony concerning ourselves, as sinners, and to His witness to the person and work of His Son, as the Saviour of sinners.

What, then is the conclusion which we should gather from the word of God on this subject of “the obedience of faith?” Why, that every one who listens to the testimony of God concerning His Son, as declared in the gospel of His grace, has not only the precious opportunity given to him of accepting the SALVATION of God freely, and thus obtaining the gift of eternal life but that he is likewise responsible to God *to obey* the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, thus so freely and unconditionally presented to him. God, who “so loved the world, that he gave his only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"—will not, however, allow sinners whom He has thus loved to continue to trifle with Him. He has, indeed, long patience; but take heed, beloved reader, that thou dost not turn the long-suffering of God against thyself, by refusing, or what is the same thing, neglecting His salvation. The solemn word is written, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!" The day is coming when at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Mayest thou *now* bow to that name, "which is above every name," and it will be salvation and blessing to thee for ever.

WONDER CONNECTED WITH WORSHIP.

THE word of God is not given us for information, in order to heighten our intelligence, but for faith to lay hold of, that our affections may be entranced, so that the soul being fed with the sincere milk of the word, may grow thereby. I would not for a moment give the impression that there is not worship without a deep knowledge of the word, but, the more we know of the mind of our God, and learn the mystery of His will, "which he hath purposed in himself," (Eph.

i. 9), the more will our hearts be bowed and prostrate before Him in wonder and admiration. In speaking of wonder, I do not mean bewilderment of the senses, but a holy wonder, the product of faith; nay, more, it is the soul losing sight of itself, in the contemplation of the object of its heart.

The patriarch's heart fainted for very joy, he believed not for gladness, at the bare mention that his beloved Joseph was yet alive. (Gen. xlv. 26.) Says the Psalmist, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." (Ps. cxxvi.) And again, the disciples "believed not for joy, and wondered," while the blessed Jesus was revealing Himself to their astonished gaze (Luke xxiv.) "Behold my hands and my feet, it is I myself:" and their little faith was lost in actual gazing on the object of their hearts' admiration. They were like men in a dream, for their captivity was turned, and their beloved One was alive again; yes, and He lives for evermore.

It is ours also by faith to be gazing on that same Jesus, now seated on the Father's throne. And what joy and wonder does it produce in our hearts to see Him there, and there for us. We too behold the marks of His dying love, the marks in His hands, in His feet, and in His side, received when "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree." How wondrous His love for us who never

had a bit of love for Him. His love is unfathomable, for it reached down, down to the depth of our sin, and we could not have been lower, else we had been in hell. His love is so infinite that it cannot be satisfied until it brings the soul that has accepted Him into the highest place. And we cannot be higher, because we are seated with Him in the "heavenly places." Surely we can only worship Him in wonder and adoration. Lord Jesus, Thou hast won these poor affections of ours, and we return Thee that which is Thine own. It is Thy love that lights our hearts, it is Thy joy that is our strength, Thy peace that gladdens, and Thy grace that sustains. We often sing,

"The coming glory scarce more sweet
Than sweet the peace before."

And methinks that when we shall "behold the land that is very far off," how our worship will be mingled with joy and wonder. Like David, son of Jesse, our prayers will then be ended. Hope will fade in full fruition, and faith be lost in sight.

It is also a noticeable fact that in that awful period of the world's history, the period between the rapture of the church, and the coming of the Lord in judgment, in order to bring in the millennium, we find that all the world wondered after the Beast, and in their wonder they worship the Antichrist.

But O how different the wonder and the wor-

ship of the saints in the glory! There in that shadeless light, with rapturous joy and holy wonder, without a single disturbing element, they worship the Lamb in awe and adoration, and follow Him whithersoever He goeth.

Will you be there, dear reader? Ah! yes, indeed, you will be there, if you believe in Him. You will be there to share in that glory, to be the wearer of those spotless robes of white and of the crown of life and glory. And upon tuneful harps to sing, while endless ages roll, eternal praise to Him "who is worthy," even to Him that "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

H. R. K.

SHALL I EVER DIE?

"Of course you will! sooner or later," most men will answer.

"I do not know," is the answer which most Bible-students *ought* to give.

Of believers, it is only those who have a special revelation that they will die, as Peter had had (John xxi. 19; 2 Pet. i. 14), and Paul (2 Tim. iii. 6), who are justified in saying, "Certainly I shall die." Peter *could* say so, for the Lord Jesus had promised to him in particular the martyr's crown; Paul knew the same of himself. But *I* am only an ordinary Christian, and I do not pretend to be either a Peter or a Paul, and I do not

either pretend to have had any revelations direct from the Lord Himself to me about my own private self in particular. Therefore, I am obliged to be satisfied with the general light, which God in His word gives to His family as such—that clear and broad light which shines upon the people of Christ as such.

I am thus obliged to be satisfied with such words as these (Heb. x. 27) : “ *As it is appointed unto men [man as a sinner, not as often wrongly quoted, unto *all* men] once to die, but after this the judgment;*” so far we read of what awaits man in fallen nature—death and the judgment; then comes what is true of the believer only : 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.*”

AS mere man is a sinner, and as such is appointed to death and judgment; SO the believer (every believer) had all the penalty due to his sins borne by Christ. He looks for Him—“ *to them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.*” (Ver. 28.) Again (1 Thess. i. 9), “ *Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*”

Again (1 Cor. xv. 51), “ *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.*”

Again (1 Thess. iv. 15), "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Again, John (in the Revelation i. 7) says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds;" and (chap. iii. 11) the Lord says to John, and to us, too, "Behold, I come quickly;" and in chapter xxii. 7, 12, "Behold I come quickly;" and (ver. 20) when the Spirit and the bride (ver. 17) invite Him to come, "the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

He answers, "Surely, I come quickly. Amen." To which John replies, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

These scriptures and many others shew, first, that the path of the believer, as laid down in scripture, leads the mind, not down to the grave, but up to meet the Lord at His coming: and secondly, that the believers in apostolic days did look up that bright and shining way to the Lord returning as their hope, even as it becomes those

“whose conversation is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Phil. iii. 20.)

Thus did they as I, having no special communication of my death,—act up to the word of the two in white apparel, who stood looking up steadfastly toward heaven (where a cloud had received Jesus from their sight): “Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts i. 10, 11.)

Being myself only one of the flock—nor bell-bearer, nor shepherd—the prospect of the flock is my prospect, nor more nor less. Special communication to myself, as an individual, as to what ought to be looked for by myself in particular, have I none ; so I must content myself with the hope set before all Christians, and seek to be like unto one that waits for his Lord from heaven, “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.” (Phil. iii. 21.)

It must be so ; the Lord has not yet fulfilled the promise which He gave to poor self-confident Peter. (See John xiii. 38 and xiv. 1, 3.)

“Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.”

“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also.” Yes! such is our hope—“that when Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. iii. 4.)

Some one may say, If these things are so in the scriptures, how come the religious people of our day not to see them?

To this I answer, the Pentecostal Christians were by faith and through the Holy Ghost occupied with the ascended Lord, who, having by His death cleared them of all guilt, was in heaven caring for all their heavenly and spiritual interests, and about to come again that He might receive them unto Himself.

Few of the religious now-a-days know even what the value of His death and resurrection is to them; they therefore cannot study His glory in heaven; and they do not long for His return, or even wish to do so.

It may be said, “Are you alone right, and every one else wrong?” I reply, “Thank God, I am not alone in this; but if I were alone I would be alone in truth, rather than with a multitude in error.”

But are you sure you are right? Of this I am sure; first, that God's word is with me; and secondly, that God will not suffer those that prayerfully search His word, and lean not on their own understanding, to err in their faith and hope.

Certainly Christ in His coming, and not death, was the hope of the early Christians. Certainly, too, *it is written* at the end of the Revelation (and it cheers my heart to read it for others' sake as well as for my own), "The Spirit and the bride say, Come."

"Surely I come quickly. Amen."

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"I DO BELIEVE."

(For the young.)

BILLY Smith (for such I will call the little boy about whom I am going to write) was the son of a drunkard. He was not like many who may read this little book, the possessor of a happy home. For the money which might have brought many a little comfort to their cheerless home was spent in drink.

Most of Billy's time was spent in the streets, seeking to earn a crust where he could. He had a mother, but she was ever subject to the abuse of her drunken husband; and furniture and everything else he had taken, pledged or sold, and expended in drink.

Billy had, perhaps, never been taught anything about God or His Son Jesus Christ; but one day when he had been wandering, hungry and cold, about the streets, he saw a crowd listening to someone preaching. He pushed his way in amongst the people, and strange but soothing words fell upon his ear. Words about the Lord Jesus, who came down into this world, leaving His bright throne of glory, and died, that those who trust in Him, might have everlasting life. He listened attentively, and no doubt his thoughts wandered to the wretched place he called home, and compared with it the home of never-ending happiness in heaven alone. After the preacher had been speaking earnestly about the way of salvation, he gave out the hymn, containing the chorus—

“I do believe, I will believe,
That Jesus died for me;
That on the cross He shed His blood
From sin to set me free.”

Poor little Billy caught up the strain; he kept saying “I do believe, I will believe, that Jesus died for me” all the way home; and when he got into the room in which his father, mother, and he slept, and although his poor miserable father was there, drunk, as usual, he could not refrain from saying, “I do believe, I will believe.” His father said he would turn him out of the house if he did not hold his noise, but he seemed deaf to

everything and still kept softly singing that beautiful verse. His mother took off the few tattered things he had on, and he crept on the top of an old broken-down cupboard, which answered for his bed ; and as his mother drew over him a piece of old carpet, his only covering, he sang softly and sweetly, "I do believe, I will believe that Jesus died for me."

How strangely these words must have fallen upon the ear of that poor woman. But how happy was this dear boy. That old cupboard seemed as soft to him as a feather bed ; cold, hunger, all of earth was nothing to him, he had got Jesus and he wanted nothing else.

The next morning his mother called him : "Billy, Billy," but there was no answer. She turned down the old carpet ; was he asleep ? Yes, asleep in Jesus. He had gone to sleep to wake up in the likeness of that blessed One who had died for him. His mother saw but the lifeless body, for Billy's ransomed soul had gone to be for ever with the Lord Jesus Christ.

My dear reader, you may be only a little boy or little girl, but you are not too young to believe in Jesus. Can you, like little Billy, say from your heart,

"I do believe, I will believe,
That Jesus died for me ;
That on the cross He shed His blood,
From sin to set me free?"

If you can say this from your heart, how happy you must be. But oh ! if you cannot—if you do not know your sins are forgiven, if you are not saved, let me tell you, Jesus is ready and willing to receive you. His arms are as ready to receive and bless you now as they were when He was upon earth, and said, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” You are not, dear reader, too young, as I said, to believe ; and you are not too young to die. Where would you go if you were to die unconverted ? The Lord Jesus, too, is coming soon, to raise up all those who have believed in His name, whose bodies are resting in the quiet grave ; and those who are saved and are alive, will be taken up together to dwell with the Lord for ever. Little Billy Smith will be amongst that gladsome throng ; oh ! won’t you also make one of that blessed number ? Jesus said, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

J. A. B.

“BECAUSE I LIVE YE SHALL LIVE ALSO.”

YES, it is quite true that because He lives up there, every believing soul in Jesus, too, shall live up there ere long with Him in the glory. But do you not feel yourself, dear one, sometimes only

sighing and longing for something else? not only do you want to rest assured that all is well for the future, but you need that which will sustain you at the present moment. Well, there is only one remedy for your case. Christ must be your all and in all. He is sufficient for every emergency. Let not trial, defeat, your sinning, or any other cause keep you from Him. Rather use them as opportunities to draw near to Him. Nay, more; He often permits us to be tried, in order to shew that our sufficiency must be of God. Have you never found yourself in a remarkable and unexpected manner brought through some trial or difficulty, which previously you had thought would be overwhelming? But you have come off victorious, and why? Because you knew that so serious a matter could not be met in your own strength, you dare not trust your own wisdom, but like the disciples, you simply went and "told Jesus." Thus to your glad surprise you found He was with you in the furnace, and was affording strength according to the time of need.

And now, I am sure, beloved, we want more simplicity to rely on Himself for every step of the journey. Surely, there is nothing too minute for the Lord Jesus to be interested about. He notes every sigh, breathed by His dear saints, and He knows the weight of every care. Do we not often forget that He was the burden-bearer of the very grief that oppresses now? O do not

grieve His loving heart by mistrusting and doubting whether His sympathies extend to such little griefs and sorrows that constantly cross our daily pathway. Take everything to Jesus. Let Him rule and guide you. Give up to Him the reins of the government of yourself.

It is a great thing to be *directed* aright on the road, but it is a much sweeter thing to be *guided*. If on a difficult journey you seek direction from some friend, how delighted you are when he not merely gives the direction, but offers to accompany you all the way. He knows every turn and winding of the road; you can trust him to lead and guide you. Just so it is with Jesus. Perhaps you have longed to be guided by Him, but you have only asked Him to direct you. But He desires to be your Guide, He desires to be your Companion and Friend all life's journey through. But have you not often hindered the sweetness of this fellowship with Him, by trying to bear your sorrows, and anxieties, and joys alone? Well now, the more we become occupied with ourselves, the less are we occupied with Jesus. A very little matter will obstruct the sight, so that we cannot see the sun. Then think, whenever you become weary or tempest-tossed, that "He lives" up there for you. And because He lives you shall live also. Not that you should be ever and always a bowing bulrush, but that you should become a stately cedar. Not that you should escape like Job's

messengers ; nay, but that you should in *all* things be more than a conqueror through Him. Says Paul, "I can do all things through Christ." O to be more in His company. It is when we are with Him, that we can "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called."

"CAN two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos iii. 3.) Can parent and child go on happily together if there be controversy between them? The nearer the relationship, and the greater the love which exists between *two*, the more sensitive will their hearts be to any difference of judgment or mind. And how infinitely true is this of us in our dealings with God our Father. "His divine power *hath* given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter i. 3); and His desire is that we "may stand perfect and complete in *all* his will" (Col. iv. 12); and it is in His presence, in whom is no "darkness at all," that it is our privilege, as it is also in our power, to judge and bring into light the secret and dark corners of our hearts. And what growth would there be in our souls, what power and what testimony in our lives, if, as the light of God shone in, we opened up more willingly these dark and hidden things."
—*Extract.*

THE BROKEN WING.

My cage hangs on a nail,
Securely night and day,
Driv'n in a beam that cannot fail,
That never yet gave way
But stood the test of many a gale
Of Satan's fiercest sway.
A weak and wounded thing,
I nestle on the floor,
I cannot mount my perch and sing,
And warble as of yore :
A sickly bird with *a broken wing*,
And crouching near the door.
But why, poor wounded bird,
This solemn, plaintive tone ?
Hast not thy gracious Master heard
Thy very feeblest moan ?
In sympathy His heart is stirr'd ;
And see ! Thou'rt not alone.
Before thy cage He stands,
Thy down-cast looks He heeds ;
And in His wide-spread, open hands
He has *such* tempting seeds,
And sweet, ripe fruit from other lands,
Wherewith His own He feeds.
Ah ! yes, it is my Friend
That would my grief assuage ;
He comes a little time to spend
Before my wicker cage,
And well I know that in the end,
He'll all my thoughts engage.
I listen with delight
To His familiar voice ;
And those supplies that meet my sight,
Are love's peculiar choice ;
And while I'm feeding in His sight,
I cannot but rejoice.
'Tis Thou, O Lord, dost fling
Thy blessings round my feet,
Dost take in hand my *broken wing*,
In tenderness so sweet,
That I will to Thy fingers cling,
As my secure retreat.

Now, Lord, what want I more,
Since Thou art always nigh ?
Just ope the little wicker door,
That I might early fly,
With resurrection-birds to soar
To our lov'd home on high.
Thou watchest day and night
Before my little cage,
Lest that much-dreaded foe, the Kite,
Should pounce on me in rage ;
But while I'm feeding in Thy sight,
His war he cannot wage.
Thou'st fill'd my glassy fount
With water pure and clear,
And once again my perch I mount,
Without a shade of fear,
And I Thy mercies will recount
Into Thy list'ning ear.
I'll sing both clear and strong,
About Thy love to me,
Until the hour for which I long,
When Thou shalt set me free,
And I, with all the ransom'd throng,
In endless glory be.
Thou'rt gracious, kind, and good,
And well are all Thy ways ;
Perhaps some bird from yonder wood,
Whilst list'ning to my lays,
May come into my neighbourhood,
And join me in my praise.
In spirit I am free,
In spite of wounds and scars,
In heavenly places, Lord, with Thee,
Above the sun and stars ;
And yet, because it pleases Thee,
Content in wicker bars.
Yea, happily content,
Whatever things annoy ;
And if for Thee my time is spent,
'Tis bliss without alloy,
And so my spirit finds its vent
In strains of praise and joy.

G. C.

THE TERRIBLE EXPLOSION.

EARLY on the morning of the fifth of October, tens of thousands of people in the North and West of London were aroused from their slumbers by a terrible explosion. Many a stout heart quailed, as with a bewildered look, the question was asked, without any one being able to answer it, as to the cause of so strange, so alarming an enemy which spread terror and horror on every hand. How slight a thing breaks in upon the fancied peace of him who is not safe in Christ through faith in His precious blood; and if suddenly brought face to face with eternal realities, what terrors strike in upon his heart as he consciously wakes up to the fact that he has no refuge from the wrath awaiting every unbelieving soul—that he has no covert from the fearful storm that is ready to burst. It was so in many a case that came under my own notice, and many more which reached my ears. And in the distraction of the moment it was attributed to an earthquake by some, and to many a poor trembling, terrified one, the end of the world had come. Indeed one poor lady rushed from her house in her night dress wildly exclaiming to the passers-by, “Has it come, has it come?” “Has what come?” they enquired of the poor distracted lady. “The judgment day,” she replied. But her fears were allayed by the facts of the solemn cause of so much terror and destruction.

I was awaked from my slumbers by the fearful vibrations which reached our locality, and it was such as to make the heart tremble for a time, though there was no fear for the consequences, because had it been instant death, it would have been instant glory, or rather admission to His presence who has died and borne our punishment, so that we who believe should be delivered from the wrath to come. Yet with the passing away of the panic passed away the fear of the future in many hearts. But God may use it as a voice to arouse many a deadened conscience as to its real condition before Him. With some it is the still small voice of love that is heard and listened to with attention, and the glad tidings it tells gladly embraced, and the water of the word drunk in by the thirsty soul with thankfulness and praise. How uncertain is human life, we need not say. In a moment death puts in his sickle, and the fairest and the healthiest are struck down in a moment, leaving sorrow and gloom over the hearth and home. Yet, with the knowledge of life's uncertainty how little men, as a rule, take heed to it. Is a man successful in business, or does he inherit a fortune? he is careful to make his will, so that no mishap should occur as to what he leaves behind him. So also as to his goods and property, he insures against the disastrous effects of fire; but as to his soul, or what concerns it in the great future, he is content to leave it all in drear uncertainty, though there

be no uncertainty really, as he would find if he consulted the word of God, which is clear enough for any honest heart eager for the truth. God loves the sinner too much to leave him in any uncertainty, and tells him what He has done in the display of His grace in giving up Jesus to death, even the death of the cross, so that if His record is believed in, if His Son is accepted as the ransom, then verily there is eternal life, and a passing from the place of condemnation to the place of the most perfect liberty and joy, so that we can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Had the explosion occurred a little before, no doubt but what my own household and hundreds of others *must* have been hurried into eternity, for the canal which bore the fatal barge along runs in a deep tunnel through our neighbourhood. A neighbour remarked that had it been so we should have felt the shock. "Not at all," I said; "it would have been so sudden that we should have been in heaven in a moment." This I said as a test as to his condition, for *he* ought to be able to speak with some little assurance about his safety in Christ. But he coolly remarked, "It must be nice to be prepared."

"Prepared!" I said, "I've been prepared for many years, not by works which I have done, but by grace."

He turned away with a smile, as if it were a secondary matter.

How different this to the cry of an old man a friend and myself visited. He is nearing his end, and the future is full of alarm for him. "Oh! that I knew I was saved," was the oft-repeated utterance. "Would that I could see the scarlet line, the true token in the window, then I should be happy." We endeavoured in every way to direct his eye to Christ, but it seemed of no avail, yet he was well versed in the scriptures—seemed to have the Bible at his fingers' end, but could gather no comfort from his knowledge of it.

He was eighty-eight years of age, with a clear intellect and wonderful memory. He could quote freely from the Bible, and I trust in the main he was all right, but he had not peace, yet desiring it. He exclaimed again and again,

"Oh, would that I could testify
My sins were all forgiven ;
That I might close my eyes on earth
And open them in heaven."

It is a serious thing to put it off till a dying day.

Time flies, year succeeds year, and as the poor old man said in the bitterness of his soul, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

May this not be the reader's case. To any poor anxious soul, desirous about his salvation, I would say, Decide at once. Accept Christ, and with Him forgiveness, peace, life, and glory.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

“He came to himself.”

THE Bible is a book of contrasts. We see placed side by side in the word of God, from beginning to end, such striking contrasts as these: grace and judgment, life and death, eternal happiness and eternal torment. Every one who lives on this earth will one day or other have to do with one of these conditions. Then, happy is he who looks these truths full in the face while yet there is time, and chooses grace, life, and happiness, instead of judgment, death, and torment.

Many and varied are the narratives we get in scripture, illustrative of these contrasts. We will, however, take into consideration for a little while two narratives which fell from the lips of our blessed Lord Jesus when upon earth, expressive of the two extremes, to one of which every one of us is hastening.

In the story of the prodigal we get one who has left his father's house, and gone into a “far country,” where he wasted his substance with riotous living.” This is a picture of man generally. He has listened to the voice of the deceiver, and has turned away from God, and is now in the “far country”—an alien and a stranger. But when the prodigal had spent all, (a mighty famine arising, and he in want, insomuch that he would have filled his belly with the food of swine), “he came to himself.” He began to think of his

father's house, and thought that even a servant's place there better than being in the far country. We know how he started, and that when he was a great way off, his father ran to meet him, sealing his confession with a kiss, clothing him with a robe, putting a ring on his finger—symbol of eternal love—killing for him the fatted calf, and all are rejoicing.

Reader, if thou art out of Christ, if thou art still in thy sins, thou art in the "far country," and soon wilt be in *want*. If thou wilt return, I can assure thee of a Father's welcome—a Father's love; and there will be rejoicing over thy repentance in the presence of the angels of God.

In the case of the rich man we see a totally different state of things. He also came to himself, but it was then too late for mercy. The prodigal came to himself in the far country, returned, and was welcomed; but the rich man did not come to himself until he was in hell. He was separated from heaven, where Abraham and Lazarus were, by a great gulf, which none could cross.

What a contrast there is between the two narratives! One came to himself while yet *there was time*, but the other *too late*. One enters the Father's house, has the best robe, the ring, and the shoes put upon him, the fatted calf and wine to feed upon; the other in torment, not having a drop of water wherewith to quench his parched tongue.

Dear reader, wilt thou not ponder over these things? Wilt thou still go on enjoying the "good things" of this life, and despise the Father's house and the Father's welcome? Art thou content with the fading, fleeting pleasures of this life, whilst neglecting the eternal joys and pleasures of heaven? Oh! be not deluded, come to thyself now, ere it be too late. Does the contemplation of these eternal realities cause thee to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" I bless God if it does, and would answer in the words of Paul and Silas, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Thou hast not to do any great work, nor strive by anything good in thyself to merit eternal life. Thou hast only to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners, and came to seek the lost. May God in the riches of His grace incline thine heart to rest entirely upon Christ for thy salvation, and if thou dost this, thou shalt, when all else shall wither and decay, dwell for ever with the Lord Jesus Christ, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

J. A. B.

TRIUMPHING IN CHRIST.

SHE was drawing near the hour of her departure. Her poor emaciated frame, worn by many weary months of sickness, was about to sink to rest, while her immortal spirit plumed its wings to soar away to a sunnier clime. Signifying a wish that all in

the house should be called, they entered the room one by one, and stood in silence around the bed, and wept. "Herbert, dear," said the dying woman, looking earnestly upon her husband as she spake, "what are you crying for? don't cry; let us sing." "What shall we sing, darling?" he enquired. She quickly replied, "We will sing,

'Oh! what has Jesus done for me?'

We opened our hymn-books, she needed none; but our tongues refused, and great lumps came into our throats, and we could not sing. "I will lead," said the dying saint; so, propped up with pillows, and apparently unconscious of the fact that no one joined with her, she sang all alone, and in a voice both sweet and clear,

"Oh! what has Jesus done for me?"

He pitied me, my Saviour;

My sins were great; His love was free;

He died for me, my Saviour.

Exalted to the Father's side—

He pleads for me, my Saviour:

A heavenly mansion He'll provide,

For all who love the Saviour.

Jesus, Lord Jesus,

Thy name is sweet, my Saviour:

Soon shall I see Thee face to face,

My wondrous blessed Saviour."

The effort over, she sank back exhausted, and after a few more words, said, "Farewell till the resurrection morn." Precious grace that could make a feeble believer in Jesus so triumphant in the hour of nature's weakness. Death had no

sting for her, and the grave shall have no victory. She was more than conqueror through Him that loved her.

It is the knowledge of Jesus that can alone fill the heart with peace and joy when death confronts us. Unfeigned reliance upon Him and upon His finished work is what most avails at such a time; anything else will prove but a broken reed, which will fail us when we need it most.

Jesus is enough—possessing Him we possess all. What cause for fear have we, if He is ours? He has put away all our sins, by bearing the judgment due to them upon the cross; everlasting life He has given to us, and ere long He will bestow everlasting glory. There are absolutely no grounds for fear. Were there any, the efficacy of the blood of Jesus would at once be called into question. Either that blood has atoned for our sins, dear believer, or it has not. If the latter, then there is no hope, seeing that by no works of ours can sin be put away; but if the former be true, (and shall we doubt it?) then all is finished, and everything that the justice of God could take cognizance of has been answered for by Him in our stead.

But on the other hand, if the Lord Jesus Christ be not known, there are no just grounds for confidence in the face of the solemn realities of *eternity*. To build on anyone but Christ, or on anything but the redemption work He did at

Calvary, is to build on sinking sand. The house may look secure enough while the sun shines, and all is calm; but when the winds blow, and the rain descends, and the floods come, and beat against it, the house shall fall, and great will be the fall thereof. Not by works of righteousness which man can do, can man be saved, but by the boundless mercy of God which flows out to the vilest sinner through the cross of the holy Lamb. And God *can* bless and justify from all things the most ungodly, because of what the laying down of the life of the Lord Jesus was to Him. *He* is the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Rom. ii. 26), and delights to shew His thought of the blood of Christ, by clearing from every charge the simple believer in Jesus. See to it then, my reader, that you are resting on this sure foundation; let Christ and His glorious work be the rock on which you build, and take care that you gather your thoughts of your standing before God from His written word alone. Should you, however, be a stranger to Christ, and as a necessary consequence, unsaved, and in the path that leads to hell, be entreated to flee to Him at once. Take your place before Him in all sincerity, as a guilty sinner, on whom the wrath of God most righteously abides, and then understand that Christ died for such—died *instead* of such, that they might be saved. This is what the gospel declares, and we may indeed believe it. What a sense of deliver-

ance this brings! What peace! what joy! The clouds are scattered; the darkness flees away; all fear is gone; and we sink at the feet of Jesus to bathe them with our tears.

W. B.

“WE’RE NOT HEATHEN, SIR.”

A GENTLEMAN was distributing tracts on the promenade of a large town on the south coast, when he met a lady and gentleman, with a little girl. The tract distributor offered the little girl a book, which she accepted, when the lady said, with a smile, “You know, we’re not heathen, sir!”

I was much struck with this remark, as to my mind it so clearly shewed the real state of the so-called christian world at the present time. According to the common religious idea—and as taught in the Establishment, a child when he is christened or baptized, becomes by regeneration a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven: in other words, it is made a Christian. Now there is no warrant for this in the word of God—no, not a single text! I do find *this* in the Bible, that as soon as a man believes in the Lord Jesus Christ (with the heart, I mean), he becomes a Christian, that is, a saved soul. “He that believeth on the Son, *hath* everlasting life” (John iii. 36).

It is not he that is christened, or he that is baptized, but “he that believeth.”

Reader, it matters not whether thou art heathen,

or whether thou dost go by the name of Christian; for if thou hast not Christ, thou art on the way which leads to hell; if thou art religious, and yet unsaved, and if thou art not awakened from thy dull religiousness, then thou wilt find out, "too late," the terrible consequence, of a Christless religion.

True religion consists not in the observance of forms and ceremonies, it is the worship of the heart, having Christ as its object.

I know a person who has heart disease, who, when spoken to about her soul, always says, "If my religion cannot save me, nothing else can." What a delusion is this! it is what the devil is seeking to do on every hand, namely, to put religion in the place of Christ. Religion can save no man,—but Christ can and will save all who believe in Him. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Reader, if thou art trusting to anything short of Christ, whether it be so-called good works, religious exercises, or even the saying of prayers, thou art building on a false foundation, thy house is on the sands, and when that storm which shall shortly sweep over this scene shall burst forth, all that thou hast been trusting in, perhaps for years, will give way, and leave thee without protection or shelter, from the fury of God's wrath in the day of vengeance. But if thou wilt believe God, and rest

in Christ Jesus for thy perfect salvation on His finished work, when the storm comes thou wilt have Christ for thy rock, and Christ for thy refuge.

This poor lady, who said, “you know, we’re not heathen, sir,” I am afraid was trusting to so-called Christianity, instead of Christ. But this will never do, we have to do with the person of Christ.

I must have Him for myself; I must, before I can bear the name of Christian in sincerity, be able to say “He died for *me* ; ” “He shed His blood to wash *my* sins away.” This is appropriation, and unless I appropriate Christ by the hand of faith, I can never know what salvation is.

Oh! sinner, let me intreat thee to rest in nothing short of Christ, for if thou dost trust to the observance of certain religious duties, and art a stranger to Christ Himself, it will be more tolerable for the poor heathen, who may never have heard of Christ, in the day of judgment.

May God cause the Lord Jesus Christ to be the true resting place of all who may read this little paper for His name sake.

POOR JOSEPH.

A poor, weak-minded man, named Joseph, whose employment was to go on errands and carry parcels, passing through London streets one day, heard the singing of Psalms in Dr. Calamy’s Church, Alder-

manbury. He went into it, having a large parcel of yarn hanging over his shoulders.

The Doctor, after awhile, read his text from 1 Tim. i. 15, "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*"

From this he preached, in the clearest manner, the ancient and apostolic Gospel, that there is eternal salvation for the vilest sinner, through the worthiness of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who made all things.

Joseph, in rags, gazing in astonishment, never took his eyes from the preacher, but drank in with eagerness all he heard. Trudging homewards, he was overheard muttering to himself, "Joseph never heard this before ! Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who made all things, came into the world to save sinners like Joseph :—and this is true :—and it is a ' faithful saying ! ' "

Soon afterwards Joseph was seized with fever, and was dangerously ill. As he tossed upon his bed, his constant language was, "Joseph is the chief of sinners : but Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and Joseph loves Him for this." His neighbours, who came to see him, wondered at hearing him always dwelling on this subject. Some of them addressing him in the following manner :—"But what say you of your own heart, Joseph ? Is there no token of good about it ? No saving change there ? Have you

closed with Christ by acting faith upon Him?" "Ah! no," says he; "Joseph can act nothing; Joseph has nothing to say for himself, but that he is the chief of sinners, yet seeing that it is a faithful saying that Jesus, He who made all things, came into the world to save sinners, why may not Joseph, after all, be saved?"

Some one finding out where he heard this doctrine, on which he uniformly dwelt with so much delight, went and asked Dr. Calamy to come and visit him. He came; but Joseph was now very weak, and had not spoken for some time, and though told of the Doctor's arrival, he took no notice of him; but when the Doctor began to talk to him, as soon as he heard the sound of his voice, Joseph sprang upon his elbows, and, seizing his hands, exclaimed as loud as he could, with his now feeble and trembling voice, "O Sir! you are the friend of the Lord Jesus, whom I heard speak so well of Him. Joseph is the chief of sinners; but it is a faithful saying, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who made all things, came into the world to save sinners, and why not Joseph? O pray to that Jesus for me; pray that He may save me; tell Him that Joseph thinks that he loves Him for coming into the world to save such sinners as Joseph." The Doctor prayed: when he concluded, Joseph thanked him most kindly. He then put his hand under his pillow and took out an old rag, in which were tied up five guineas,

and putting it into the Doctor's hand (which he had kept all the while close in his), he thus addressed him: "Joseph in his folly, had laid this up to keep him in his old age; but Joseph will never see old age; take it, and divide it among the poor friends of the Lord Jesus, and tell them that Joseph gave it them for His sake, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is the chief." So saying he reclined his head. His exertions in talking had been too much for him, so that he instantly expired.

Dr. Calamy left this scene, but not without shedding tears over Joseph; and used to tell this little story with much feeling, and as one of the most affecting occurrences he ever met with.

It may furnish the reader with matter for serious reflection. The congregation where Joseph heard the glad tidings of salvation through Christ, was large and fashionable. Most of them, it may be, were occupied with themselves and their own thoughts and persons. They went, perhaps, to see and be seen, as is often the case, and listened heedlessly to that which was spoken. But not so with poor Joseph. He listened as to a voice from heaven, he drank in every word. With others, the word fell like seed on stony ground, or by the way side. Their minds were intent on other things; and, perhaps, after leaving the door of the church, they never once more thought of what they had heard, although it was God's word; but Joseph

received it as God's word, and not as man's word, and treated it as such. He heard it as with the ears of his soul. He held it fast, and thought upon it. Others cared for the things of this world, and slighted the good news of salvation; but Joseph, after he heard it, cared for nothing else. His mind was intent on his salvation. He knew that he was a sinner, and his soul clung to Jesus as the Saviour of sinners; for he believed what was written in the word of God, that Jesus came into the world for this gracious purpose. Jesus died, "the just for the unjust." He "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," that He might bring us to God.

Joseph trusted in this blessed assurance. He believed in the love of God to us, sinners as we are, and this love drew forth his own. His faith was not an airy notion, but a principle of action. It was evidenced by his love, of which he gave substantial proof by giving to the poor friends of the Lord Jesus all that he possessed.

Poor Joseph had no faith in himself. Simple-minded as he was, he appears to have learned rapidly the lesson which many Christians are slow to learn. He appears to have renounced self in every form. He did not rely on the work in his soul for his comfort; nor did he trust in his faith for his confidence. He turned away from himself to rest solely on Jesus, his Almighty Saviour. Reposing in Him, he could not but die in peace.

"I'VE READ MY BOOK."

WHILE staying for a few days in the village of H——, I was requested to visit a sick man, to which I gladly consented. I found him very ill, his friends greatly fearing he would not recover. He seemed quite at ease at the thought of the future should he be called away from this scene. I asked him on what he was resting: if he were trusting simply to the finished work of Jesus; but he replied, with the greatest complacency, "I've read my book" (meaning his Bible). This seemed to satisfy *him*, he felt assured he would go to heaven because he had "read his book." I set before him the gospel, endeavoring to shew him that nothing but the precious blood of Jesus could fit him for the presence of God; that Jesus had finished the work of redemption, in order that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 16); telling him that merely reading "his book" would never save his soul. But, alas! he was quite contented, saying to almost every text I quoted, "Yes, I have read it in my book;" and there he rested.

Oh! what a delusion of the enemy! And how many thousands there are who, like that poor man, rest the salvation of their soul on *reading* God's word.

Reader, are you one of that class? If so, let me beseech you to trust no longer to such a feeble

thing, for it will not avail you in eternity. Nay, your condemnation will be greater than if you had not read it. Do I say you ought not to read God's word? No, indeed, one is only too glad to see a poor soul "*searching* the scriptures." But simply reading them with the false idea that by so doing you will get eternal life is totally different. That word declares that "Faith cometh [not by reading, but] by *hearing*, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17); and without faith it is impossible to please God. (Heb. xi. 6.)

Trust not, my dear reader, to anything but the work of Jesus; there is nothing whatever for you to do: "not of works, lest any man should boast." It may be you have never considered the state of your soul, but have gone on for years, heedless of the future—"without hope, and without God." Oh, do not reject the love of God; delay not another moment, for who can say how soon you shall be cut off; and God's word declares, "He that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;" and again, "He that believeth not shall be damned."

May you not spend eternity in the lake of fire, "prepared for the devil and his angels," but with Jesus in glory, and join in that happy song, "Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." (Rev. v. 9).

"I'VE GOT MY PENNY."

A word to the aged.

SOME years since an old man who had been an infidel the greater part of his life, was invited one day, by one of his servants, who was a believer in the Lord Jesus, to attend a meeting where the gospel was proclaimed to perishing sinners, and the Lord graciously met him, and revealed Himself as a *Saviour-God*, just as he was brimful of infidel thoughts, gushing forth from an infidel heart; a heart that up to that time hated the word of God, and sought to drag others with him down to that fearful place of punishment for all who reject the message of God's love, in the gift of Jesus, His beloved Son. The dear old man's joy was, that God in His rich and sovereign grace, had called him at the eleventh hour of the day. He would be often heard saying, with great delight and joy of heart, "I've got my penny."

Should these few simple lines be read by one who has been many years on the same broad road, many years in the same condition of heart, many years disbelieving the truth of God, and many years believing the devil's lie, (and alas there are many, many aged men and women in this day of God's long-suffering and salvation,) may you be led to accept the gift—God is essentially in the day of grace a *giving God*, He asks nothing from you, no good works, no improvement of nature, no religious duties, no, not even your prayers.

He asks you for nothing, but delights as the *giving God* to meet *your* need, even if it be at the eleventh hour. Just think of being all these many years *in your sins and out of Christ*, still unsaved, still travelling the downward road, still blinded by Satan the god of this world, still in the dark as to your real condition before God—and yet, thank God, not eternally lost. You may not have known up to this time that you *are lost and guilty*, but thank God, while you are still in this world, you are in a place where He can meet you and reveal Himself to you as a *Saviour-God* in the person of His Son. May you through His rich grace be brought to see yourself as a good-for-nothing sinner, a guilty sinner, a lost sinner, a hell-deserving sinner. The blessed God has some *good news* to tell you, poor good-for-nothing sinner, poor lost and guilty sinner, poor hell-deserving sinner, poor aged sinner. *He* says, “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*.” *He* says, “He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” *He* says, “Behold! now is the accepted time: behold! now is the day of salvation.” *He* says, “Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.” And lastly, *He* says, “Him that cometh unto me, I will *in no wise* cast out.” What words of encouragement these are for aged sinners, living on day by day *without* God, without hope in the

world." Do you not see that *God, the giving God, the living God, the Saviour-God* in Christ Jesus, is waiting for you, and although you have these many years been neglecting so great salvation, yet He is still waiting to *save you, just as you are?* He invites you to partake of the blessings of redemption in Christ Jesus, He gives liberally, and He is honoured when His gift is received, and He bestows honour on such an one—

“ Oh ! what a gift the Father gave,
When He bestowed His Son ;
To save poor ruined, guilty man,
By sin, defiled, undone.”

The moment you receive His gift, then it is *your* privilege to sing—

“ Oh ? *what a gift ;* His praise shall be
For ever on my tongue,
And mine shall be the loudest praise
That ransomed soul hath sung.”

The moment you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ God's gift to lost sinners, that moment you are eternally saved—saved from your sins, saved with an everlasting salvation, the One you believe in is the One who *has saved you*. The blessed God says in His word, “ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;” and again, “ He that *hath* the Son *hath* life;” and again, that “ as many as received him (Jesus), to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to those who believe on his name.” You may be a very old

sinner as to this present life, but the moment you believe in Jesus, the moment you look to Him, the moment you receive Him with your heart by faith, the moment you are "born again"—the moment you are "turned from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God," you receive the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." May God in His grace give these solemn, yet blessed truths, a place in your heart, and then the little while you are in this poor dark world, may you be a *bright* witness for a precious *Saviour-God* until He come to take you to be with Him in His glory for ever.

R. E. K.

"COCK-CROWING TIME."

Mark xiii. 35.

THE years are rolling on apace,
And bear their solemn warning ;
The midnight's past, and *faith* can trace
The first faint streaks of morning.
Ye ransom'd ones, from slumber wake,
For hark ! the "cock" is "crowing ;"
The blessed "day" begins to break,
With brightest glory glowing.
Another year has run its course,
And with it joys and troubles ;
Yet poorer seems the world's resource,
And emptier seem its "bubbles."
Christ bids us watch, as those who wait
To see their Lord and Master ;
With girded loins, with hearts elate,
Our footsteps urging faster.
I have no fears of coming wrath—
No dread of condemnation,

For at His second coming forth,
 'Twill be for *full* salvation ;
 For He has blotted out by blood
 My Adam-life and story ;
 And causes through my heart to flood
 Surpassing scenes of glory.
 I love to ponder o'er His word,
 In things divine progressing ;
 'Tis only as His voice is heard
 We get the richest blessing.
 I'll look to Him along the road,
 Until the journey's ended,
 And hasten on to His abode,
 With grace and glory blended.
 Ah ! yes, with all I'd freely part,
 And not alone from duty,
 But with a full, o'erflowing heart,
 To see Him in His beauty.
 "Cock-crowing time" indeed has come,
 And faith her "watch" is keeping ;
 For Him, life's centre, bliss, and sum—
 For Him our hearts are leaping.
 "Cock-crowing time !"—I lend an ear
 To its eventful warning ;
 It seems to bring one's heart so near
 The resurrection morning.
 "Cock-crowing time !" all hail the day
 For which my soul is yearning,
 And through the troubles by the way
 To which my eye is turning.
 I onward press, through joy, through strife,
 And troubles whatsoever,
 To meet my Lord, my joy, my life,
 To be with Him for ever.
 I'll sing, as I my journey take,
 My choicest, sweetest numbers,
 Perchance my strains some saints may wake,
 And 'rouse them from their slumbers :
 And if they ask me why I sing,
 I'll say, to heaven I'm going—
 And that it's time to plume one's wing
 Because the "cock" is "crowing."

G. C.