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# The Gospel Messenger.

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## THE AGNOSTIC.

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“YOU seem to be very fond of reading.”

“Yes, very, provided I can get good books: I do not care for trash.”

“What do you call good books?”

“The works of the best authors. On my well days I like books that need a good deal of thinking out, but on my weary days I want a good novel; it is a great rest to forget myself in a thoroughly well-written novel.”

“Do you find rest in that?”

“Well, *rest* is perhaps too strong a word to use, rest means so much. There is no real rest, but books mean temporary oblivion, forgetting for the moment all one's circumstances and surroundings. I do not know what I should do here without books.”

The last speaker was a lady of middle age, with dark, keen, deeply-set eyes which had almost a hard look in them. She had had an eventful life, and now, through a fall, while walking rapidly across a London street, had become partially paralysed, and through reverse of circumstances could not have the care and attention she needed in a private house and thus had become an inmate of a home for such cases.

She was lying in a bed in the corner of a ward in which there were ten other patients, and yet she seemed altogether alone. She lived apart with her books, neither giving nor seeking sympathy, but holding aloof from all.

She had been only ten days in the ward when the conversation referred to took place, but her visitor had heard something of her history from other sources, and felt it would be no easy matter to gain her confidence, or penetrate the proud reserve which, like a barbican, guarded the entrance to the citadel of her inner being.

The novel in her hand proclaiming that it was one of her "weary days," and the half sigh with which she said there was no real rest, opened a loophole for kindly sympathy, and interest in the cause of her sufferings, while anything that might seem to her like mere impertinent curiosity was carefully avoided. Her new friend told her she could in measure sympathise, as she herself had known what it was to be confined to bed or couch for a lengthened period, and thus knew something of what weary days and restless nights meant. "But," she added, "I had always the comfort of knowing that the One who loved me best had all power in His hands, and would do the very best thing for me, and He only asked me to trust Him, even Jesus the Son of God."

No response came. There was no need to ask, "Do you know that One?" The cold silence, the hard stony look that came over her face, made such a question superfluous.

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After a brief pause, during which her friend had been arranging something for her on her little table, she suddenly said :

“*I* would not let any one I loved suffer if I had the power to prevent it.”

“But, in your experience as a nurse, have you never had to carry out treatment that was painful at the time, for your patient’s good, even if that patient were some one you loved ?”

“Yes, that is true, but I could explain the necessity of the treatment, and the good that would follow.”

“If your patient were a young child, could you explain ?”

“No, of course not ; but I could *show* love and tenderness to any child I nursed. But what can you know of love, or power, or of anything you cannot see !”

“This book,” holding up a Bible, “reveals to me the love of the heart of God and the power of His hand. I believe it to be a direct communication from God Himself.”

“But I do not believe the Bible ; some parts of it are beautiful as poetry, and good, but how can any one with a mind really believe all that is contained in the Bible ? I do not believe anything I cannot reason out. We cannot know anything beyond what our understandings can grasp. I have for years been an Agnostic.”

“Oh ! I am so sorry for you ; it must be such a dreary thing not to know anything certainly.”

“Are you any better off, do you know anything certainly?”

“Yes, indeed I do. I know that God loves me—I know that Christ died for me, I know that when He appears I shall be like Him; and meantime I know whom I have believed, and that He is able to keep me till that day. Even for time to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, is rest and peace and joy.”

“But how do you know?”

“God has spoken, and I believe Him. You see I believe this book to be inspired from cover to cover.”

“And I believe the Buddhist Scriptures to be as much inspired, and the writings of Confucius; indeed every writer worth reading I believe is inspired.”

“God gave man his powers of intellect certainly, and he is accountable to Him for the use he makes of them; but the Holy Scriptures are not the work of men’s minds. God used human instruments to record what He would make known; ‘Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,’ the apostle Peter says; and the apostle Paul says, ‘All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,’ and by that I understand not only that He gave the power to write, but also the words to say, and God has preserved this book through all the efforts of Satan to get rid of it. You believe there is a God, do you not?”

“Yes, an eternal existence there must be.”

“Then, if there be a God, would He not take

## THE AGNOSTIC.

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some means to make His will known—make Himself known? I believe we see His power in creation, the works of His hands, and this book reveals what His heart is. It has taught me what I am, and what He is. I do not need any external proofs as to its being His communication. God has spoken to me through it by His Spirit. You speak of Buddhism and Confucianism; we women are poorly off in the countries in which these doctrines prevail. Having already existed as a man, to live again as a woman is, as you know, almost as degrading as to become one of the lower animals. Alternatively, a woman has no soul at all. Do you think the Buddhist's Nirvana, or ceasing to exist—which is his highest hope in the future—can compare with the Christian's joyful prospect of being with Christ and like Him for ever—with Christ, the Son of God—about whom I can say now, 'Who loved me, and gave Himself for me'? Do you never feel dissatisfied with your agnosticism—never want something, some One to cling to? Does it never enter your mind that your thoughts may be wrong thoughts; that the Bible may be true, and the soul's hereafter, of which it speaks, absolutely real?"

"I will own to you I do at times get doubts, but I put them from me."

"Is that even wise?"

"But there are so many discrepancies in the Bible."

"That only seems so to our finite minds, and because we only know in part. When I find some-

thing I cannot understand, I know the fault is in me."

"I cannot accept what I cannot comprehend."

"If I could comprehend God, He would not be God to me; He would be no greater than I. The Bible says, 'The world by wisdom knew not God.' Will you let me read a chapter from the Bible to you before I go?"

After reading the third of John's Gospel her visitor said to her, "Would you care to see me again?" "Yes, I should," she answered, "I do not know how it is, but you remind me so of the aunt who brought me up till I was seventeen. You speak just as she spoke. She was certain, and happy too."

A week passed before her friend saw her again. At first when they met her manner seemed stiffer than ever, as though she had armed herself to repel anything that might attack her position; but after a time she softened, as she listened attentively to the story of one who had been an infidel like herself, but who had been moved by the lives of some Christians with whom he came in contact, and their evident possession of something to which he was a stranger, and which was enough to fill their hearts with abiding peace, in spite of all adverse circumstances. At first he got uncomfortable, then anxious, then to realise the fact that he was a sinner, and God a holy God, who could not look upon sin, till at last he spent a whole night, sleepless, in distress of soul. Then as morning began to dawn he cried to God to have mercy on him a lost sinner, for Jesus Christ's

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sake ; he just knew two things—that he was a sinner and that the Lord Jesus had died for sinners—and so he pleaded His death to meet his sins ; and then and there he got the sense that he was forgiven, nay, more, loved—because he said this scripture came to him, 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.”

At this point she burst into tears and said, “Once, long ago, when I was seventeen, I spent a night like that ; it was after a preaching to which my aunt had taken me.”

“And then ?”

“Then I went to London to the house of another aunt, who made great professions of Christianity, went to early morning services, and had a great show of religion ; but she took me to the theatre and to every place of amusement. When her religious observances were over, she had no thought but for the pleasures of the world, yet she thought herself, and was thought to be a very devout person. I despised the religion that produced such a life, while she lost no opportunity of speaking against the religion of the one whose life had seemed to me so consistent with what she professed, and so different from hers. I was young and the world was attractive. I did not believe in this aunt’s religion, but her world was pleasant, and I put her professions from me, as all unreal. Afterwards I took up nursing, and while nursing a patient, who was an Agnostic, I read his books to him, and imbibed his views.”

"But you have found no comfort in them, nor rest?"

"No."

"An unknown God, an unknown future, and nothing for the present—that is no comfort for a sick bed."

"But Christians are so unreal."

"You have known one real one at any rate, and you knew her life for seventeen years, and she was happy and restful?"

"Oh yes, her very face showed it. I knew others too, when I was a girl, who believed as my aunt believed, and shared her peace and rest."

"Was your patient a happy man, or a holy man?"

"Neither. I knew he was not a good man, and, while ill, his restlessness made him a difficult patient."

"Then in your own experience you have known some who knew the Lord and their hearts were satisfied, while those who gave up the God of the Bible found nothing to satisfy them. An old saint said long ago, 'God made us for Himself, and our hearts are never satisfied till they rest in Him.' I may not be quoting quite exactly, but I think it was Augustine said it."

Her answer did not seem quite *à propos*; she just said, "You bring back to me almost the very look of my aunt's face."

Evidently the teachings of this godly aunt had not been lost; though choked by her niece's years of scepticism they could not be eradicated. Satan had



done his utmost to drag down her soul, but the Good Shepherd had kept His eye on this wandering sheep all the time.

She listened intently while the fifteenth of Luke was read that day, and at the close her friend said, "Will you keep this Bible and read it, and I shall pray that the Spirit of God may touch your heart as you read, and open your eyes to see your own need of a Saviour, and God's provision to meet that need?"

"I will read it," she said, and she kept her word.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light," the inspired Psalmist said, and so it was in this case.

Slowly the light dawned upon her soul. The old habit of reasoning and doubting did not disappear in a day. At each visit of her friend she had some question to raise—Why did God do this, or allow that?

"Have you ever read in the Book of Job: 'God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters'? or this in the Epistle to the Romans: 'Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?'" was the answer. "It is no question for you or me, Why does God do this, or allow that? The great matter for us is that eternity is before us, possibly very near at hand, and you and I have to meet God. How can you, how can I meet the claims of a holy God? The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has settled that question for me. 'For 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.' Christ met the claims of God as to the question of sin, and He bore the judgment of my sins, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' He took my place, the just instead of the unjust, and has brought me to God, and to God as a Father."

It was evident a terrible conflict was going on in her soul. Satan had made a palace of it for many years, and he fought hard to keep possession of his palace, but the stronger than he dispossessed him and claimed it for Himself.

For several minutes she did not speak, her whole frame trembled, then with bowed head and eyes filled with tears she said in a low voice, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

From that day everything was totally changed with her, even the very expression of her face.

The infidel books had disappeared from her bed and table from the time she began to read the Scriptures. Now the novels went too. She went through great anguish as to the terrible sin of her past life in its rebellion against God, and the way in which she had hurt other souls by her bold defiance. She was specially troubled about a near relative, who was ensnared, as she had been, by the same device of Satan, and chiefly through her means; but she learned that the death of Christ had put away this, as every other, sin from God's sight, and though she could not undo the past, she could look to Him to meet that one as He had met her.

To this relative she spoke of God's deliverance of herself from the bondage of Satan, and earnestly besought her to read the Bible, not as a critic, but as a seeker for light.

She was quite changed in the ward. Instead of keeping proudly aloof from all, she now sought the company of those she knew were Christians, during the short time that she was able to move from her bed, and one of these especially was a real help to her.

Some young Christians had been visiting in the ward, but her face and manner had been so repellent, they had been afraid to speak to her. Now she let it be known that she would love to have visits from them, and she much enjoyed these visits, as she also did the letters of one of them who had left the town, but who had spoken to her in her days of unbelief, and retained a prayerful interest in her.

To the friend who had seen her every week for three months she said one day: "I can thank God now for what seemed so hard. I believe he allowed my accident to take place to bring me here, to rescue my soul from Satan's bondage, and bring me to Himself. I shall praise Him for eternity for what seemed the hardest thing of all my life."

Three weeks after she found "peace in believing" her friend had to leave the town for nearly four months. She had kept her supplied with deep books for "well days," and simple ones for "weary days," that might help her in the study of the Scriptures, and when she went away she left several with her.

For weeks she read eagerly, then the paralysis increased, and this enjoyment was at an end.

When her friend returned, it was to find a great change in her bodily state, but as her "outward man" perished, her "inward man was renewed." She could no longer even hold a book or turn a page to read for herself, and this was a great privation—reading had been such a delight to her—but she so enjoyed anything she got from others—a few verses of Scripture, a hymn, a little talk about the things of God. "How bright she was!" was the remark of one who ministered to her in this way.

She hailed her friend's return with great warmth of welcome, and the visits became weekly ones again. She asked that they might study the Epistle to the Romans together, but they never got very far on in the epistle. On the occasion of the second visit, she wanted to know more about the Lord's coming to fetch His people, and His appearing with them to reign; about the judgment-seat of Christ, and the marriage supper of the Lamb, and that day they went through many scriptures together. At the end she said, "We have not had our regular reading, but I have so enjoyed this, and it has given me so much to think over."

The next visit was their last meeting on earth, and she sent a relative away that their reading might be undisturbed.

"It is Romans ii. to-day," she said, "after we have gone through this epistle, I have so many parts

of Scripture I want you to go over with me this winter."

She was ill and weak; both knew she would never be well again, or better than she then was, but each alike thought she had the winter before her, to spend down here.

The remarks she made that day, as they read Romans ii. together, or rather as it was read to her, showed how the Spirit of God had been teaching her.

"I missed you so terribly while you were away," she said, as her friend left her, "but I think the Lord must have meant me to depend all the more upon Himself."

"And you have no doubts ever now?"

"None. I should like to blot out those long years of rebellion and blasphemy, but He has blotted them out and forgiven even me."

With a bright smile on her face she said "Good-bye"—the last good-bye between them it proved—for thirty-seven hours after she was "absent from the body, present with the Lord."

There was no time for any last words or messages, or any death-bed testimony; she was gone in a few minutes. She had been rather better that morning, and had taken her breakfast as usual. An hour or two afterwards she felt a choking sensation, and asked to be raised. As this was being done, her face changed, and in a few minutes she had left the weak suffering body behind, and had gone into the presence of the Saviour who had sought and found her, and brought her to Himself after all her wander-

ings, and then had carried her home on His shoulders rejoicing.

Reader, if the call to leave the body and pass into eternity came as suddenly to you, would it mean for you as it did for her, "absent from the body, present with the Lord"? x.

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## A SHEET-ALMANAC AND WHAT IT DID.

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**I**T was a little cottage, a small company, and a young and untrained preacher. But the Spirit of God was there in convicting power, and as the speaker pressed upon his hearers the importance of accepting God's great salvation, the soul of one young woman was thoroughly aroused by the stirring question, "*How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?*"

As she passed along the country footpath on her homeward way, these words were ringing in her ears, wakening the slumbering conscience, and causing deep anxiety as to her eternal destiny.

But the devil, the great enemy of Christ, was there, and at once set to work to hinder this precious soul from heeding God's warning yet loving voice, and he had a capital tool with which to work. Christmas was drawing near with its round of gaiety and pleasure, and our young friend was to take no unimportant part in the *tableaux vivants* and other amusements which were being arranged for the close

## A SHEET-ALMANAC AND WHAT IT DID. 15

of the year. She knew that if she confessed herself a follower of Christ, she could not consistently take part in these worldly entertainments, and accordingly she endeavoured to stifle the voice of conscience and forget the warning words she had heard. But this was not to be. At the house where our young friend was in service, there lived a Christian coachman who had placed on the walls of his coach-house a large sheet-almanac. In the course of her work she had to go to the stable every day, and to her astonishment and dismay found the question she was trying to forget staring her in the face, "HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?"

But in spite of this earnest appeal to her soul, she still resisted. The weeks passed by, and Christmas came with its round of merrymaking, fun, and frolic; but though she took part in it all, there was no pleasure for this sin-burdened soul. A short time after she confessed to a Christian friend that it had been the most miserable Christmas she had ever spent, and now, disappointed with the world and its misnamed pleasures, she <sup>h</sup>turned to the loving Saviour, and, blessed be His name, she met with a hearty welcome and found true joy and satisfaction in Him.

Reader, a few days ago, you doubtless got from many loving lips the kindly greeting of "A merry Christmas, and a happy New Year." If you have come as a guilty sinner to the Saviour, you have found in Him the secret of all true joy and happiness, and can sing with us—

O Christ, in Thee my soul hath found,  
And found in Thee alone,  
The peace, the joy, I sought so long,  
The bliss till now unknown.

Now none but Christ can satisfy,  
None other name for me,  
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,  
Lord Jesus, found in Thee."

But if your heart is still held captive, and your eyes dazzled by this world's glittering show, it must be said of you, as the late R. M. M'Cheyne wrote of a relative of his, who said she was determined to stand by the world:—

"She has chosen the world  
And its paltry crowd ;  
She has chosen the world  
And an endless shroud ;  
She has chosen the world  
With its misnamed pleasure ;  
She has chosen the world  
Before Heaven's own treasure.

She hath launched her boat  
On life's rigiddy sea,  
And her all is afloat  
For eternity.  
But who may tell  
Of the place of woe,  
Where the wicked do dwell,  
Where the worldlings go ?

Away, then—oh, fly  
From the joys of earth ;  
Her smile is a lie,  
There's a sting in her mirth.



## A SHEET-ALMANAC AND WHAT IT DID. 17

Come, leave the dreams  
Of this transient night,  
And bask in the beams  
Of endless light."

These verses were received, read with a careless smile, and put away in a drawer to be forgotten. A few years later this earnest servant of the Lord passed away at the age of twenty-nine. The news of this early death was a great shock to the young lady, and reminded her of the solemn message she had received from him.

After searching some time among her papers, she found the verses and read them again in a new light—the light of an early death and a long eternity. They came to her as a message from the unseen but very real world beyond the grave, and became the voice of God to her soul.

At the beginning of another year, we would appeal to you to make your happy choice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will save you from the burden of sins, He will take away all fear of judgment to come; and as you walk in communion with Him, and engage in His happy service, you will find a joy and satisfaction fill your heart, which as far surpasses the pleasure this world gives as the glorious shining of the mid-day sun surpasses the faint gleam of a candle.

"Choose ye THIS DAY whom ye will serve." "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart."

S. H. P.

## FAITH AND REPENTANCE.\*

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“**Y**ET *forty days*, and Nineveh shall be overthrown,” was indeed the voice of mercy. It had its effect. And what do I read? “So the people of Nineveh believed *Jonah?*” No. “So the people of Nineveh *believed God.*” Our Lord Jesus Christ says, “They *repented* at the preaching of Jonas.” Look at the people who heard this warning, this solemn word of God, what is the effect on their souls? Does it go in at the one ear and out at the other. By no means. I read this: “So the people of Nineveh believed God.” The word was mixed with faith in them that heard it.

There are two unspeakably important effects of Jonah’s short sermon in Nineveh. Faith and repentance. They believed God. Faith is the soul’s *reception* of a divine testimony, and repentance is the *result* in the soul of the reception of that testimony. Jonah’s was a very solemn testimony. I am not here to-day to tell<sup>an</sup> you that you have yet forty days in which to turn to God. No man can be sure of forty days, or forty hours, or even forty minutes. I can tell you what you are, a sinner in your sins, and I bring you the blessed tidings that where you are there is mercy, grace, and pardon for you through

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\* Extracted from Jonah’s Forty Days in chap. ix. of “The ‘Forty Days’ of Scripture.”

## FAITH AND REPENTANCE.

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faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you believed the Word of God there would also be repentance, for repentance is the result of faith. Repentance is the tear drop in the eye of faith.

Were these Ninevites told to repent? They were not. Manifestly, however, they repented. Though the word may not have been used by Jonah with regard to them, their whole course was altered when they got hold of the solemn fact that God was going to deal with them because of their sins. What was Jonah? Typically and personally a risen man. What is Jesus now? A risen Man. And what do we therefore read now? God commands all men everywhere to repent. Why? Because the day of judgment is appointed, and the Judge ordained, even the One who died and rose again. Nineveh had forty days in which to repent. It seems to have repented the very first day. Faith sprang up at once in their hearts, and they did repent. Our Lord says, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because *they repented* at the preaching of Jonas." Tell me this, Have you repented yet?

That they repented was manifest. We read, "So the people of Nineveh believed <sup>in</sup> God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them" (ver. 5). Sackcloth is the Old Testament expression of repentance. Where did it begin? The remarkable thing in Nineveh was this, it began at the top and came down. The word somehow reached the King of

Nineveh, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

The Ninevites listened, believed, and repented. Imitate them. Even their king repented. I think I see that proud man bowed down before God. The King of Assyria was the ruling power on earth at that moment. The mightiest monarch on the earth bows down before God. Wise man! Look at him. "For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes" (ver. 6). He seems to say, "What avails my kingly robe if the judgment of God is upon me, and if in forty days I am a corpse?" Wise man, sensible man, humbled man, repentant man. Why? Because believing man.

Now note the next thing he did. "And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands" (vers. 7, 8). The life was to be changed. Mind that. When a man gets converted his life is always altered afterwards. What he has been in he comes out of. He shuns sin, and loves holiness.

The king further says very pathetically, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from

his fierce anger that we perish not" (ver. 9). What he felt was this—We are bound to perish if we go on as we are doing, but, if we repent, perhaps God will turn and repent, and we may be spared and perish not. He saw one doorway. And what was that? Repentance. So he covered himself with sackcloth, sat in ashes, and cried mightily to God.

Had you gone into Nineveh at that moment, what would you have heard? The lowing of the cattle, saying, "Oh, lead us to water." But no man led them. And the sheep bleating to be led out to grass. But no man led them. There was an awful quiet over the men of that city, broken only by the voice of prayer. They were under the sense of the impending judgment of God. Oh that sinners might be seen now in a similar state, bowed down and repentant before God. It was an amazing sight. Nothing like it was ever known before, or since, that I know of. And yet what we see in Nineveh is just what goes on in the history of every soul of man, when that man is first awakened, and is about to be blessed of God. He gets the knowledge and the sense of sin. He is brought to repentance, even though he perhaps does not understand fully what the meaning of the word is. What does it mean? It means getting right with God. The apostle Paul says, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xx. 21). These are the two vital things which always go together. "So the people of Nineveh believed God." There was faith.

How was it evinced? They "proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them" (ver. 5). There was repentance. Friend, do you believe God? If you do you will bow down in repentance before Him, and you will get blessing. "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," are the sure precursors of deep soul-blessing.

But you may ask this question, What is faith? It is believing God. It is taking God at His word. That is what an old woman said in the early hours of the morning when she was dying. She had been a professing Christian, and her friends sent for her minister. When he came in he said, "Well, my good friend, I see you are very ill. What are you resting on for eternity?" With gasping utterance she feebly replied, "Sir, I have taken God at His word." That was faith. Have you taken God at His word? To do so is to show that you are the possessor of divinely produced faith. I repeat—Faith is the soul's reception of a divine testimony. "He that hath received his testimony *hath set to his seal* that God is true" (John iii. 33). That verse is a divine definition of faith. I think the little girl at the Canongate Sunday school had got hold of it very clearly. The question was asked, "What is faith?" Her answer was this, "It is believing what God says in the Bible about Jesus, and asking no questions."

Now then, my friend, if you also believe God, you will get saved where you sit to-night. Believe Him where you are just now. Believe His love. Believe

His grace. Believe in the mercy of His heart. Do not forget this, it is not your repentance that leads God to goodness, but "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. ii. 4).

The King of Nineveh said, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" (ver. 9). You and I cannot say, "Who can tell?" God's Son has come and told us. His Son has come down and told us all the truth—that He loves mercy and not sacrifice. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John iv. 14). "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be saved" (John iii. 17). God has told out His heart, He has given from His bosom His best Beloved—the best thing in heaven for the worst thing on earth. And what is that? It is a sinner in his sins. Yes, Jesus has given Himself for us. The love of God is declared, and now, as much for us as for Jonah or Nineveh in days gone by, we have to learn the blessed fact that "salvation is of the Lord."

There are two reasons why you can only get salvation as a gift. God is too rich to sell it, and you are far too poor to buy it. How then can you get it? Receive it as God's free gift. Do you want salvation? God will give it to you. Can you buy it? Never. Do you deserve it? Oh, no. How can I get it? By simply taking it. If you are bowed down and repentant before God, you will get it. Repentance is the result in my soul of the reception

of God's testimony. I am crushed by the sense of my sin and His goodness. It is not, however, a pair of steps by which I can go up to the platform of salvation. Repentance is the divine movement in the soul that follows in the footsteps of faith. If your soul were moved and bowed with the sense of your sin on the one hand, and on the other your heart were melted by the love of the Son of God who died on Calvary for your sins, and there bore the judgment of God due to you, and your tears fell fast, would all this wash away your sins? No. But once see that Jesus' precious blood washes away all your sins, and then your tears of gratitude may flow freely, because you can say, like the apostle, "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

I press this question of repentance, for it has a big place in Scripture. John the Baptist cried through the land, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iii. 2). Men were mightily moved, and the devil quickly got Herod to put him in prison, and then cut his head off. Depend upon it, Satan rejoiced to get rid of that man. Just then John's Master appeared on the scene, and immediately His voice is heard. Hear what the Master has to say. The murdered man cannot say more, but his divine Master reiterates his cry. Almost His first word is, "*Repent*: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17). God is about to assert His rights.

What is the next thing? The Lord Jesus selected twelve men, "And they went out, and preached that men should *repent*" (Mark vi. 12). I find the Lord



Jesus Himself saying presently, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to *repentance*" (Mark ii. 17). By-and-bye they come and tell Him of certain people on whom a wall fell, and He says, "Except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 5). Later, He takes us down to the very depths of hell to hear the prayer of a formerly rich man, and what does he say? "I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Abraham says, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will *repent*" (Luke xvi. 27-30). Even the damned in hell know that there must be repentance.

Further, when Christ rose from the dead, do you know what He said? "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that *repentance* and *remission of sins* should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 46, 47). Repentance and remission of sins always go together. If a man hears the Word of God and believes it, he is brought to repentance. And what is the next thing? There is faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and immediately there is remission of sins? When Peter preached in the second of Acts, what said he? To those men thoroughly aroused, wakened up, and pricked to the heart, he exclaimed, "*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 " (ver. 38). When you come to the next chapter, he says, "*Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*" (Acts iii. 19). Further on we find him saying, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give *repentance* to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts v. 31).

Repentance is the fruit of God's goodness, with the view that you may know your sins forgiven, and your soul saved, just where you are. If we pass along in the Acts we find the same thing. I have already quoted to-night, "God 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 and 31). What do I learn there? The judgment day is fixed, and the judge appointed. Solemn consideration for every unsaved hearer. When will it be? I do not know. It may be to-morrow. To-night may find the Church rapt to glory, and to-morrow you will find the great Assize has come. And what about the man that is judged? He can only be damned. My friend, you repent to-night and get blessing.

"Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," were largely preached by the apostle Paul. When telling the story of his conversion to King Agrippa, he says : "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly

vision : but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should *repent* and turn to God, and do works *meet for repentance*" (Acts xxvi. 19, 20). This thought goes all through Scripture. It is very simple. I get the light of the testimony of God, I believe it, and then judge myself and my ways, and lead a new life. I hear of a testimony with regard to judgment. I bow to it. It may be, on the other hand, testimony as to the work of Christ. I bow to it. And as I bow I see my need : I believe the love that seeks my blessing, and I judge myself. The prodigal son was brought to repentance. He says, "I am perishing, and there is goodness in the heart of my Father. How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee," that is confession, "and am no more worthy to be called thy son," that is repentance. He judges himself. That causes joy in heaven, for when man *repents* heaven *rejoices*.

Now the Ninevites very wisely repented at the preaching of Jonah. And what was the result? They were blessed ; they were spared. "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" (Jonah iii. 10). Our blessed Lord says, "They repented at the preaching of Jonas ; and, behold a greater than Jonas is here." If these men repented at the preach-

ing of this risen man who brought the word of God to them, my friend, what shall be the effect on you that hear of Jesus, God's only Son, who has died for sinners such as you? He went into death that He might redeem us to God. And now He is risen from the dead the triumphant Victor. Tell me, will you not believe in Him who is greater than Jonas? Will you not turn to the Lord now? Say in your heart now, "Christ for me, I see that I am a lost, ruined sinner, but 'salvation is of the Lord,' and if it is for the sinner, I will have it."

Simply take Him as your Saviour now, and then go on your way and witness for Christ.

W. T. P. W.

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#### FRAGMENT.

A REMARKABLE proof of the power of the gospel was given when Tamati, a Maori chief, was admitted to the Lord's Supper. By his side knelt Panapa, a chief who in former years had killed and eaten Tamati's father. This was the first time they had met together. Tamati's emotion was most extraordinary, he seemed perfectly to quiver with it. After the meeting terminated, he was asked the cause of this; he then related the circumstances, and said it was only the gospel, which had given him a new nature, that could make him eat of the same bread and drink of the same cup with the murderer of his own father.

ANON.

## A KAROO FARMER'S BIBLE-READING, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

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**E**ARLY in May 1881, I had decided to go to Africa. The members of our family accompanied me to the little railway station, about an hour's drive from the town where we resided in Eastern Prussia, to bid me farewell. We reached there about a quarter of an hour before the train was due, and this time was spent in earnest conversation, my dear parents and sisters giving me their last advice, and expressing their best wishes for the unknown future.

Full of bright expectations, my last words to my dear parents were, "Well, I am going to make a large sum of money, enough to make me independent, and when I have reached that I shall return again and come and live near you."

The train was then just ready to start, and the only answer to my boastful speech was from the lips of my dear mother, "*God bless you, my son!*"

I had just served my year in the army at Dantzic, passed the reserve officer's examination, and got a three years' leave for Africa. My intention was first to go to Algiers for a few years, then to Egypt, and from there to India. From childhood's days I had always expressed a desire to go across the sea, as soon as I had fulfilled my military obligations, in search of the riches of this world. One of my com-

rades, of the same regiment, had resolved to go with me, as we had become intimate friends during the year of our service. We met at Berlin, but only stayed a few days at the capital, and then travelled through Germany, Switzerland, and Italy to Genoa. There we took steamer to Marseilles, and from thence to Algiers. We found, however, that, in the mercantile line, there was no possible opening for Germans at that port. The German Consul advised us to go either to America or South Africa. We decided for the latter, and returned to Marseilles. From thence we went to Bordeaux, where several of our acquaintances were living. They advised us to stay there and get into situations, but as we did not succeed we left a month later for Madeira, *via* Madrid and Lisbon, and from thence took the mail steamer to Port Elizabeth in South Africa.

My funds were almost exhausted, and with a bad conscience about the past and uncertainty as to the future, I became very much depressed. Many a time I stood at the railing of the steamer's deck, when all the passengers had gone to rest, considering if it were not best to jump overboard and have done with my wretched life. One night I made up my mind to do this, but failing courage at the last moment, I ran down to my cabin, and resolved never to attempt such a thing again. Thanks be to God for keeping me from taking that fatal leap!

Arriving in Port Elizabeth at the end of July, well-nigh penniless, my companion and I soon got situations as clerks in a small up-country store.

## A KAROO FARMER'S BIBLE-READING. 31

After being there about eighteen months, my master moved to another district and took me with him, leaving my comrade in charge of the old place. On my occasional business trips to the latter, I had to pass the farm of an English storekeeper, Gert's Kraal, on the Karoo. As this was what is called in South Africa a public "outspar," I usually off-saddled there.

One morning the old gentleman asked me to have breakfast with them. After breakfast he had Bibles brought, remarking that it was their custom to read a portion of the Word of God at that time of the day, as well as in the evening; that if I liked I could stay for the reading, but if not I could please myself. I did not care one bit for either Bible or church. Since I left my parents' roof at the age of eighteen, I had only attended church when on a visit home, and this only to please my mother. But I consented on this occasion to stay for the Bible-reading. The chapter read was Isaiah lxiv., the 6th verse of which raised in me a feeling of wild rebellion, and I resolved, there and then, never to enter the old gentleman's house again if I could help it.

*My "righteousnesses filthy rags"!* How I wished I had never entered his house at all. How dare he read such things to me!

Outwardly I kept calm, but I went away in a rage, and for the next eighteen months I took another road when passing that way, whenever possible, so as to avoid hearing things which were such an offence to me. All the time, however, I could not get rid of,

"*All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" The moment I was alone, and subsequently even when very busy, it sounded louder and louder in my heart until I was entirely upset. The more I tried to forget it, the louder it sounded, and by-and-by the question arose in my mind, "If your *righteousnesses* are as filthy as rags, what must your unrighteousnesses be?"

Up to that time the enemy of souls had held me captive, and led me to measure myself with my fellow-men whenever conscience aroused me, often telling me how much better I was than many of them, although I had a wicked and sinful life behind me and was thoroughly conscious of it. But when I commenced to cry out in my anguish of soul and longings to be delivered from this misery, he laughed me to scorn and told me there was no possibility of my being saved. "Look at your wicked life!" he would say; and I had to admit the truth of the accusation.

About that time my comrade and I had taken over the old business of our master. I told my partner all I underwent, but did not get any help from him, as he, too, was unconverted then. At last, my soul-agony becoming unbearable, I made up my mind to go again to that old Englishman's place and tell him that he was the cause of this my trouble. On arriving I found him down at the mill some distance from the house, and as we were alone I told him how upset I was, and that he was the cause of my wretchedness. He smiled and answered, "I am very glad to know it."



A KAROO FARMER'S BIBLE-READING. 33

"You are glad to see me wretched? Well, then, you must have a heart of stone."

To this he responded, "Oh, no, young man, *no*."

"Well," I said, "what have I to do to get out of this misery?"

"Nothing, nothing," he answered.

I was completely overwhelmed with grief, and sat down on the ground, exclaiming, "What will become of me?"

"That will be all right," he said.

On repeating the question, "What have I to do?" I got the same answer, "Nothing."

"But listen! *It is done*," he said. "You *believe that! All is done* for your salvation. Christ has done it, and you have to believe it, that is all!"

Then he advised me to read the Gospel of John carefully.

Coming up to the house, I saddled my horse and was just ready to start, when Dr G —, who was visiting Gert's Kraal at the time, came out. He spoke very earnestly and kindly to me, but all seemed to be ineffective. He pressed upon me the importance of doing nothing, but just trusting in the perfect work of Christ.

Putting into my hand a copy of *Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment*, and advising me to read it carefully, we parted. I was as unhappy when I left as when I went, but I knew they were praying for me, and my dear mother's prayers came to my remembrance also. I thought of her letters, and how she had sought to direct me to the Lord.

Another week was spent in anguish, and then suddenly the light broke in upon my dark soul. Oh, what a flood of light it was! I saw the finished work of Christ, I accepted God's salvation, and passed from misery to peace!

Many of my neighbours thought me mad, and so did most of my dear family at home, when I wrote them how the Lord had converted my soul. However, more than eighteen years have passed since the Lord in His mercy turned me from darkness to light, and never yet has He allowed a doubt to come over my soul. I trust He never will.

Seven thousand miles I had come to seek the riches which perish, but the Lord gave eternal riches instead. Thus did He generously answer the last prayer I ever heard from my beloved mother's lips, "God bless you, my son!"

One thing has often struck me since my conversion, that of the thousands of people I came across I did not meet a single person who showed the least care for my soul. No one ever asked me, "Where are you going to spend eternity?" Yet the Lord had compassion on me, and sent me to that lonely Karoo farm that I might hear that all my righteousnesses were as "filthy rags," that I had nothing to do in the work for salvation, and that I had only to trust the One who had done it.

Blessed be His name! To Him shall be all the praise and thanksgiving for ever and ever! Amen!

S.—B. K.

## THE MARK OF THE RIGHT WAY.

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**H**OW am I to know God's way of salvation? How can I distinguish it, for certain, from ways which, though perhaps specious, are not the one true way?

A more important question could not be asked. Its answer is of eternal moment. The salvation of the soul is an awfully serious matter. There is, thank God, a distinguishing mark, and one which is extremely plain; there need be no difficulty in finding it out.

The human way, no matter who its deviser may be, demands the gradual improvement of the man. It assumes that he is sinful, and calls for the extermination of what is sinful in him—its gradual elimination until he is fit for the presence of God.

The divine way is the utter condemnation of "the flesh" as inherently and unimprovably corrupt, so that the man can by no means fit himself for the presence of God.

These two systems are diametrically opposed to each other.

Never has a philosopher started a school having for the basis of its doctrines such a statement as, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." Every one of them has held the idea that there is in man some latent spring of good which is cultivable, and which can be developed under certain conditions.

God's Word traverses the idea, and brands it as radically wrong. It declares that "in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing"; that "there is none righteous; no, not one"; and "that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

On these diverse but fundamental points the Word of God and human philosophy are at hopeless variance. Agreement between them is no more possible than it is between fire and water.

It may be possible to reform the drunkard, and so on; but reformation does not touch the spring. What is called "the old man" is "corrupt," and the heart is "desperately (incurably) wicked." These are the facts of Scripture and of all true experience; and until this is owned, there can be no peace with God. The human family is divided into two large classes—Cain headed the one, and Abel the other; the former repudiated God's judgment on man, but the latter accepted it by abjuring the flesh wholly, and "he being dead yet speaketh."

The one was self-righteous; the other obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying to his gifts. Self was Cain's witness; God was Abel's.

You can trace these two lines of religion right down the course of time, until you see their advocates standing before the throne of the King, in the judgment of the nations (Matt. xxv.); the one set justifying, and the other condemning themselves. We find the human and the divine clearly marked out all the way through.

Self-justification, in some form, marks the human

## THE MARK OF THE RIGHT WAY.

37

and the false way ; whilst self-condemnation, full and unsparing, marks out the divine and right way.

Those marks are very plain and simple. The Pharisee represents the one, and the publican, who cried, "God be merciful to me *the* sinner," and who consequently went to his house justified, represents the other.

Have you, my reader, ever condemned yourself before God? If not, you are as yet in the wrong way, and the sooner you repent and own your guilt the better.

This is no mere act of penance, no purchasing the favour of a sin-hating God by so-called meritorious conduct—nay, it is self-judgment ; it is repentance by the hearty acknowledgment of personal guilt. It is the prodigal coming to himself and clearing his sin-laden soul on the bosom of his Father. Then, and then only, is there forgiveness and peace and salvation.

Turn to Buddha, to Confucius, to Mahomet—the system of each is a hereafter merited by the mortification of the flesh here. The conditions are unsatisfactory, and so must be the result.

To all this, and to the enormous principle it involves, Christianity stands in bright and lovely contrast ; and it stands absolutely alone in solitary grandeur. It is God's method, and it is perfect. It glorifies Him, and it suits most admirably the case of the poor guilty sinner.

In the cross of Christ the flesh is utterly condemned, sins are atoned for, and a ransom is given by One who is of infinite moral value, by whom

every claim of the Throne is met, sin's awful penalty borne, and divine justice against it satisfied.

Further, in the resurrection of Christ the grave loses its prey, and is shorn of its victory; death is annulled, and the power of Satan broken.

And now, thank God, man is permitted—nay, welcomed—to step by faith into all the benefits of Christ's victory.

He is justified by faith, and the faith that justifies produces repentance and self-judgment, and leads in ways of practical holiness. It is of God. And therefore, dear reader, in your quest after the right way, begin by self-condemnation, and then rest by faith in Christ's victory.

J. W. S.

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### “HOW CAN YOU SAY GOD IS MERCIFUL?”

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THE above question was asked the writer recently in the town of P——, South Africa. In the course of my business I met a man who had lost his wife about twelve months previously, and had since that event given himself up to drink.

One day when he was recovering from a drinking bout, I took occasion to speak to him seriously about the course he was following, and the result. In the course of our conversation he asked me the question: “How can you say God is merciful, when less than twelve months ago he took from me and my children

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the best wife and mother that ever lived and made a home happy? If He is the loving and merciful God you say He is, would He have done that? Was it an act of mercy?”

I said, “May I ask you a question?” and he answered, “Yes, as many as you like.” So I said, “Have you given God His rightful place in your life?” He was silent for a few moments, then he replied, “Perhaps not.” “Well,” I said, “can you *expect* God to study you and your comfort when you have never given Him His rights, and never thanked Him even for the happiness you say you were blessed with?”

He said, “I have never looked at that side of the question before, but when I think of our happy home in the past, then go home and see my motherless children, it drives me to desperation.”

“Are you doing your duty as a man and a father now, in neglecting your business, your home and your children, whom God has entrusted to your care? Remember, that since your wife has gone you have a double responsibility, and yet you are leading a selfish life, thinking only of your own troubles, and thereby adding to the troubles and sorrows of your children. Do you think you are adding to their comfort by going home sodden with drink? Why, man, you are pursuing a terribly selfish course. Just think for a moment of the fearful example you are setting them, and yet, while pursuing such an unmerciful course yourself, you dare to judge the actions of God.”

Perhaps one of my readers is in the same position as that poor man. If you are, let me beg of you to first judge yourself—search your own heart, let your past life come in review before you, and I am sure that instead of presuming to judge God, you will bring in a verdict of “Guilty” against yourself. You cannot do otherwise if you deal honestly with the question, and when you have found yourself Guilty, just get a Bible and turn to Romans iii. 23, and you will find that God has found you “Guilty” also. His words are, “for all have sinned.” Then turn to Romans vi. 23, and you will find that you are *sentenced* also, for “the wages of sin is Death.”

What a terrible position to be in—found Guilty, not only by yourself but by God, and sentenced to Death; but, thank God, He has provided a way by which your sentence has been executed on Another to His complete satisfaction, and thereby He is enabled to offer you a *complete pardon*, for the sentence passed on you was borne by Jesus. He took the sins of others upon Himself, and thereby came under the judgment that belongs rightly to all—and so He died. But God raised Him up again without the sins. Therefore, my reader, “be it known unto you that through this Man (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things” (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

“Who is a pardoning God like Thee,  
And who has grace so rich and free?”

C. J. B.



## WHERE WOULD DEATH LAND YOU?

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**T**IME is fast hurrying each and all of us into eternity. With swift and noiseless wing it is flying, flying, flying. We cannot stop time's rapid flight.

Six thousand years have nearly finished their course, during which period death, pitiless and cruel, has been doing its ghastly work. The monarch and the peasant have shared alike. The strongest as well as the weakest, the youngest as well as the oldest, have come under its awful crushing power.

Reader, what if your turn came next? If so, what then? *Where would death land you?* Would it find you in your sins and unprepared to meet God? Eternity is nearing. Death's arrows are flying fast and thick around us. If death comes to you, and finds you unrepentant, your eternal doom will then be sealed. There is no pardon in the grave, and repentance will then be impossible. Consider your latter end; you cannot afford to lose time or be in the least indifferent. These questions are too serious to be trifled with. They demand your earnest and immediate attention.

Fancy a man sleeping five stories high when the cry of fire is raised, and he suddenly wakes up to find every way of escape cut off but the window of his bedroom—would he be unconcerned? Would he not soon cry for help? And if the fire-escape were

placed at his disposal, would he not be thought a madman if he did not *at once* lay hold of it?

Or picture to yourself a man returning from the gold-diggings, after accumulating a vast fortune, with which he sets foot on the steamer and sails for home. He perhaps is picturing to himself a bright future in this world, when, to his great surprise, it is reported that the main-shaft of the vessel has broken, and that she has sprung a leak. Could you imagine that man clinging to the foundering ship because he was unable to take his fortune with him?

If you are not saved by God's grace from the awful judgment that awaits this godless world, your case is more desperate than either the man in the burning house or the one on the sinking vessel. You may say that you neither see it nor feel it. That only makes your case the more pitiable. You are not the more secure on that account.

You could understand a man having his senses stupefied with wine or strong drink being quite indifferent on the sinking vessel or in the burning house, but not a man in his sober senses. If you do not see or solemnly feel your danger, we tell you plainly and in love that your spiritual senses must have been totally dulled by an opiate of Satan. He "blinds the minds of them that believe not," the Scriptures tell us. May God arouse you, and drag you out of this subtle snare.

The question of your soul's salvation must be of the most supreme importance when Jesus said, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole

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world, and lose his own soul?" and when Paul, by the Holy Ghost, said, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" These are momentous, solemn, heart-searching questions!

The *whole world* and God's great salvation are put on the scales. Weigh the one against the other in the fierce, searching light of the eternal world. Which will you choose? Which will you lose? Your eternal fate is decided by your own choice. If you are brought to a standstill, face the reality of it in God's presence and turn to Christ now. He wants to save you because He died to save you.

If Christ Jesus, God's own blessed Son, died in love to save you, He cannot possibly be indifferent to your state. If nothing less than His death would do, your state as a sinner must be serious. The blessed God cannot be indifferent about you when He thought so much of you as to give His own Son to meet the judgment that lay upon you. Why will you go on to eternal ruin in the face of such amazing love? How can you be careless in the face of it? Never was love so great. It quite surpasses all human thought.

The wife of a Christian man in a Yorkshire town died and left him with ten children. A kind and loving friend, in consideration of his circumstances, offered to take one child from him and to bring it up as his own. The man was not very well off in this world, and it seemed quite a temptation to part with *one*. However, when he began to think of the eldest and came down to the youngest, he felt they were all alike

dear to him. Each had its own peculiar place in his affections, and part with one—only one—he could not, even though he knew it would be a temporal relief to him, and that his child would be better cared for than he could care for it.

Reader, this man would not part with one out of ten, yet God had only one—His well-beloved—and He gave Him to die for you. Did you deserve such consideration from God when you had so sinned against Him? How have you treated such love? Have you received Jesus, His love-gift, and thus believed in God's great love to you?

Not to receive Him as the One that God sent to save you, is to slight God's interest in and love to you. Not to believe in Him, will be your eternal condemnation. "He that believeth not is condemned already." "He that believeth not shall be damned." Sweeping statements these! They came from the holy lips of Incarnate Love. Think over them solemnly! Ponder them deeply!

Reader, look up at this moment to God, and if you have never thanked Him for His great love to you, do it now. Thank Him for giving His only begotten Son to die, to save you from the awful judgment your sins deserve. If you do, peace and joy will fill your heart. To thank Him is to receive His gift. When a gift is received, thanks are returned as a usual courtesy. Say in your heart truly, and with your tongue and lips audibly, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

If you long for true pleasure and satisfaction,

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there is only one place where it can be found. That is in Christ. How many unsatisfied hearts and discontented minds there are in this world! The world is full of discontentment and unsatisfied desire. It is reported that a lady, who was living in the very height of opulence, said that she wished she had been born a slave, because she had been blessed with the awful curse of plenty of money and nothing to do.

What a contrast this was to the dear old saint whom nearly the whole religious world knows about now. When she lay dying on a garret floor in London, a missionary of the city called to see her. Feeling deeply for her in her dying state, he exclaimed, "Poor thing!" and afterwards went out to purchase some oranges for her. On her hearing him say "poor thing," she at once replied, "I am not poor, I have Christ—what want I more?" These beautiful lines were afterwards composed on her dying words:—

"In the heart of London city,  
 'Mid the dwellings of the poor,  
 These bright golden words were uttered,  
 'I have Christ—what want I more?'

By a lonely dying woman,  
 Stretched upon a garret floor,  
 Having not one earthly comfort,  
 'I have Christ—what want I more?'

He who heard them ran to fetch her  
 Something from the world's great store;  
 It was needless, died she saying,  
 'I have Christ—what want I more?'

**THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.**

But her words will live for ever,  
I repeat them o'er and o'er ;  
God delights to hear me saying,  
' I have Christ—what want I more ?'

Oh, my dear, my fellow-sinner,  
High and low, and rich and poor,  
Can you say with deep thanksgiving,  
' I have Christ—what want I more ?'

Look away from earth's attractions,  
All earth's joys will soon be o'er ;  
Rest not till each heart exclaimeth,  
' I have Christ—what want I more ?''

Christ not only meets and fully relieves the most guilty conscience, but He is enough to fill the greatest mind, and satisfy the most unsatisfied heart, and set at perfect rest the most restless, troubled soul.

Weary, troubled, tempest-tossed soul, if you have tried the world for pleasure and satisfaction, we invite you to turn to Jesus, and you will find how true His own words are: "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Thousands who have tried everything the world could offer have turned from it heart-broken and disappointed, and found all they wanted in Christ. He is "the chiefest among ten thousand, . . . he is altogether lovely" (Cant. v. 10-16), and He says His heart is large enough to welcome you. He invites all to come (John vi. 37). "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

P. W.

## MOSES ON THE MOUNT.\*

“And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.”  
EXOD. xxiv. 17, 18.

**W**HAT occurred in those forty days? The next seven chapters of Exodus are occupied with unfolding this. Nothing could be more interesting and blessed than what is unfolded to Moses during these forty days. He went up, I quite admit, to receive from the hand of God the law; and the people thought he was only gone up to get that law; but what was God thinking about? He was thinking about Christ all that time, and He was telling Moses about Christ, in figure, type, and shadow. The next seven chapters, from chapter xxv. right on to the end of chapter xxxi., are all about Christ. “How about Christ?” you say. “He was not born.” I know that. But it was a marvellous unfolding of Christ’s Person and work.

Now I will ask you to glance over those chapters. Therein we see the way in which God can come out to man, and how man can go in to God through the work, the death, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, those were wonderful forty days! To apprehend their teaching is of the last importance.

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\* Extracted from “The ‘Forty Days’ of Scripture”—  
Moses’ Forty Days.

First, notice what we find in chapter xxv. "And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may *dwell among them*" (ver. 8). That is God's main idea. "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (ver. 9). Observe the first thing commanded to be made. "And they shall make an ark of shittim wood" (ver. 10). What is that ark? Christ. Of course it was Christ. Eleven articles are named, and all pointed to Christ. First of all, you have the ark. What is the next thing? The mercy seat. "And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof" (ver. 17).

Do you know what happened afterwards, when Moses brought down the tables of stone the second time? He put them into the ark. Why? Because there was never any man but Christ who kept the law. If it be a question of the first man's responsibility, failure is immediately manifest; all is gone. Hence Moses breaks the first tables of stone at the base of the mount. But in that ark the second tables of stone were placed, and there they remain till this day. When you get to Solomon's reign, which is a picture of the future millennial reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, there was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone. The golden pot with manna and Aaron's rod that budded have then disappeared. They speak of Christ, seen here once in lowly grace and then exalted, and of His priestly



grace, which meets the saints of God in wilderness days. The tables of stone tell a different tale. By-and-by when "a king shall reign in righteousness," there shall be the establishment of that law which the tables of stone reveal. It shall be written in Israel's heart, and everything shall be according to it.

The mercy seat was Christ. Where did God meet man in that day? When the high priest came to the ark, where did he put the blood? On the mercy seat once, and before the mercy seat seven times. In Romans we read, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (a mercy seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. iii. 25). How can I draw near to God now? On the ground of the blood which is sprinkled on that mercy seat.

The third thing telling us of Christ is the pure table of shittim wood whereon the shewbread was placed (ver. 23). And now we come to the fourth thing. "And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made" (ver. 31). Again, this is Christ, and all the light that Christ bears and sheds within the holy place.

Passing on to the next chapter, you get the tabernacle with its "ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim of cunning work" (xxvi. 1). This is the fifth thing. It is a lovely picture of Christ. How has God revealed Himself? The apostle Paul replies: "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come,

by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building" (Heb. ix. 11). Christ is the precious antitype of all this striking imagery. I view that tabernacle, and I look at the inside curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim (ver. 1). What do they tell us of? Nothing but Christ. We must, however, not now forget that everything is taken out of type, and is seen in a living Man at God's right hand. The day of ritual is over, and the ritualist is quite out of date now. To revive ritual is to ignore Christ really. The veil, spoken of in chapter xxvi. 31, is an exquisite type of Christ. The *blue* gives His heavenly character; the *purple* His imperial rights as King of kings and Lord of lords; the *scarlet* indicating that He is King of the Jews; also, the fine twined linen tells us of His spotless humanity; the cherubim—always in Scripture the executors of God in judgment—telling that all judgment is placed in His hands. How wondrous, later, to find that veil rent, and ourselves brought to the knowledge of God through the Lord Jesus Christ, having title to go inside the rent veil through His blood. He who will be the judge has himself borne the judgment of God that we might be delivered.

In chapter xxvii. we come to the sixth thing. "And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood . . . and thou shalt overlay it with brass" (vers. 1, 2). There we find an unmistakable figure and type of the cross of Christ, where all the claims of God were met by Christ. If anybody went towards the

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tabernacle in that day, what was the first thing that met his eye? The brazen altar and the sin offering on it. I draw near to God through that brazen altar: on the cross Christ has met all the claims of God, and any claim that God could bring against me as a sinner has been answered and met by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now go a little further. In chapters xxviii. and xxix. you have the priests, their anointing, and all about their garments. It is the way in which God brings us back into His own presence. He brings you inside the veil, and there you find the high priest. He represents the people before God. "Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord *upon his two shoulders* for a memorial." Again: "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment *upon his heart*, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually" (xxviii. 12-29). What is that? It is Christ risen from the dead: Christ the great High Priest bearing each one up before God. It is love bearing me on His shoulders of everlasting power, and on His breast of undying affection. What a picture this was that Moses got on the mount. It would be a very profitable thing for you and me to consider these "forty days" very thoroughly.

Now pass to the thirtieth chapter. "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it . . . and thou shalt overlay it with pure gold . . . and Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he

dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations" (vers. 1, 3, 7, 8). Now, what is the teaching of this golden altar of incense? I think it is this. There is going up before God all the fragrance, the sweetness, and the perfection of what Christ was as a man. The precious incense, which went up as a sweet savour to God, speaks of the infinite grace of Christ's person and ways as man, and, as being all for God, was burnt on the golden altar.

But there is something more to observe regarding the statement: "And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations" (ver. 8). When God lights a light it never goes out. If the light of God has got into your soul, it is there. The lights were lit in the tabernacle, and they were never to go out. There are two things you do not find in the furniture of the tabernacle, neither an extinguisher, nor a seat. The light is never to be put out. Satan cannot manufacture an extinguisher for the light that God has lit in any soul, and God has not manufactured one. If the light is there it will remain. It may get low. I tell you what He often does. God trims the wick. And I daresay most of us Christians are the better of a trimming. I like to meet a man who trims me. I get brightened up when I get near an earnest, warm-hearted Christian. Do not you? No! Then I do

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not think you are a Christian at all. But it is very striking there is no extinguisher, as I have said, and further there was no seat. The work of the priest in that day was never done. Now look at this: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. x. 12). His work is done. The Lord Jesus exceeds and rises above all types and shadows of which He is the divine antitype. His work is done, and He has sat down. In that glorious fact I rest. Do not you?

But further, Moses is told, "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein" (ver. 18). This was most needful for the ministering priests. As Christians we need to have our hands and feet washed (John xiii.). I must have the feet washed. In going through this wilderness I need to have the water of the Word of God applied to my conscience and heart as a believer. It will give the sense of cleansing. I need what Ephesians v. speaks of. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (vers. 25, 26).

Now, do you know what the laver is for. Cleansing. It is the washing of water by the Word. Can you tell me the size of that laver? I cannot tell you. No record of its size is given. Solomon's laver, or molten sea, "received and held three thousand baths"

(2 Chron. iv. 5). In the established kingdom of the Son of Man all will be according to law—*measured*. But it is a remarkable thing that the size of the laver for the tabernacle in the wilderness is unrecorded. It is not measured. It suggests the thought that you cannot measure the applicability of the Word of God. It is wonderful how God's Word meets the soul in its varied conditions, and therefore there is no measure. What meets one person would not meet another. The Word of God can only be applied by the Holy Ghost, and there is no limitation to the way in which that Word is applied. The unmeasured laver gives the idea of the immeasurable breadth, length, and universal value of the Word of God to meet the multitudinous necessities of souls as we pass through this scene.

Following the instructions as to the laver, we read that the Lord bade Moses take certain principal spices and make "an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary : it shall be an holy anointing oil" (xxx. 22, 23). Without doubt we here read of the Holy Spirit of God. It was not to be put upon man's flesh. The blood of atonement must always precede it. The oil was put on the blood, teaching us that the Holy Ghost falls only upon a man who has been born of God, and led to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, dead for his sin, and risen. This is most strikingly borne out in the New Testament, where we read, "In whom ye also trusted *after* that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation ; in whom also, *after* that ye believed,

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*ye were sealed* with the holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13).

Only one point more do I notice. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight" (ver. 34). They made therewith that beautiful incense, which was to be burnt upon the golden altar. All the fragrance, the sweetness, and the perfections of Christ, in His life and ways as a lowly man, walking in grace on earth, are here indicated. Burnt on the altar morning and evening, their sweet savour went up before God. If you and I do not appreciate Christ, God does. If you do not appreciate the love that led Him down to death, even the death of the cross, God does.

Well, that was what Moses was being instructed about during those forty days. You should look at these instructions regarding the sanctuary more in detail at your leisure. They are summed up in chapter xxxi. You will find the eleven things I have just indicated named in verses 7-11. God puts them all together there. It is just a little picture gallery, to show what the Lord Jesus is in His person, His offices, and His work. The Old Testament is the picture book of Christ, and by these figures, types, and shadows, we learn wondrously what Christ is, and what Christ has done. What could be more wonderful than what Moses here learns, that there is a mercy seat based on righteousness. All the claims of God have been met in the person and work of the Lord Jesus

Christ. Then there is the blood of atonement that gives me title to draw near, and the cherubim fixedly gaze on that sprinkled blood. I find the table, and on it there is the bread. I am to eat. I find the light, and am in it, to enjoy all that Christ is. I am in all *the light of the purposes of God*. Then I am brought to the brazen altar—the cross that gives me a title to glory. God, so to speak, takes me by the hand, and says, You can come in. The claims of the brazen altar have all been met, and the sprinkled blood witnesses that by His atoning death Christ has settled the sin-question. And then you find a Priest that maintains you in the presence of God. He bears you in His heart and on His shoulders. You find in His company light that you can enjoy, and food which you can eat. Then the oil—the Holy Ghost—put on us, gives us power for access to God in all the fragrance of the incense of Christ's perfection. The thought of God is not to keep us at a distance, but to bring us near in the enjoyment of all that Christ is.

This was what Moses was favoured to see during those forty days.

Reader, if you have never yet studied these types of the Old Testament let me urge you to sit down and do it. They are replete with blessing for the soul. *If you are yet a sinner, in your sins you will find that which meets your case.* The blood of atonement is seen everywhere. If you are a believer every picture of Christ will only endear Him to your heart more fully, as you see how he supersedes every type.

W. T. P. W.



THE THRONE, THE ALTAR, AND THE LAKE. 57

THE THRONE, THE ALTAR, AND THE  
LAKE.

(Read Isaiah vi. 1-8 ; Revelation xx. 11-15.)

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**T**HE contrast between these two scenes is both striking and solemn. Isaiah saw the throne and the One who sat on it. John saw the throne and Him who sat on it. Isaiah saw something which John did not see—he saw an altar. John saw something that Isaiah did not see—he saw the lake of fire. Isaiah saw a throne and an altar; John saw a throne and a lake of fire. Which do you see, my reader? “Neither,” you say. Which are you going to see? You will see one or the other as sure as you live. You are yet going to see the Lord, and you must see His throne, and while on earth you have to make your choice between the fire of the altar, and the fire of the lake.

Whether your lip will be touched with “a live coal from off the altar,” and your soul brought to know redemption and grace, or whether you will pass into eternity in your sins, and learn the meaning of that expression the “lake of fire,” lies with you to decide. *I know, thank God, my destiny. Let me urge you to get the question of your salvation settled now, settled definitely.* You have never seen Jesus, but you are going to. The Lord is coming back, and do not forget this, my friend, that “every eye shall see him.” Careless, heedless, godless

sinner, you that despise the gospel, and make light of Christ, face the fact that you are going to see Him, you will have to meet Him. You need not be afraid to face Him now; be wise and do so without delay.

Perhaps you will say that you do not believe in these things. Your wisdom does not lie in unbelief, depend upon it. Unbelief will yet be demonstrated to be pure folly. If you were really wise you would be a simple, reverent believer in the Word of God. In the first scripture I have asked you to read, we find the Lord deeply convicting a man, bringing him to a sense of his state before God, then cleansing him, and leading him to be a consecrated man—that is what we get in Isaiah vi. What John saw—as recorded in Revelation xx.—is the awful doom of the damned.

Dear friend, let me beseech you to hear the Word of God. It is very easy for you to say that you do not believe it, and that you have your doubts regarding it. You surely have no doubts about your sins, no doubts about your guilt. You know perfectly well that you would not like other people to know your whole history, but God does, and, knowing all, He is prepared to pardon you, and just now to blot out your guilt. But if you miss the day of grace I will tell you what will happen—for the twentieth of Revelation describes it—you must stand before a throne where all that guilt is brought out, but too late for remedy, too late for repentance, too late for cleansing, too late for pardon, too late for everything

## THE THRONE, THE ALTAR, AND THE LAKE. 59

but the sentence of judgment from which you never can emerge.

My friend, do not think these are idle words; they are the words of one who is impressed with the awful realities of eternity. Oh, that you might be affected as Isaiah was. What a wonderful change we see in him as he beholds the throne and the altar. One moment he was crushed with a sense of his guilt and cries, "Woe is me." What is the next thing? When the Lord wants a messenger he exclaims, "Here am I; send me." What a change! Let me ask, Have *you* passed through any experience like this?

Let us dwell for a little on the scene John describes, and do not forget that you have yet to stand before the Lord. I quite admit that Revelation xx. carries you to a point when time is over, and your earthly pathway is gone by. After all, it is very short. Supposing you were to live to the age of Methuselah—969 years—that is not very long when you think of eternity.

Remember, if you die in your sins you will be buried in your sins and enter eternity in them. Possibly even now that ever-successful old Archer may, so to speak, be drawing his bow, and aiming his arrow at your heart, as his target. Who is the Archer? you say. Death is his name, and ere the morning light you may have passed into eternity. Tears will very likely fall upon your shroud, and perhaps upon your coffin, as it is placed in the grave; but they will not wash your sins away, and

nothing you have ever done will wash your sins away. You have lived a Christless life, you die a Christless death, you have a Christless shroud, a Christless coffin, a Christless burial, and a Christless long-lie of more than a thousand years. No one will touch you, no one disturb you; but, at length, the voice of the Son of man, which you never listened to in time, will call you out of your grave, and you will stand among the dead at the great white throne.

The books are opened—God's eye will single out at that moment the book of your life and your history. There may have been ten thousand people of your name since the world began, but there will be no mistake. The book which has the record of your life's history will be taken down, and then there is another book opened—it is “the book of life.” Your book I might call “the book of death,” because the whole of your history has been one continuity of actions—God calls them sins—which are connected with death. That book reveals simply and truthfully what you have been.

You may not have been a gross sinner, but you have lived in sin, continued in unbelief, and died without the knowledge of the blessed Son of God, hence when you stand there before the throne, although risen from the dead, you are spoken of as still “dead.” Note carefully the language. “I saw *the dead*, small and great, stand before the throne; 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

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written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. xx. 12). Why, when guilt is so evident, is the book of life opened? God is never in a hurry to judge; He is often in a hurry to save, blessed be His name. I will show you presently the hurry in which He is to meet an anxious sinner. Oh, the long-suffering of our God!

Although the book is opened with the record of your guilt, still there is a pause—another book is opened, to see, as it were, if there might have been a mistake; but your name is not on its pages, because you have died as you lived, "and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (ver. 15). You say, What is the lake of fire? That which you had better escape. Thank God, I never shall know its terribleness. It is something intensely awful, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Memory will be there, and your sins will be there. You say, Is it material, is it real? When God speaks of "the lake of fire" it is something that is intensely real, but the blessed Son of God died to keep you and me out of it, and thank God, for that very reason, though I deserve it, I know that I am not going there.

You may think that possibly there is hope for those who stand at the great white throne by-and-by. No, the one who stands there inevitably passes into a lost eternity—such is the statement of the Word of God. But the tale of judgment is not the gospel, and sometimes I am told I should not preach "judgment to come." Quite true, judgment is not gospel, but it is

the background of the picture, and if you make light of the gospel it is only right that you should be told what lies ahead of you in eternity. You know you love your sins—do not deny it—and God is holy. Sin and God can only meet for judgment. Man can roll sin, like a sweet morsel, under his tongue ; but stop a bit—eternity is before you, and where are you going to spend it ?

You need not go to Spiritualism, you need not go to the devil or any of his agents to-day to get information as to what is going to be in the next world—God tells you. You may say, “I do not like His record of the future.” No, because in the bottom of your soul you know that you are still in your sins, and you do not like the idea of “the lake of fire.” You had better avoid it, by coming to Jesus and getting your sins pardoned, and your soul saved. The Lord Jesus made it perfectly plain that the one who believes in Him shall never come into judgment (see John v. 24), because He Himself has taken the judgment due to the one who believes on Him.

What John saw might well lead every sensible, thoughtful person to say, “Well, if the Spirit of God has written this as a warning, and thus shows us the end of a pathway of sin, by the grace of God I will pull up.” Judgment, I repeat, is like the dark background of a picture. The gospel is the unfolding of the heart of God. It tells that God has sent His beloved Son into this world to die for sinners, and to bring them to Himself. It tells us that God has a deep interest in us. The gospel rises

## THE THRONE, THE ALTAR, AND THE LAKE. 63

in the heart of God, and comes to us in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is all *about* Jesus, and all *for* us. It declares the value of His life and death before God. What is the gospel? The glad tidings of God's love—righteous love. You would not think much of a painter who did not put a background in his pictures; and if God gives us the lovely picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His perfection stooping to die for sinners, to save them from “the lake of fire,” I am not surprised if He say to the painter, “Put in the background,” for that is the eternal fate of the one who makes light of His grace, refuses His Son, and thus misses His gospel, declared now by His Spirit. Where sin and unbelief have reigned in the soul, “the throne” and “the lake of fire” are the inevitable concomitants in a future day.

Let us now turn to Isaiah vi., and dwell on that scene a little. “I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up” (ver. 1). This is exactly what John saw. He was brought into the presence of the Lord. Let me ask, Have *you* ever got into God's presence? If not, you had better get there now. There was something else Isaiah saw: “Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly” (ver. 2). Even those unfallen beings, who celebrate His holiness, were not fit to look upon God. If those seraphims had to cover their faces, if *they* could not face God, how can you and I face Him? Mark, the seraphims did not see the Lord—Isaiah did. Let these beings

speak, and let us listen to their tale—"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, *holy*, HOLY, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (ver. 3). Did you never hear that word before? Oh, let this seraphic word arrest you now. Are you holy?

"And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke" (ver. 4). Though the creature is sometimes unmoved by the testimony of God, the very posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried. Let them not rise up against you in judgment as witnesses that you were not moved at the testimony of God's holiness. God is holy, and He cannot tolerate sin. What is sin? It is the will of the creature exercised against the will of the Creator.

Isaiah was moved as he saw the Lord, and the question arose, Am I fit to be in the Lord's presence? And then came the piercing testimony, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts," and Isaiah stood deeply convicted. Hear his next word: "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone." In the previous chapter he has been looking at other people in their sins, and six times over says, "Woe to *them*," rightly enough. Now he gets right into God's presence, and what is it? "Woe is *me*!" Have you ever known anything like this in your soul's history?

But Isaiah goes further, as he exclaims, "I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (ver. 5). Do you know how he had unclean lips?



## THE THRONE, THE ALTAR, AND THE LAKE. 65

He had an unclean heart. What was the reason of Isaiah finding all this out? He had got into God's immediate presence, and what he was is made manifest to him.

We have many similar instances in Scripture of men being thus convicted. Look at Job. What does he say? "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore *I abhor myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job xlii. 5, 6). Look at Peter the fisherman in Luke v. When the glory of Christ shines into his soul he falls down at the Lord's feet, and says, "Depart from me, for *I am a sinful man*, O Lord." On the occasion we are contemplating it is the same. Isaiah sees Jesus—not Jesus on the cross, but Jesus on the throne, and "*Woe is me!*" is the outcry of his soul.

But notice now God's haste to relieve his burdened spirit. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips: and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (ver. 6). On that altar there had been a sacrifice. There had the fat of the sin-offering been consumed, while the blood of the spotless victim had been put upon the horns of the altar and poured out at its bottom. Atonement had been effected (see Lev. iv. 22-25). And now the seraphim, commissioned by God, flew with a live coal from off the altar and said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity

is taken away and thy sin purged." What blessed words of comfort to a sin-burdened man !

Notice it was not a dead coal, but a live coal from the fire that had already consumed the sacrifice. I have no doubt the altar and the sacrifice typify the Person and the death on the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. This same Isaiah writes afterwards of His sufferings and death, and among other things he says, "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" (Isa. liii. 5).

Side by side with the wonderful glory of that throne and its spotless holiness there is the altar, the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, which first of all meets all the claims of God's holiness, and then meets the sinner in his sins. It is the way in which God has come out in grace to us, as the fruit of the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Old Testament days, when the victim was put upon the altar, it was consumed, and there was nothing left of the victim. All that the seraphim brought to Isaiah was the live coal which had consumed the victim and then purged his sin. On the cross the blessed Lord Jesus Christ has exhausted the judgment of God—the fire has not consumed the Victim, but the Victim, so to speak, has quenched the fire. Hence the work of atonement all effected, and God glorified about sin, Jesus is risen from the dead, and is now the mighty Victor at God's right hand.

The Spirit of God would now turn your eyes to

## THE THRONE, THE ALTAR, AND THE LAKE. 67

that living, exalted Man, and as you look at Him you will get peace and pardon, and your heart be filled with a sense of His love. Then you too will understand the meaning of that word, "Thine iniquity is taken away." Who took it away? Jesus, when He died on the cross. He who was the express image of God wrought the work of atonement when forsaken by God, because He bore our sins upon the cross.

I do not here read that the seraphim went with slow and measured pace, and, after a long time, came back with a live coal to relieve the burdened prophet. No, he flew. You do not think God has much interest in your salvation. You are immensely mistaken. Thank God for the rapidity of His grace, and for the way in which He hastens to meet needy sinners.

What is the next thing? Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (ver. 8). God wanted a messenger, and I believe from the glory to-day His voice is now heard saying, "Whom shall I send?" Mark Isaiah's answer: "Then said I, Here am I; send me." A moment before he was a convicted man, saying, "Woe is me!" But now with iniquity taken away, and sin purged, he knows that he is cleansed, and wishes to devote himself to God's service. Happy man!

Reader, imitate him. First come to Jesus to be saved; then do not be ashamed to own Him; and finally with all your heart say, "Here am I; send

me." Enter His service. Which of these two scenes attracts you. I prefer the throne and the altar, to the throne and the lake. Do not forget that one or the other will find its counterpart in your history. Which shall it be?

W. T. P. W.

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## ALONE WITH THE DEVIL: A DREAM.

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"IT'S only a dream." Such are the words which frequently escape the lips of nearly all those who hear another person's dream, and these words have often been uttered by myself, but I thank God that He does use even dreams to bring those who are the objects of His boundless love to have to do personally with Himself, while it is the day of grace. However, God saw fit to bring me into touch with the Prince of Darkness, the Devil, to open my eyes to see my real and true condition.

The outline of my dream is as follows:—It was on the evening of 17th November 1895, that a dear old Christian friend of mine gave me a gospel tract, similar to the one you are now reading, which was composed of many different papers, one being entitled, "The Pale Horse and his Rider, Death." I was very much struck with this title and read the article. It left an impression on my now awakened conscience, perhaps unobserved to those around, but I was miserable and went early to bed. Perhaps you say, But not to rest. Make no mistake, my friend,

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I went once more to sleep on a Christless pillow, and slept peacefully, yet knew all the time that my sins were not forgiven. It is indeed a terrible sight to contemplate, yet thousands are doing this very thing on every hand, and if God had stopped the beating of my heart that night, which He could have done righteously, it would have meant for me eternity in reality with that being into whose presence God was about to take me, though only in a dream.

All was calm until about midnight, when, in my dream, I was sitting in the front room of the house, with two of my intimate friends, playing a game on the table. Suddenly the door leading to the hall flew wide open, and immediately our game ceased and all was quiet. One of my friends broke the silence, after a short period, with the expression, "It's the Devil," which of course we all three greeted with roars of laughter. This we neither of us believed, so to enable us to recommence our game, I arose and went to close the door, when, to my awful surprise, my friend's words proved only too true, for the Devil himself now entered the room.

Pen cannot describe the awful anguish of my soul, for I was face to face with the very being whose existence I not only had doubted, but ridiculed. I tried to get away but found no exit. On he came, not uttering a word at all, his face covered with a most fiendish grin. He was after our precious souls, and he thought that he was now sure of our destruction. He then caught hold of one of my friends by

the shoulders, carried him through the door which he had flung open, then opened the front door of the house, and threw him into the pit, for when he had opened the door I heard the terrible shrieks and screams of those that were already in the place where my friend had now been cast, and I could smell the sulphurous smoke from this place, and hear the crackling of fire. He returned, and took my only remaining friend, and did to him as he had done with the first. He again returned, and to my horror, I found that I was now alone in his presence. I shall never forget the feeling I passed through; I pleaded for mercy, but that he does not give, that he cannot show; I fought and screamed, but all to no avail. He was now right over me, and about to put his hands upon my shoulders also, when I awoke.

My dear reader, if I never thanked God before, I did then, that my dream was not a reality, and that He had spoken to me in such a wonderful way. This led to my decision for Christ. You have now heard of this dream, which God in rich mercy sent me for my eternal blessing, but I cannot promise you that He will speak to you in a dream. But I have no doubt God has spoken to you at some time or another; it may be that He has taken you up to the very doors of death, by an illness or an accident, and restored you again. Possibly He has spoken by the death of a dear friend or relative; perhaps father, mother, or child has been taken from you, and yet you must still confess that you have never seen God's hand in it, or heard His voice. "God speaketh

once, yea, twice, but man regardeth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14), and if you will not listen to His voice again speaking to you through this little book, you may never have another opportunity of hearing His voice calling in grace, for we read, "My Spirit shall not always strive with men" (Gen. vi. 3).

But you will hear His voice again, for He will call you in judgment before Him, and then how will you answer when questioned as to how you have heeded this call? Then will He say unto you, not "Come unto me," for He will have to say, "Depart from me" (Matt. xxv. 41). And then you will be compelled to depart, to be for ever alone in the awful regions of darkness, where the Lord Jesus says, "Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 44).

Reader, this need never be your lot. If you only travel back in thought to Calvary, see and believe that Christ there suffered and died for you, eternal life will be your portion instead. Yes, friend, He was alone that you might never be alone. He was forsaken, that you might never be forsaken. He went into death to take away the sting thereof, and He has risen again for your justification.

It was LOVE that caused Jesus to hang there. What a sight! The Creator of the Universe hanging up between the heavens and the earth which His own hands had made, and suffering for the sins which the man He had created had committed. So awful yet wonderful was that sight, that the very sun refused to shine, and the stars gave no light

The angels were looking on with strange wonderment, when the dying Victor exclaimed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

My dear reader, this cry was as much for you as for those present at that time. But you say, "How can that be, for I was not in existence then, and how can that include me?" Well, I think it will include you on this wise. If you have not yet accepted Christ as your Saviour, if you cannot say that He died for you, then you are still on the side which cries, "We will not have this man to reign over us," still of that company which has Satan at the head successfully leading you to that awful place, from which Jesus Christ died to save you. This is perfectly true, and the Devil knows it right well. He knows that he cannot touch Christ, who is now at the right hand of God, so he is bent on the destruction of YOUR precious soul.

My dear friend, you may not be in earnest about these things, to you they may not now appear real, nevertheless it is a solemn and true fact that if you do not care about the eternal welfare of your soul, the Devil does. He is now at this very moment bent on your destruction, not for time only, but also for ETERNITY. But, dear friend, do not let this discourage you, for, on the other hand, we see that God has "devised means whereby his banished be not expelled from him." God to-day is standing, as it were, waiting thy return, with outstretched arms of love; He is waiting, longing, and even yearning over you. If you do not love Him, He loves you,



and He wants to tell you of the love which He has for you, that you might enjoy for all eternity, with Christ, the joys of heaven. But remember, God's attitude will not always be that of grace to the world. There is coming a time when He will rise up and shut to the door that now stands wide open. Then if you have not decided for Christ, God will be righteously compelled to decide for you. This is not what God wants to do, for it is what He terms His "strange work." God willeth not the death of the sinner, but that all should come to repentance.

God is in earnest over your welfare, the Devil is in earnest, therefore let me implore you at once to *wake up*, for your position, as an unbeliever, is far more ghastly than any human thought can reach or tongue describe. These things are real and tremendously solemn, and you cannot afford to treat them lightly any longer. You have God to meet about your sins, and an eternity of BLISS or UNUTTERABLE WOE is at stake. Let me beseech you not to any longer treat this matter indifferently, but fly to Christ for refuge, for it is Him alone that can give you secure refuge from the coming wrath of a righteous but holy God.

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

"Christ died for the UNGODLY" (Rom. v. 6).

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting LIFE" (John iii. 16).

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

Everything is accomplished on God's side. What is there to hinder you getting the blessing? Nothing! Simply believe. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31).

W. J. PY.

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## PROFIT AND LOSS.

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**E**VERYTHING is to be viewed in relation to the world to come, and eternity, and not to the present transitory order of things. Hence

David prayed: “So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Ps. xc. 12). It cannot be wisdom to act on the principle of Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; yet, alas! how many are doing this to-day. Things of infinite and eternal value are sacrificed for the enjoyment of the pleasures of sin for a season; the soul for the gratification of the body; eternity for the evanescent joys of time; God for self; heaven with all its wealth of blessedness for the possession of earth, though it leads to an eternal hell.

When the Son of God was here, He viewed things in relation to that kingdom of glory that He would in due time set up; and declared that those who knew and followed Him, would have a place with Him in that kingdom and share in His glory.

Is that a small thing in your eyes, beloved reader?

Are your eyes so blinded by the vain-glory of this world, and your heart so captivated with its joys and pleasures, that you cannot see how great the glory of the kingdom of God's Son will be, and how enduring will be its joys and pleasures?

The Lord Jesus said: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Let those words sink down into your ears.

Then He goes on to say: "For the Son of man shall come (or is about to come) in the glory of the Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi. 26-28).

Perhaps you will say, "I am profited." Yes; you surrender your soul to Satan for the moment, and what do you gain? You gain, it may be, riches that fade and pass away; pleasures that leave an aching void; honour that becomes a burden to you in the end; the praise of men which is but a snare for your feet; sins unnumbered, too, which on your death-bed will sting your conscience, for "the sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. xv. 56); and after death, what then?—"the judgment"—"hell"—"outer darkness"—"weeping and gnashing of teeth"—"the lake of fire, which is the second death" (Rev. xx. 11-15, xxi. 8).

Is this profit? Is this gain? You gain the world, the whole world if you please, but you lose your soul for eternity. It is the Esau principle of

action : the present for the future ; time for eternity ; self for God ; the chains of Satan for the liberty and joy that is found in Christ, and a place in His glorious kingdom.

Friend, act on that principle in life, and you will find when you come to "the swellings of Jordan" presently, that you have in reality gained nothing, but lost everything. Your soul will be *lost* ! LOST ! LOST FOR ETERNITY !

Reader, as you love your own soul, reverse, I pray you, the principle of your life's action. Say, Soul, I must think of your value—that you are God-given, that you exist for eternity, that there is a hell to lose and a heaven to gain. Come, friend, let us put all of this world, its very best, into the scales, and see how it stands—the world with its pleasures, honours, riches, and glory, on the one side ; and your soul, and Christ, and salvation, and suffering for Christ, and eternal life, and a place in the kingdom of the Son of man, and a home with God for ever, on the other side. Let the hand of the Almighty hold up the scales, and, soul, you watch their movement. The side your soul, and Christ, and salvation are in, goes down, and the side that the world, with its boasted all, is in, goes up, and compared with the other is as the small dust of the balance.

In its moral worth it is as light as a feather compared with the infinite value of Christ and your soul.

Friend, can you barter away your soul any longer ? Fling to the winds, I beseech of you, the

## PROFIT AND LOSS.

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Esau principle of action ; reverse the order of your life ; be converted to God, and—

“Lose not thy soul for earth’s vanities,  
Lighter than air.”

Then says the Son of God, “or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” The Saviour’s meaning is plain. He means that it is of such infinite worth that the possession of the world would be as nothing to the value of the soul. Its value is beyond computation, and the world is as a little heap of dust compared to a mountain, miles high, composed of purest gold.

There is but one place where you obtain a proper estimate of the value of your soul. It is not in the round of pleasures of this world, but it is in the presence of that scene of all scenes, that sight of all sights—“the death of the cross.”

At Calvary you see the price that God puts upon your soul. Witness who it is that hangs there: the Son of God. See the agonies of that blessed Holy One. Hear that heart-rending cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” See, the nails have rent those hands and feet that were ever wont to perform deeds and run on errands of love. And behold the spear thrust into His side, and the water and the blood flowing forth. And on this, amid that scene of darkness and death, hear the dying Victor’s cry, “It is finished!” and He drops His holy head and dies.

And what is this?

*It is the price that God puts upon your soul.*

Again do you ask : Why all this woe and suffering for One so holy and so divine ?

IT WAS TO SAVE YOUR PRECIOUS SOUL.

O friend, in reaching the cross, and Him who hung there, but is now risen and glorified, and “is about to come in the glory of his Father with his angels,” you reach a Saviour indeed. If you have not gone to Him before, go to Him now, to-day, and tell Him that you want to be saved, and He will save you. He will not cast you out. He will receive the worst of sinners, even the devil’s cast-aways. Come, then, at once. Do not miss the grand opportunity of being saved now, and the privilege of suffering for Him in this world where He is rejected, and a place in the glory of His kingdom by and by. Let it be said in that day that you were not ashamed of Him and His words in the midst of this wicked and adulterous generation, but that you confessed Him and did not deny Him.

Better far to go unnamed and unnoticed here, and have a place in the glorious kingdom of the Son of man, than to possess all here—crowns and kingdoms and wealth that pass away—and lose your soul in hell for ever. Byron, with all that he possessed and enjoyed of this world, said at the close of his life—

“ My days are in the yellow leaf,  
The flower, the fruit of life is gone,  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone.”

Awful reflection ! Oh, “ *What shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?* ” (Matt. xvi. 26). E. A.

“YES, I WILL ACCEPT CHRIST NOW!” 79

“YES, I WILL ACCEPT CHRIST NOW!”

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“**I** AM as coarse a man as ever stepped in shoe-leather,” said one to whom we were presenting the gospel and pressing the necessity for instant decision. “Not so bad as one whom we are told was the chief of sinners,” we replied; “and although you were, it is the like of you that Jesus takes a special delight in saving. He wants coarse ones! Bad ones!! Will you accept Him to-night?”

D—— knew the gospel well enough, and although we would have naturally thought that he would be the last to bow to it, he got blessing that night.

Like many another, he was afraid of the second step before he took the first. He thought, if he confessed Christ, he could never hold out against the taunts and jeers of his fellows.

Perhaps our reader is such an one, and would like to decide for Christ, yet is afraid of the consequences. “What will friends think or say?” Satan whispers. Beware! do not let your never-dying soul be damned through Satan’s lies, or the thoughts and sayings of friends. Accept Christ. Trust Him. He is able to keep as well as to save, as D—— has found.

Standing on a country road, the claims of Christ were put before him, and he bowed to them. “Yes, I will accept Christ now,” he said, and that moment he passed out of death into life (John v. 24).

We left him, and home he went to tell and show what great things the Lord had done for him.

To one who spoke to him the following Lord's Day at a meeting, he said, "I would not have been here had there not been a great change in me."

He went on, and amid persecution from his fellow-workmen he still stands for Jesus, rejoicing in His love, and says, "It's grand to live for the Lord."

Dear friend, you have not tasted the joys of heaven if you are a stranger to the love of Jesus.

D—— tasted the joys of the world, and said they could not satisfy; and the writer can corroborate that statement:

"I tried the broken cisterns, Lord,  
But ah! the waters failed;  
*E'en as I stooped to drink, they fled,*  
And mocked me as I wailed.

Now none but Christ can satisfy,  
None other name for me;  
There's love and light and lasting joy,  
Lord Jesus, found in Thee."

You may be drinking at the streams of earthly pleasure, and miss the well of water offered to you in the gospel; and if you find yourself in eternity without a drop of water to cool your parched tongue, you will have no one to blame but yourself.

Hurry, now! Perhaps the door of mercy may be turning on its hinges; this very moment press in, ere it be too late. Woe, eternal woe, will be the portion of those found outside the door of heaven. That portion need not be yours. Jesus took the sinner's



## A GREAT SHEET.

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place that we might share the glories of His Father's house. Trust Him now. To-morrow may never be. Trust the loving Saviour now. Believe on His blessed name, and you will find One who will stand by you in time and eternity.

R. P.

## A GREAT SHEET.

(Read ACTS x.)

**T**HE angel who appeared to Cornelius of Cæsarea, instructed him to send for Peter, and he would tell him words whereby he and all *his house should be saved.*

Jesus, while on earth, had given Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; so on the day of Pentecost, he opened the door, and three thousand persons from amongst the Jews passed out of Judaism into the new sphere of blessing which was available and made known through the preaching.

Now Peter seemed to have forgotten that he had another key, to open a door for the Gentiles to enter into the same blessings as the believers from amongst the Jews ; so in this chapter the first lesson was given to the preacher, to instruct him in the mind of God.

Peter had gone to the housetop, away from the bustle of the house, to speak to God, and God took that opportunity to speak to him. Peter became

unconscious of outward things, and was by a vision brought face to face with God's purposes.

A vessel like a sheet was let down by the four corners, and it came to Peter. He fastened his eyes on it; then, he considered; then, he saw. These expressions are full of instruction for us. If we desire to be enlightened, we must be in earnest, and fasten the eyes of our mind on whatever God brings before us; we must consider or meditate, and then we shall see.

Peter saw what to a Christian from amongst the Jews was a strange mixture; but he had to learn there was no mixture, for in the eyes of God all of them had been cleansed. In this vessel were "four-footed beasts and wild beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air." What did they represent? The Jew had been under law, and had been restrained, and was like the tame "four-footed beast"; while the Gentile had been un-restrained, and was like the "wild beast." The publicans and sinners were like the "creeping things," grovelling in sin and ignorance; while the moral and intellectual men were like the "fowls of the air," that looked down on their fellows with a feeling of superiority.

Thus every condition of mankind was represented to Peter as being in the vessel. To Peter's eye they were in the state of nature, but to God's eye they were in grace. God had cleansed them; for the truth was, whether Jew or Gentile, moral or immoral, all needed cleansing. This had been done, and those who were cleansed were drawn up into heaven.

All this was instruction for Peter, who, although he was converted and had been used for the conversion of very many Jews, was unprepared to believe that God was going to do just the same for Gentiles. After the vision, Peter had to go to carry out the truth which he had learned, and use the other key, to admit believers from amongst the Gentiles to the same circle of privilege as the Jews were already brought into.

Thus Peter started, with words whereby his hearers should be saved. But how could words save any one? Words mean testimony, and the gospel is God's testimony in words to men. All who have been saved in this dispensation have been saved by words. The Holy Spirit works through the words, which thus become living to the heart of every one who believes.

Peter bore testimony in words, "that whosoever believeth on Him (Jesus) shall receive remission of sins." Now Cornelius had waited for Peter four days (see ver. 30), and both he and his household were prepared for the blessing which the words were to convey to them. For while Peter spake the words, the Holy Spirit fell on them. The dew of heavenly grace came on them in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In this day, which is but the continuance of the day which began at Pentecost, the words whereby Cornelius was saved, have the same power, and all who believe God's testimony concerning His Son, receive the forgiveness of sins, and the same gift of

the Holy Spirit. In those early days of Christianity, those who received the Holy Spirit immediately began to speak with tongues they had never learned, which was a sign for that particular time, but which was not continued when Christianity was established.

Cornelius had evidently been born again, and *saw* the kingdom of God, but he needed words with the Holy Spirit's power to enable him to *enter* into that kingdom.

The keys were, however, the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and so when Peter knew by the tongues that they had the Spirit, he asked the six Christians from amongst the Jews who had travelled with him, if they could forbid these persons the water of baptism? Then by virtue of the position he held, which the figure of a key implied, he commanded them to be admitted. Thus these believing Gentiles were by Peter admitted into the same outward circle of Christian privilege along with the believing Jews.

The assembly was thus composed of all kinds of persons who had been cleansed by God's testimony concerning His Son. The sheet seen in the vision stretching to the four corners of the earth, had received persons from the east, west, north, and south (see Luke xiii. 29).

The antitype of this vision is not yet complete. For near two thousand years the sheet has been filling, and when it is full it will be drawn up into heaven. Nothing of God's purpose can fail.

G. W. GY.

## "THE LAST DAYS OF ST PIERRE."

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SUCH was the startling heading of an English newspaper. In it we were told that the inhabitants of the island of Martinique had four days' indication of the coming disaster, first by dense clouds of smoke and towering flames being emitted from Mount Pelée, twelve miles north of the city, then by a heavy fall of ashes raining on the doomed place, and then at length the terrible eruption took place. Suddenly, a stream of molten lava, twenty feet high and half a mile wide, was belched forth.

Its progress was appalling. Rushing down the dry bed of the Rivière Blanche, at the rate of one hundred miles an hour, it reached the sea in three minutes from the top of the mountain, 4,000 feet high and five miles away, and blotted out everything in its course. The force of the impact was so terrible that the sea receded for 300 feet for miles along the western shore, and then returned with violence. The noise of the eruption was carried by the wind a distance of 300 miles.

This was on Monday. Tuesday, the volcano continued to belch forth smoky fumes and lava, while rumbling noises and earthquakes went on incessantly. By Wednesday morning this awful state of things had somewhat subsided, but in the afternoon heavy "cannonading" sounds were resumed.

The morning of the fateful Thursday was rela-

tively still. St Pierre's last day had come. Its inhabitants rose for the last time. Business was being partly carried on, when suddenly at seven o'clock "a sort of whirlwind of steam, boiling hot mud, and fire" swept down on and over the city and shipping in the roadstead, and within twenty minutes of the eruption, 30,000 souls were launched into—ETERNITY!!! The people rushed to the quays, till they were black with the crowds, but only for a moment. Ships were canted over, and began simultaneously to burn and sink in the sea, which was then a raging cauldron. Very few, if any, persons in the city escaped. Every house in the place was destroyed by fire, and only a few walls left standing here and there.

Such is the appalling and thrilling account of the last days of St Pierre.

France was thrown into mourning, the whole world was startled, monarchs headed the subscription lists, everything in the way of sympathy and money and help that could be offered was offered, yet how puny man is when such an event happens! And we may well ask, Is the whole affair to end there? When will men understand that by this God hath spoken? It was said that the noise of the eruption was heard three hundred miles away. But God's warning was carried on the wings of the cablegram, and was printed in every newspaper in the world. Will men pay heed to it, or will they be shaken for one moment out of their false security, and then forget all about it?

“THE LAST DAYS OF ST PIERRE.” 87

The title of this article, “The Last Days of St Pierre,” is startling, but did you ever reflect that the last day of the world will come?

The world is solemnised when it reads in its newspapers one morning of 30,000 souls being swept into ETERNITY in one brief moment of time, but what are 30,000 souls compared to the millions that inhabit this globe. What about the last days of the world? This world is growing hoary in its sin. Its days are numbered, and its future is doomed.

Some months ago a distinguished scientist, at the annual meeting of the Royal Society, told his hearers that the end of the world would be by a similar disaster to that which wrecked the island of Martinique. St Pierre was destroyed by a local disaster, the world will be destroyed by a universal disaster. This earth, said the scientist, would be destroyed by fire; that was the scientific forecast of its end.

The apostle Peter, who was not a member of the Royal Society, and who wrote in the infancy of the Christian era, left the same record centuries ago. A twentieth century scientist tells us the doom of the world will be destruction by fire; a first century fisherman tells us, “THE DAY OF THE LORD will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. iii. 10). We said a first century fisherman foretold this astonishing fact. Nay, it is God, who hath spoken *through* the apostle Peter by

inspiration. It may be you may not see the last day of the world, but that instead *your* last day will come. Are you ready for—ETERNITY!!! Happy will you be if the earthquake in Martinique should wake you up.

The inhabitants of St Pierre had four days' warning. God has warned you in many ways. Open His book, and the warnings of love lie thick on almost every page, and are presented in many forms. Will you listen? At your peril you refuse to do so. The devil would persuade men that it is not His book, or only His "in parts," and then man's unhallowed mind will sit in judgment on it, and his inclination leads him to keep the part that suits him and throw the rest away. I beseech you not to throw the warnings away, you will do so at your peril. Here are but one or two of them, but enough, if only you will pay heed. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 4). "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos iv. 12). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). "After death the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. xxiv. 7, 8). "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh" (Matt. xxiv. 44).

Nor do I call the voice of the earthquake the voice of God out of mere sentiment. God's book gives us a grand example of an earthquake awaking



“THE LAST DAYS OF ST PIERRE.” 89

the soul-slumbers of a jailer and bringing from his lips that question of all questions, “What must I do to be saved?” (Acts xvi. 30). It was a kind earthquake that terrified him to such a purpose. You remember the story.

The jailer with many indignities had cast the apostle Paul and his companion Silas into the inner prison, making their feet fast in the stocks. “A great earthquake” shook the foundations of the prison, and released the prisoners. It was a strange way for God thus to shake the shackles off His servants’ feet—nothing can withstand God. Better still, by the earthquake the jailer was aroused. Doubtless his first inquiry was as to the prisoners. Supposing them to have fled, he could not stand the disgrace, and was about to commit suicide. What passed between his soul and God, as he stood shivering on the brink of death, we know not. Perhaps his soul was as suddenly illuminated as the inky darkness of midnight by the vivid lightning’s flash. Anyhow a question not of Roman law, but of God’s frown, demanded settlement. Hence his eager question. Behold the erstwhile brutal jailer with light in hand, trembling, and at the knees of his prisoners, whose shackles had been broken as easily as the ten-foot walls of the prison, asking, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

How will God answer such a question? In a moment of imminent peril, with no time to lose, will the answer be satisfactory, will it involve much toil or time? Nay, listen, ye seekers after peace.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31). Here is the earthquake text for you. On the spot the jailer was saved, and on the spot you may be.

I had a friend on the ill-fated island of St Vincent, and I was naturally very anxious as to his safety. There the gases from the crater of the Soufrière made death very tragic and sudden. The papers told us that death was sometimes so sudden that the attitude was undisturbed, books remaining in the hands of readers and guns in the hands of sentries. Thank God, I knew my friend was ready. If his body had been charred to charcoal, I knew his soul was saved, for he trusted Christ, and His precious blood had cleansed him from all sin. He might have gone to heaven from St Vincent in a chariot of fire, but I knew he would use the earthquake text if opportunity occurred. May God thus speak widely and effectually.

I am writing these lines in the city of Lisbon, where in 1755 the great earthquake destroyed 60,000 people. The papers of two days ago give warning that an earthquake may visit the city again. In adjoining Spain shocks have been felt within the last week. The whole world seems in unrest. Thank God, I am ready. Are you? But it is only through the merit of my Lord and Saviour that this is so. It is our delight to sing—

“Why are ye troubled when death comes in view?

Christ giveth rest;

Though after death there shall come judgment too,

You may be blest;

## GOLIATH'S SWORD.

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Christ bore God's judgment poor sinners to save ;  
He gained the vict'ry o'er death and the grave.  
Oh ! *now* believe Him, and life you shall have.  
You shall have rest."

There is no true rest to be found out of Christ. He died that we might have it. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xii. 28), is His gracious invitation still. "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Oh ! reader, hear God's voice of warning. "Flee from the wrath to come." Hear His voice of invitation, and "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

Thank God for such a message, will you accept it ?

A. J. P.

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## GOLIATH'S SWORD.\*

(Read 1 Sam. xvii. 40-58, xviii. 1-4.)

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**N**OTICE here the way David wrought deliverance for Israel. He gathered from the brook five smooth stones. What good could they be against such a giant ? I think when Saul saw him do that, he regarded it as folly. And do you know what some people in our day have said ? "The story of the cross I cannot accept. I do not believe that I can be saved by the dying agonies and the atoning sufferings of a

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\* Extracted from "The Forty Days of Scripture"—Goliath's Forty Days.

Man upon that tree. It seems folly to me." Such speakers have been already pointed out, for the apostle Paul says, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. i. 18). I know that I seem to some of you, in this day of incredulity and infidelity, to be indeed foolish, but I am quite prepared to be counted a fool for Christ's sake. But please observe that what you count "foolishness" is "salvation" to me. Is not that strange? Who is the wise man to-day—the man of faith, or the sceptic? The man of faith, for the preaching of Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 21). That is the meaning of the five smooth stones; what looked the essence of feebleness was the power of God.

The giant curses David, and treats him with disdain. The latter goes out with only stone and sling, and what happens? He slings that stone, and it enters the giant's forehead. All thought it was impossible. Yes; but the fact is this, what is impossible with man is possible with God. That which seems weakness with man is power with God. What could be weaker than a stripling and a stone? I can tell you of something weaker. A babe lying in a manger. I read, "And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke ii. 12). There are two signs God gives us in Scripture. A babe lying in a manger. That was the sign given to the shepherds. But there is yet another deeper sign of weakness.

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Do you know what it is? A dead man. The Lord Jesus said: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish (R.V.), so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. xii. 39, 40).

The expression of absolute weakness is a man in death. Do you know how I am saved? Through a Man in death. He was rejected by everybody, betrayed by a false friend, and denied by a true one, forsaken by everybody, and at length forsaken by God, and on the cross "crucified through weakness" (2 Cor. xiii. 4). But that cross is God's power unto salvation. There is nothing will meet and deliver man but the cross. It is God's way of meeting man where he is, a sinner in his sins. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. i. 25).

When the giant fell, what was the next thing? "David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith" (ver. 51). I think Jonathan took a good long breath when he saw the giant's head come off. I see five points in Jonathan's history. When David came into the camp he was *trembling*, he was miserable. When he saw David go forth, for he had heard what David had said, he was *hopeful*. I hope he will conquer

him, said he; and you say, I hope Christ has met my case. When the giant's head came off, he could well say, Thank God it is all done, I am clear of that enemy now. He was *delivered*. Next he was *enriched*, and lastly he became *devoted*.

It is a great thing to see that by Christ's death on the cross the power of Satan was broken. To put Christ on that cross was the most foolish thing the devil ever did. He got Judas to sell Him for thirty pieces of silver. (Do not you spend eternity in hell with Judas.) And he got Herod to taunt Him, and then he got Pilate to condemn Him. (I should not like to spend eternity with Judas, Pilate, and Herod. My mind is made up. I am going to spend eternity with Jesus. You do the same. That is my advice.) Then the Romans nailed Him to a tree, and the devil said, I have got rid of Him now. What a profound mistake! He did not know that by His death He was going to meet the claims of God on man, and take up the whole question of man's sin in His death, and, blessed be His name, He did it. And what is the next thing? A risen Saviour, an empty tomb, and then a rolled-away stone. The stone was not rolled away to let the Saviour out. No, no; but to let you and me look in, and see the proofs of His victory over death and Satan. Thereafter the Lord went up on high triumphant.

What must Satan have then said? "The most foolish thing I ever did was to put that Man on the cross." His death has saved millions. If you are

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wise you will say, By the grace of God I will have Him to-night as my own. You may well have Him, boast in Him, and yield all to Him, for He is worthy.

We have already seen that David cut off the giant's head with his own sword. What does that teach us? Do you know the sword that Satan holds over a sinner's head? Death. He says to you when you are young, "There is plenty of time." When you are middle-aged he will say, "You must work hard and make money now." When you are old he will say to you: "You have missed your opportunity of salvation. It is too late." Then he will hold over your head the solemn fact that you have been a sinner, and that the wages of sin is death. His witness is quite true, but he will not tell you the gospel. If you are wise you will, where you are, get hold of this, that a Man, on whom death had no claim, has gone into death, that He has come up out of the grave, triumphant over Satan, and that He has left unsettled no question as to the sins of those who trust in Him. There was no sin on Him when He went on the cross. Then "the sins of many" were laid on Him while on the cross, but there was no sin on Him when He came down from the cross. There He atoned for and put them all away, and as a consequence He has gone into death and annulled it.

Did you ever ponder this verse? "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that

through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14). Do you know why you and I die? Because we are the children of a fallen man. Do you know why Christ became a Man? That He might die. Death had no claim on Him, for "he did no sin" (1 Pet. ii. 22). He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21), and "in him is no sin" (1 John iii. 5). As to this, testimony is abundant from every side, divine, satanic, and human. God searched Him and found "*nothing*" in Him (Ps. xvii. 3). He Himself said, "The prince of this world (Satan) cometh, and hath *nothing* in me" (John xiv. 30). Then the dying thief said, "This Man hath done *nothing* amiss" (Luke xxiii. 41). He was absolutely perfect.

Having met Satan in the stronghold of death—the very citadel of the king of terrors—He has annulled his power and risen from the dead. I think I can understand now why He says to John, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. i. 18). He, so to speak, says to John, "I have been down exactly where you were, I have gone into the death you ought to have died, I have met the one who had the power of death in my passage through death, I have plucked the keys from his girdle, and wrenched the sceptre from his hand; he is a defeated foe, and I am a risen, victorious Saviour." That is the One I know.

I repeat that I believe Jonathan drew a good long breath when he saw the giant's head roll off, and the



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sense of deliverance entered his bosom. Nor am I at all surprised to read, "And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted" (ver. 52). I sometimes wonder how people when they hear and get hold of God's delivering gospel do not shout, "Hallelujah, I am saved to-night." I should rejoice to hear you say it. You get the enjoyed sense of the deliverance of Christ, and it will mightily move you. The fact is, that people are very proper nowadays, and are little moved by the gospel. They forget that a great many are going into hell with the utmost propriety. They will be terribly moved when they stand before the great white throne. The men of Israel and Judah were moved. They spoiled the tents of the Philistines, and they were enriched. Among them Jonathan was enriched. At first anxious, then hopeful, then delivered, now he is enriched, and in the next chapter we notice that he becomes devoted to David, and surrenders all to him.

David comes back to the camp with the giant's sword in one hand, and his head in the other. And now I read, "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (chap. xviii. 1). Yes, he sees, and owns his deliverer. And, my dear friend, when you see the beauty of Jesus, the grace of Jesus, and the value of the blood of Jesus, if you see that by His death He has delivered you and saved you from Satan's power, and that in His clearance of death and judgment the Christian

now stands in association with Him, your heart will be captivated. He said to His own, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19). He said to Mary, after He was risen from the dead, "Go to *my brethren*, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God" (John xx. 17). He associates us with Himself in life, favour, and relationship before God. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. i. 7), is the Spirit's record. I do not wonder that Jonathan's heart was captivated by David, and I hope yours too is won for Jesus fully.

The next thing we read is this, "And Jonathan *stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle*" (xviii. 4). I think it produced great consternation that day, when the heir to Israel's throne was seen to step out to this simple shepherd lad, take off his royal garments and give them, with his weapons, to David. There is the most perfect surrender. He says, "My heart is yours, David, and my all is yours."

My friend, tell me, do you know anything like that in your soul's history? Surrender your all to Christ. It is easily done when a man's heart has been captured. Friend, I do not want your head or your money, but I want your heart, and your heart for Christ. He wants your heart. Do you not feel

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inclined to yield your heart to Christ now? · Imitate Jonathan. It was a fine start he made. May you be *devoted* to Jesus from this hour forth.

W. T. P. W.

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“I DON'T CARE IF I HAVE TO WALK  
HOME NOW.”

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“**I**T is wonderful when you can say it,” said a woman to me a few weeks ago, while we were conversing together after the gospel preaching.

“Yes,” I answered, “and through the grace of God I can say it. Now let me ask if you can say the same.”

“Well, I once thought I knew Christ, but I must confess that I cannot say I know Him now,” was her reply.

“Then you cannot say that your offences are gone, and that you are justified; and you cannot sing like the Israelites of old, that wonderful song of redemption and salvation.”

“I cannot,” she answered.

During the preaching I had been speaking from Exodus xv. The Israelites had been sheltered from judgment on that memorable night when the destroying angel passed through on his deadly mission. All the virtue lay in the sprinkled blood, which, being

a witness of life already taken, barred the entrance of the angel of death. Neither bars nor bolts could effect this, nor could Pharaoh's mighty men of valour stay the steps of death. But that which pointed on to the precious blood of the Son of God—the blood of the paschal lamb—was effectual in doing what nothing else could do. What a wonderful picture of the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanseth from *all* sin (1 John i. 7).

We had also seen from our scripture that the Israelites were saved from all their enemies. The Red Sea had afforded a means of escape for them, and at the same time had swallowed up all their enemies. This speaks of the death and resurrection of Christ. He went into death and thus met Satan on his own ground, as it were.

But death did not hold Him, as the enemy had hoped; I say hoped, for Satan undoubtedly had misgivings. He feared that Christ would rise. Hence he sealed a huge stone against the door of the sepulchre. He surrounded the tomb by a band of Roman soldiers. In fact he took every precaution to secure his prey, but all in vain. He had not gauged the strength of his Opponent, neither had he correctly estimated his own power. In rising from the dead Christ has triumphed gloriously. The powers of Satan are smashed, as typified by the destruction of the Egyptian hosts.

Thus the apostle could say of Jesus, "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Consequently the one

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who has put his trust in Christ can say that his sins are forgiven, and that he is justified (Rom. v. 1).

But as stated above, my friend could not say this. Yet she desired to be able to say it, so a few of us sat down together and spoke with her.

At the outset she admitted, in answer to my question, that she thought that she was required to do something. So the question was raised as to what one has *to do* to be saved. That scripture was quoted which says, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove.”

Ah, yes, that was the point. It was that *mountain of sins* that was causing the trouble and anxiety. How could it be removed? The answer was simple—“If ye have faith.” And what does that mean? Simply that a person trusts Jesus and not himself.

Man with all his ingenuity and boasted skill could not remove a mountain, much less a mountain of sins. Hence the uselessness of putting one’s trust in man.

Turning to my friend, I said, “Now tell me what *you* can do,” to which she answered, “Go on explaining to me, I am beginning to see”—so I continued.

Well, what man is powerless to effect, Jesus can accomplish, yea, has accomplished. One look of faith to Him, and the mountain goes, and goes from whence it can never be recalled. It goes into the sea—the sea of death. Jesus has been there, and

has buried the sins of the person who trusts Him, far down in its depths (Micah vii. 19). What a terrible moment it was for Him when He was overwhelmed by the angry waves of judgment. Well might He say by the pen of the Psalmist, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me" (Ps. xlii. 7); and again, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me" (Ps. lxix. 1, 2).

It was on our account that He gave Himself thus. "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."

Again addressing my friend, I said, "Suppose an angel should visit you, and tell you that God had wiped out all your sins and justified you, what would you say?"

"It seems to me that God is making it known to me now," was the ready reply.

We spoke further of *knowing* that we have received the blessing. God does not leave us doubting and fearing when believing. No indeed, He fills us with joy and peace in believing (Rom. xv. 13). That is just the very opposite. And it could not be otherwise, since He graciously gives us to *know* that we are safe, when sheltered by the blood of Christ.

We read, "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

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believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts xiii. 38, 39). From this scripture it is evident that we can know two things, namely, the forgiveness of sins and justification. We also see the way in which we get to know these things. It tells us that it is not by the Mosaic law, but through the Lord Jesus Christ, by faith. The terms are as easy as possible —“*All that believe.*”

Enough had now been said, for my friend could say, “I am quite clear now, and I can say with you what I could not say a short time ago.”

Our talk was finished, and as we went outside one of our number asked if it would be more convenient to return home by train rather than by tram. A few had come a distance of five miles to the gospel preaching, the person about whom I write among the number. Spontaneously and readily came the answer from her, “*I don’t care if I have to walk home now.*” The mountain was removed into the sea. She had no burden now to carry, and so she cared not whether she walked home or not. What a relief it is to be freed from the burden of sins! My friend now experienced this relief. Her conscience relieved, her heart light, and her soul rejoicing in the knowledge of the love of Christ, she had no anxiety as to how she would reach her home that night. The fact of the matter was that she had found a new home for her affections in the Person of Jesus.

And now, my reader, allow me to address a few

words to you. I know you not, and you know me not, and probably we shall never meet in this world. But I am nevertheless deeply concerned about that precious soul of yours. I ask you to stop on your way and consider its condition. Christ was so concerned about your soul, that He went into death that you might be saved. He gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. ii. 6), and hence for *you*.

We Christians are likewise concerned, and like the apostle, we are seeking to persuade men, knowing the terror of the Lord (2 Cor. v. 11). God is not mocked. If you die in your sins, you will live to be haunted by them throughout a never-ending eternity.

There is still another who is concerned about your soul. It is Satan. The yawning mouth of hell is ever open, and like the fowler, Satan, by means of his deceitful allurements, entices you thither, that you may be swallowed up in its unfathomed depths. Oh, flee to Christ, while it is yet the day of God's grace.

Are you not concerned *yourself* about your soul? Is it no concern to *you* whether you reach Christ in glory, or sink into the quicksand of eternal woe? Oh, do think of the matter. A day or two ago I met a Christian woman whose husband, having got under the cruel power of drink, had forsaken her. Did she curse him? No, her great concern was his salvation. She would like to see him again, but if she only knew that Christ would find him before he died, she would be quite satisfied. The wrong done



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to her was nothing in comparison with the salvation of his soul. And he at the moment was most likely wallowing in sin, with no such thought about himself.

Again I put the question to my reader, "Are you concerned about your salvation?" Don't put the question off until a more convenient season, like Felix, as he trembled, when brought face to face with solemn facts (Acts xxiv. 25). There is no more convenient season than the present. "*Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation."

Don't say like Agrippa, "*Almost* thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Just turn to Christ now, as you are and where you are. Be fully persuaded, and let the devil no longer keep that from you, which God is waiting to bestow upon you.

"Almost will not avail,  
Almost is but to fail,  
Sad, sad, that bitter wail,  
Almost but lost."

J. T. C.

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THE LEPERS' CONSULTATIONS, AND  
WHAT CAME OF THEM.

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**I**N the course of the history of the ten tribes of Israel, Samaria, their capital city, was besieged by Benhadad, king of Syria, and reduced to the greatest extremity through famine (2 Kings vi. 24). The king, though he clothed himself with sack-

cloth within upon his flesh, as a sign of repentance and humbling before God, being severely tested by the awful distress, manifested the deep-seated enmity of his heart against God, by seeking to take the life of Elisha the prophet, His servant.

Notwithstanding this further desperate wickedness of the king, the Lord, great in mercy, sent him a message of pure grace through His servant, who said, "Hear ye the word of the Lord, To-morrow, about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria" (vii. 1). But it was accompanied with a threat of death for a lord, on whose hand the king leaned, who dared to break in with an "if," thus openly questioning the Lord's gracious message.

Now, at the entering in of the gate of the city sat *four leprous men* (vii. 3). In addition to all the horrors of the siege and famine, these poor wretches were suffering from an incurable disease, and in consequence were separated from the rest of their fellows.

How strikingly all this shadows forth man's condition to-day! He is in a world surrounded with the whole power of Satan and his hosts, suffering from a grievous famine of all that will really satisfy his soul. He is clothed on his flesh with a profession of religion, but his heart is as full of enmity against God, and His Son, the true Prophet, as in the day when the Jewish mob cried, "Away with him, away with him; crucify him, crucify him." Moreover, man is an alien, suffering from the awful and incurable malady of sin,—he is a moral leper.

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But the four leprous men, in the depth of their misery, *began to think*. It is a great thing to begin *to think*, to weigh and consider our state. The lepers were brought to it, and it led to very good results. See them sitting day by day at Samaria's gate, the picture of misery and hopelessness, with nothing but death staring them in the face. At last their lips give expression to their inmost thoughts, and they say one to another, "Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die" (vii. 3, 4).

It was a question of choosing one of three things. Firstly, should they go into the city? There was nothing but famine there. That would be certain death. Secondly, should they remain where they were? In the event of an assault by the Syrians, there was no place more exposed than the gate. And meanwhile they were without food. It was certain death there also. Thirdly, if they were to go into the camp of the enemy, what then? Well, that seemed at first sight almost as desperate as the other two; but there was just one ray of hope. They were poor lepers, non-combatants. There might be a spark of pity in the hearts of their relentless foes. They might save them alive. At any rate, they might as well be killed by the foe in the camp as die of famine in the city or perish at the gate. It was the

best plan of the three. The lepers in their first consultation came to the decision that they would *face the difficulty at all costs*. They rose up in the twilight to go into the camp of the Syrians.

Dear reader, have you ever sat down *to think*? Have you ever weighed and considered with others *your real state before God*? Have you realised the extremity in which you are as a poor lost sinner? If you turn back to, or go on with the world, you will share the world's doom. Judgment rests upon it. If you still remain in indifference as to your state and what will become of you, you will perish. You are exposed to the wages of sin, *death*. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). But *if you face the difficulty*, instead of reaping the fruits of the fall and your guilt, you will surely reap salvation, life out of and beyond death, and all the rich blessings of the gospel. How? Let us see.

The lepers rose up to go into the enemy's camp, and what did they find? Approaching tremblingly, not knowing what the result of their venture might be, to their immense surprise, *not a foe was there!* NOT ONE. And why? *Because the Lord had been there before them*. He had been in the camp of the enemy, and with His mighty arm He had wrought the victory. He had caused the foe to hear the noise of a great host, and filled with fright, they ran for their lives, leaving their tents, their horses, their asses, and most of their wealth and belongings as they were. Hence the poor lepers, instead of famine

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found plenty, instead of death life, instead of poverty wealth. *The Lord had spoiled the foe, and all the spoil was there for the taking.*

And so also, poor trembling sinner, if only you are decided; if only you face the momentous question of your salvation, you will find that Jesus, God's Son, has been into the camp of the foe and wrought a mighty victory on your behalf. At Calvary He died and glorified God. He rose from the dead, overcame once and for ever the whole power of Satan, sin, death, and judgment for *every one that believeth*. The victory has been won by another *for you*. And now all you need is offered you freely. Every famished soul may eat and be satisfied, and all the wealth of the gospel—silver, gold, raiment, redemption, righteousness, Christ—all are yours. Instead of perishing with hunger, *you* may be satisfied; instead of dying in your sin, life in Christ is offered you; instead of misery and poverty, untold wealth is proffered you in the risen Christ.

More than satisfied, the lepers held a second consultation. They said one to another, "We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace; if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household" (chap. vii. 9). So they came and called unto the porter of the city. In short, the lepers being saved, became evangelistic. It was impossible to keep such good news to themselves. They feared some mischief, if they did. As another said later, "Woe is unto me,

if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16). And the moment the lepers told it out, it spread far and wide. First, they made it known to the city porter. He told it to the outside porters of the palace, and, though it was night-time, they told it to the king's house within, and it was very soon communicated to the king himself. And in an incredibly short time the whole city was cognisant of it.

Now the king rose in the night, but he was not prepared to receive the glad tidings without question. Like a good many more to-day, when they hear the gospel, he had his own thoughts about it. Besides, was he not the king, and he would like to make a little show of his wisdom. Although he had heard the words of the prophet in the name of the Lord, and had had it confirmed by witnesses who were already proving the truth of it, he still doubted. He puts it down to a trick of the enemy (2 Kings vii. 12). But one of his servants was wiser than he, and proposed to send five of the horses that remained in the city, and see. The king, tossed to and fro between doubt and hope, consented that two chariot horses should be sent. If the news proved true, *good*; but if not, he had still a reserve, and could hold out a little longer. He ventured two on the authority of the word of the Lord, but kept back three, in case of eventualities! What a striking picture of the mistrust of God in man's heart!

"And the messengers returned and told the king. (And really it was far better than they expected, for they discovered spoil all the way to Jordan.) And

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the people went out and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour *was* sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord" (ver. 16). "And the king appointed the lord, on whose hand he leaned, to have the charge of the gate: and the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him" (ver. 17).

The grace and the judgment were both equally sure. To-morrow about this time so much food should be sold at a certain spot, said the prophet. And though every outward circumstance completely militated against it, it came to pass. The man who doubted it, and said "If," was threatened with death. And it came upon him in the most unexpected way. Appointed to a post of honour by the king, so great was the crush of the famished crowd at the gate to obtain food, that he was knocked down, trodden under foot, and died.

Poor famishing sinner, you have not to wait till to-morrow, but to-day, this moment, *now*, Christ and salvation are offered you *freely, where and as you are*. All is *without measure and without price*. He has gained the mighty victory once for all at Calvary, and He is seated as the accepted Man in the glory of God, a present and everlasting Saviour. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). You need not take a step elsewhere to receive the blessing. And the terms are *freely*. The moment is *now*. The place is *where*

*you are.* “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we *must* be saved” (Acts iv. 12). Believe on Him, and *thou* shalt be (Acts xvi. 31). But he that believeth not, will surely, like that poor lord who said “If,” come into the judgment of God. “The grace of God, which bringeth salvation unto all men, hath appeared.” It is sent to the Gentiles (Acts xxviii. 28), and it is free as the air we breathe. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. x. 9). But, on the other hand, it is equally sure, that whosoever believeth not God’s testimony concerning His beloved Son, will reap the fruit of his unbelief in the eternal judgment of God.

May His abounding grace lead each reader of these lines first to weigh the question of his salvation, and being saved, the question of making the glad tidings known to all around !

“Jesus died for sinners, on the cross He bled  
 To redeem from hell my guilty soul ;  
 Bearing all the wrath, in death He bowed his head,  
 And his dying saves, and makes me whole.

Sinner, trust Him, for He died for thee,  
 Trust Him now, and thou shalt pardoned be ;  
 Trust Him for salvation, trust without a doubt ;  
 None who come to Him will be cast out.”

E. H. C.



“I DO NOT BELIEVE IN A FUTURE.” 113

## “I DO NOT BELIEVE IN A FUTURE.”

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“**T**HERE is no truth in what those preachers say about eternity. I do not believe in a future.” Such was the proud boast of a fashionable worldly lady to her Christian maid who had ventured to speak to her about her eternal welfare.

She was a favourite of society, and had moved in a gay and pleasure-seeking circle all her days, but at the comparatively early age of fifty-six she was somewhat suddenly called away from the scene of her gaieties.

Early in March '95 she complained of feeling unwell, but insisted on fulfilling her theatre engagement at an afternoon performance. She went, and that night was taken ill.

It was Tuesday, but she refused to see a doctor until Thursday. When he came he said : “ It is only influenza, but *IT IS TOO LATE !* She has gone too far ! ”

Soon after she sank into unconsciousness, and remained thus for two or three days. Suddenly emerging from that state, she turned to one by her side and said, “ I wish everybody in the house to come into my room. ”

A few minutes found doctor, son and daughter, brother, and servants round her bed. Drawing herself up, she said in hushed tones : “ I wanted to see you all together, and to tell you I have had an awful

vision! I have never before believed in a future, *but I do now*. I have seen God, and He has told me I am entering upon *my first week in hell!*"

The doctor raised his hand as though to check her, *but with those awful words upon her lips*, she gasped her last, AND WAS GONE!—but where?

Such is the true, unvarnished, solemn account of the close of the life of this lover of pleasure.

The shock of this God-given vision collapsed her infidel opinions, and woke her to the fact that *eternity is a stern reality*, and that hell lies at the end of the slippery, downward path of the pleasure-hunting, sin-loving, Christ-rejecting worldling. How true are the words of the Psalm, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; *in that day his thoughts perish*" (Ps. cxlvi. 4).

A few ~~short~~ sentences can sum up the life and death of such an one, but what tongue can utter, what pen describe—

"The horrors that roll o'er the godless soul  
Waked up from its death-like sleep,  
Of all hope bereft and to judgment left,  
For ever to wail and to weep."

Scoffing scepticism and callous indifference are very short-lived.

Fifty-six years sufficed to span *sin's pleasures* for this poor lady, but only eternity can measure *sin's wages*.

Be assured, dear reader, that SIN'S FLEETING PLEASURES for a life-time will certainly be followed by SIN'S BITTER WAGES for eternity!

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God has inseparably linked together this world's joys with this world's judgment. “*Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth . . . BUT KNOW THOU, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment*” (Eccles. xi. 9).

My dear unsaved friend, remember time is with swift wing speeding thee on to eternity. Yes, the moment is surely coming, whether your days are few or many, when *YOU must enter upon your first week in eternity!* And rest assured of this, your eternal weal or woe will then be fixed for ever.

Dying in your sins will mean dying without hope of mercy, for

“There are no pardons in the tomb,  
And brief is mercy's day.”

The star of hope never casts its genial rays beyond the horizon of time, can never lighten the gloomy regions of the lost, and is never needed in heaven's eternal sunshine.

It shines brightly for thee now, poor sinner, through the thickening moral darkness of this death-stricken world.

“A door of hope” has been thrown wide open by the hand of a Saviour God, “who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. iii. 9).

Sin's penalty *must* be borne, and sin's defilement *must* be removed, or heaven *must* be an utter impossibility for any poor sinner: therefore “the Son of man *must* be lifted up,” that by His atoning work

God may be enabled righteously to proclaim eternal forgiveness to every guilty sinner. That forgiveness shall be yours if you will repent and believe the gospel (Acts x. 43). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). God's holiness demanded it, divine love provided it, and simple faith appropriates it.

*Trust it*, and you trust that which has met every claim of divine justice and holiness, and shelters the feeblest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Despise it*, and you despise God's only means of removing all that unfits you for His holy presence.

Unknown reader, art thou cleansed by this precious blood? If not, *delay no longer*. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. v. 8), and with it the closing for ever of "the door of hope"! "Flee from the wrath to come!" "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

ART. C.

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## GOD'S GRACE AND MAN'S WILL.

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**W**HILE speaking on the subject of God's wondrous grace the other night to a large and deeply interested company, the Editor of this magazine quoted part of a well-known hymn, as explanatory of his personal indebtedness to God's grace—

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“ 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 perished in my sin.”

He added his own answer: “ *It was God's absolute grace* ” !

My heart gladly responded to these sentiments. They express a living truth, and they charm the heart that has learned its own desperate and incurable wickedness.

And, if the “ I ” (the person himself who is made to hear the voice of mercy) should loom before the mind as the guilty, God-hating, rebellious sinner, who has been taught truly his vileness and total moral ruin, it will only magnify the greatness of the grace that has saved him. Well, now, “ *why* ” was this brought about ? Why was I made to hear, and taste, and enter ? Why all this favour ? Others “ *make the wretched choice.* ” They choose, and they choose deliberately, and that to their own eternal damnation. Have they that power ? The Scripture says, “ Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost ” (Acts vii. 51) ; and again, “ Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life ” (John v. 40) ; and once more, “ There is none that seeketh after God ” (Rom. iii. 11). The case is proved ! There is neither the will

nor the effort to turn to God. They seal their own doom. They starve, and perish in their sin.

What a fearful condition! And, mark, it relates to the whole race of man, apart from every question of election. The race is in hopeless alienation from God, and every member of it too.

"That is just my difficulty," the reader may say; "I am troubled as to the question of election"! Well, it is as certain that *election* shuts in the believer as that it shuts out no one. It secures the feeblest believer; it does not exclude the greatest sinner.

That which damns him is his will. "Ye *will* not come to me." Oh! that accursed and wicked will of man! What misery for time and eternity its allowance entails. But what about the power to believe? Ah! settle the question of *will* first, and then that of *power* becomes very simple. God knows we have no power, nor does He look for it; but He knows, and we know, that we have a *will* that loves sin, and that hates God, and that slew His Son on the cross, and that resists His Spirit, despises His grace, and shuts the ear to the call of the gospel.

Friend, your perverse will is the cause of all this mischief. Learn this foundation-fact foremost. Your myriad sins flow from your wicked will. They are the effects of an awful cause—a horrid stream from a poisoned source. And yet, bad as they are, and vile and filthy, their removal from the conscience is more readily apprehended than is that of their source. The one work on Calvary—the death of the Son of God—meets all the evil, both the stream

and its source, the sins and the sin, the fruit and the root. There the sins of the believer were atoned for, and the "flesh," in its incurability, was condemned before God. What lessons are learned at Calvary, and what a deliverance the soul receives which by faith accepts those lessons. Now we can value the word, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17). That which breaks down my stubborn will is the surprising knowledge of God's love to man. His will is one of mercy, and pardon, and grace, and that to all. Hence the word "Whosoever."

Then, seeing that we lack power, and, indeed, every qualification, He adds, in richest grace, "Will"—"Whosoever will"—that is, whoever of all the fallen race desires or wishes the water of life—wonderful water—let him take it freely.

You will not be forced, nor compelled, nor driven. If you love your sins, you must accept their judgment. This wretched choice is all your own. But the feast is spread, the table is richly covered; the guests, all unworthy, are welcome; the hand of love is gently, tenderly drawing. Father, Son, and Spirit are all bidding you welcome to the heavenly feast. Come, dear reader, haste and come.

"Though thy sins are red like crimson,  
Deep in scarlet glow,  
Jesus' precious blood can make them  
White as snow."

J. W. S.

“THAT’S GUID ADVICE—I’LL TAK’ IT.”

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“**I**S that you, Doctor? Oh, do come in. I am so glad to see you.”

Thus greeted, I entered the clean little house, at the top of a long, dark, common stair in Leith, at the door of which I had knocked, to inquire if a sick person I was seeking lived in that stair. I had been put upon the wrong track for the person whom I sought, but was very glad to renew acquaintance with the speaker who so warmly welcomed me to her house.

“What are you doing here, Grace?” I inquired.

“Doing here? Why, I live here—you know I am married now?”

“No, I was not aware that you were married. Of course your husband is a Christian.”

“Oh, yes; if he hadn’t been a Christian, you may be certain I would not have married him. He has been converted for some time, and is a real God-fearing man, I am glad to say. James is just coming in for his dinner, so I hope you will see him.”

As she said these words the door opened, and in walked a pleasant-looking man, with an open countenance, and a bright smile thereon, as he greeted me to his dwelling.

I may here state that my friend Grace had often listened to my voice proclaiming the gospel in the Freemasons’ Hall. She was a woman of amazonian stature, and many a night had caught my eye, but I



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had not spoken to her till one evening, as she passed out, I saw her face bathed in tears, and getting into conversation, with much emotion she told me that months of exercise of soul had ended that night in a simple reception of Christ as her Saviour, and that God’s peace and joy now filled her heart.

She had been awakened to a sense of her need as a sinner through hearing some servants of the Lord preach the gospel at a Sunday evening open-air service at the Mound, in Princes Street, Edinburgh. A card of invitation to the meetings in Freemasons’ Hall, George Street, having been given to her by one of the bystanders, she had come to the Sunday evening gospel meetings for some months before the night I refer to. I saw her for some months after this occasion, and often spoke with her, as she came regularly to hear the Word. Then for the matter of a couple of years I completely lost sight of her, till I met her in the way above described.

“And so you are married to my friend Grace?” I said to the master of the house, who I learned had been a sailor, but was now working ashore.

“Oh ay, and a real guid wife I have got too, sir,” said he.

“I could quite believe that,” I rejoined, “and I hear that she has got a Christian for a husband.”

“Yes, thank God, that is so also,” he replied. “She wouldn’t have had me if I hadn’t been converted.”

“Very good,” was my answer, “quite right. And now how did you get converted?”

“Well, you see, we had known each other for a good time, and after she got converted she gave me no rest, speaking about Jesus, and she would have me go up to the Freemasons’ Hall, where you often preached.”

“And were you converted there?”

“Yes, I was saved there, but it was not through your preaching.”

“Never mind who the preacher was, so long as you got saved, James,” said I. “Tell me all about it. Who was preaching the night you were converted?”

“Well I can’t just tell you his name, but I can describe him. He was short and thick-set, and a good singer.”

“I think I know who you mean; it would be Mr Alfred M——,” mentioning a well-known servant of the Lord.

“That is the name,” said he.

“And you were converted through his preaching?”

“No, the preaching didn’t touch me. I thought he was a fine preacher, but his preaching didn’t touch me.”

“Then how did you get converted?”

“I was brought to the Lord through a hymn he gave out in the after-meeting.”

“Indeed, and what was the hymn?”

“Well, in the second meeting Mr M—— said, ‘Friends, we will sing a little hymn,’ and the hymn was this—

“You had better come to Jesus,  
To Jesus, to Jesus;  
You had better come to Jesus,  
And that just now.’

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“The words of that hymn just struck home to my heart, and I said to myself, ‘That’s guid advice—I’ll tak’ it,’ and I just came to Jesus on the spot, and He saved me there and then, blessed be His name. I have not had a doubt or a fear ever since. I learned then that He had washed my sins away when He died for me on the cross, and He pardoned them all when I just came to Him and trusted Him simply. That’s how I got converted, sir.”

It was quite a refreshment to meet these two simple happy souls, and we bowed the knee together, and thanked the Lord for His grace and goodness to each of us.

And now, my dear reader, let me ask you, have you yet come to Jesus? If not I would urge you to without further delay. He is the only Saviour, and apart from Him you cannot be saved. The work by which your sins can be put away has already been completed by Him, and all you have to do is to get to Him who has died to that end, confide in Him, and come under the benefit of all the work which He has done. This is what James S—— simply did, and of course got all the benefit of simple faith—the happy knowledge that his sins were forgiven, and that he was saved—saved by grace—the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. To you I would say—

“You had better come to Jesus,  
And that just now.”

Is not that good advice? You know it is. If you are wise you will say what Grace’s husband did—  
“That’s good advice—I’ll tak’ it.” W. T. P. W.

## PARADISE.

WHEN Adam sinned God drove him out of the garden of Eden and placed cherubim at the entrance, with a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life (Gen. iii. 24). Thus Paradise on earth was *closed* to Adam and his race for ever. Paradise signifies a place of delight, and although the word does not occur in the Old Testament, yet the description does. We read, "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (Gen. ii. 9). Thus every desire of the creature was supplied by the Creator.

Paradise was forfeited through one sin, which shows what God thinks of sin. Men think very little of their own sins, and so they keep no record of them; however, God keeps the record, which must be settled either in the day of grace or in the day of judgment—truly a serious consideration!

In Luke xxiii. 32 we read of two thieves who were in an awful plight, for their feet had run their last journey in crime, their hands had done their last act of violence, and the Roman soldiers had fastened both hands and feet with nails to their respective crosses. Only their tongues were loose, and with them they both reviled Jesus (see Matt. xxvii. 44). However, repentance began in one, and he remonstrated with the other; but to no avail! Jesus was

nailed to a cross too, and that for sins, but *not His own*. He truly "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter iii. 18). He was about to *open* the way to the tree of life, so He had to meet the flaming sword and fulfil the prophecy of Zechariah, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts" (xiii. 7).

Thus the sword spoken of in Genesis had to be met by Jesus, if He was to open the way to the Paradise of God. This He did; hence now the sword is sheathed, and the heavenly Paradise is *open to all believers* on Jesus.

One of the thieves in his extremity found God's opportunity, for the Saviour was close by his side, ready to pardon him when he was ready to be pardoned. The pardon was not on Cæsar's behalf: he had to die for his crimes against the government, and be buried in the malefactor's pit; but what was far more important, Jesus pardoned him on *God's behalf*, so that his soul could enter Paradise in company with Jesus.

The faith which owned Jesus Lord, was counted for righteousness, and Jesus *opened* Paradise to him. How glorious was Jesus to *that man at that moment*; and how glorious He is to *every man* of faith at *this moment*! That guilty sinner saw Jesus to be Israel's long-promised King, and although, when pursuing his evil course, he had no desire for a King to reign in righteousness, yet, when he had repented, it was the desire of his heart to live under such a King.

What he had learned, when young, in the synagogue, about the coming King (see Ps. lxxii.) doubtless came back to his recollection at that moment. (A great encouragement to teach children the Scriptures.) Thus the way for blessing was simple to his faith. Jesus entering Paradise, and the believer following the same day, was an immediate testimony to the value of the work and bloodshedding of Jesus, and God's estimate of both.

God *closed* the way to Paradise when Adam sinned, and He did it *in righteousness*. Now the righteousness of God is manifested, and grace reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life (see Rom. v. 21). When the present day of grace shall have closed, then the sword of judgment will again be unsheathed against all unbelievers who have refused God's testimony.

When men die, their spirits immediately return to God. He causes the spirits of believers to enter Paradise, while the spirits of unbelievers enter prison. The former receive their glorified bodies at the *first resurrection*, while the latter have to wait until the *second resurrection*, and the great white throne which leads to the second death, the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 14, 15).

God has allowed one man *to visit* Paradise, and to return to earth (see 2 Cor. xii. 4). Paul was that man, and he describes himself as "a man in Christ" in order that we may know how he could visit such a holy place. It was not on the ground of being an apostle, but simply as being "in Christ." Jesus

*opened* Paradise for all who are in God's sight belonging to the new race described as "in Christ." All such persons have had their sins put out of God's recollection by the atoning death of Jesus (see Heb. x. 17), and being "in Christ" are at any moment fit for that holy place.

When Paul returned from Paradise, he said very little about it, because he could not tell what he had heard to others; it was not possible to translate into any language what he heard, but it greatly affected him all his life.

Innumerable multitudes of spirits have gone there since, but none have returned; so Paul's testimony has great value to believers, as it serves to make them familiar with the abode of the saints. Paradise is also called the third heaven (see 2 Cor. xii. 2). When Moses made the tabernacle, there were three parts, which were a pattern of things in the heavens.

The One who *opened* Paradise is the One who can promise to give of the tree of life. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God (Rev. ii. 7). This will be the constant enjoyment and support of those who have a right to it (see Rev. xxii. 14).

Last of all we read of those who are *without*. The unbelieving thief must be *without*; and also all those who reject the gospel must be *without*. Oh! that word *without*; it always refers to the same class of persons, and is placed in contrast to those who are *within*. Whatever description God may give of any scene, the realisation must go beyond the description.

Men naturally love to hold some unbelieving notions about divine things, but these all arise because of Satan's unseen influence over men's souls. The gospel is God's remedy for man's ruin, and it urges you to give up the company of unbelievers, saying plainly, "Forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding" (Prov. ix. 6).

Thus we have considered briefly—Paradise *closed* by Adam's *one* sin. Paradise *opened* by Jesus' *one* finished work. Paradise *visited* by *one* man, Paul, who returned and related it. Paradise *enjoyed* by an innumerable company of those who have a right to be there.

"Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 43).

G. W. G.

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FRAGMENT.—"The death of Christ has perfectly vindicated the majesty, the truth, the holiness, the character of God. It has divinely met all the claims of His throne. It has atoned for *sin*. It has furnished a divine remedy for all the mischief which sin introduced into the universe. It affords a ground on which the blessed God can act in grace, mercy, and forbearance to all. It forms the imperishable foundation of God's moral government. In virtue of the cross, God can act according to His own sovereignty, can display the matchless glories of His character, and the adorable attributes of His nature."

C. H. M.



## THE FALL OF THE ROSSBERG.

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“GOOD morning, neighbour ; we are likely to have a fine day,” said a young Swiss peasant to his old neighbour, who was sitting idly at his cottage door, basking in the rays of the early sun.

“Time we should have a fine day ; it has been wet enough lately,” growled the old man.

“Have you heard the report?” rejoined the other ; “those who were up earliest this morning declare that they saw the top of Old Rossberg move.”

“Like enough, like enough,” said the old man. “Mark my words ; and I have often said so before : I shan’t live to see it, but those who are now young will not be as old as I am, before the top of yonder mountain lies at its foot.”

“Saints forbid !” ejaculated the other, crossing himself devoutly ; “at least, I hope it will not be in my day.”

The time when this conversation took place was at the close of the summer of 1806, in the little village of Goldau, in the canton of Zug. This village was beautifully situated in a fertile valley at the foot of the Rossberg, near the Lake of Zug. Though the season was advanced, everything in nature was verdant, as well as luxuriant ; for the summer had been unusually wet, though it had now given place to lovely weather, ripening the corn and the grapes which hung in rich profusion on every side.

That harvest, and that vintage, however, were never to be gathered in by the simple peasants of the valley. The heavy rains had overcharged the springs of water within the mountain, and loosened the ground above. The upper part of the mountain, being formed of rounded pieces of old rock, cemented together by clay, became loosened by the water within, and, giving way, fell headlong into the valley, burying the entire village, with many of its inhabitants, under its weight.

The old man, who had so confidently predicted this catastrophe just before, sat composedly at his cottage door smoking his pipe, admiring the beauty of all around, with that complacency which the Swiss peasantry so habitually feel towards the loveliness of their native hills and valleys, when the young man, running by hastily, warned him that the mountain was falling. "What, so soon! I always said it would be so: ah! here it comes; but I shall have time to fill my pipe, and yet be soon enough to escape." So saying, he returned to the house for his tobacco-box. The young man, however, ran for his life, and finally escaped, though with difficulty, for he was several times thrown down by the trembling of the earth. When he dared trust himself to look back, the old man was gone, his house had disappeared, and he was buried beneath its ruins.

"Even so shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed!"

There are many in this day, and many in this land, like the old Swiss peasant. You know that this

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world cannot last for ever. You can talk of the future, perhaps, with unction and sagacity. You know very well that the great mountain not made with hands (Dan. ii. ; Matt. xxi. 44), even the Lord Jesus Christ, shall some day descend with flaming fire, taking vengeance on the ungodly ; but you do not believe it will be in your day. You say, "Those who come after may, indeed, see wonderful changes, but they will not come yet." And so all that you read of these days has no effect upon your conduct.

You know also that, if the Lord come not in your days, death must inevitably come. It will fall on you, as the top of Rossberg fell on the unhappy inhabitants of Goldau ; but you say, "I do not think it will come *yet* ; it is many years distant : I am safe *for the present*." At length sickness or old age arrives ; you are warned that death, *even eternal death*, is at the door ; you are warned that there is no hope but in fleeing immediately from the city of destruction ; but your heart is still in worldly things ; you intend to repent and flee to Christ for salvation ; but you cannot make up your mind to do so *at once*. You love sin ; you say, "Let me but enjoy myself this day : to-morrow I will repent." You are like Lot's wife ; you "look back," and are lost. You are like the old Swiss peasant who only wanted to fill his pipe once more ; you linger on and are lost.

And why is this ? It is because you do not really hate sin, nor value the precious gift of God in giving His dear Son to be a city of refuge, into which all may flee, who fear their danger and desire deliverance.

Almost all men in our land profess to believe there is a hell, which must be the portion of those who are finally impenitent ; and that there is a heaven, where those who turn to Jesus shall dwell for ever and ever. They know that they are not fit for heaven ; but they hope to repent in time to escape hell. They hope to repent at last ; but they put off repentance as long as they can, because they love this world.

Had the old man been wise, he would have removed to a safe distance from the mountain, as soon as he knew that it was likely to fall. Had the young man been wise he would have left the village that morning at least, when he was assured that the mountain was trembling and insecure. But though he was wiser than his old acquaintance, he only escaped with his life ; but he did escape : he did warn his old friend, as he ran himself, but he lost everything he possessed in the world, and was only saved as by fire ; for even as he ran, he was several times thrown down by the concussion of the heaving mountain.

There are many like him in the world now, who, instead of making Jesus their delight and sure refuge in the days of peace and health, try to enjoy this world to the last, and are only persuaded to flee to Him when they believe that death is at hand, and that there is nothing more for them to enjoy on earth. Happy for them if they do so flee ! Jesus will never reject them : He will not say, "I know you not ;" for he that comes at the eleventh hour is as welcome as if he had come in the morning. Only what a risk

they run ! What loss they sustain ! What opportunities they lose of glorifying Him who has done so much for them ! Who would wish to be so near destruction as the young Swiss peasant ? Who would run the risk of being lost like his old comrade ?

Many are thus snatched from destruction every year ; many, many more, who always intended to flee at some time or other, sink into the pit. Some few take warning in time ; and, voluntarily forsaking the world, and sin, and Satan, come and dwell securely in the tabernacles of the righteous. Happy, thrice happy, are they ! Love, and not the fear of impending wrath, constrains them to change their abode. Happy are they on earth, for they dwell secure. Thrice happy are they when they die, for they rest from their labours in the bosom of Jesus. And when Jesus shall appear, when He shall fall as a mountain on the heads of the guilty, they will not only enter into the joy of their Lord, but will receive the reward of faithful servants,—a reward not to be shared by those who come to Jesus only in the hour of death, and who know nothing of the joy of having glorified Him on earth, and of having done what they could in their Master's vineyard.

Why should it be thought incredible that a man would risk the loss of life to obtain a momentary sensual gratification, when thousands upon thousands daily risk eternal damnation, rather than give up one darling sin ? Reader, is this your case ? Then be warned by this example. Flee this very hour to Jesus. Leave everything behind that retards your

flight. This may be the last warning you will ever receive: before another evening your soul may be beyond the reach of mercy.

P. H. G.

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## “BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!”

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“**B**EHOLD *the Lamb of God!*” These precious words of Christ’s forerunner, John, tell us of the fulfilment of God’s many promises.

Christ had come into the world, the Lamb of God’s providing, that He might be glorified. Twice they are repeated, and the first time in connection with us, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John i. 29). He had come to glorify God, to annul the power of Satan, and to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. ix. 26). For some four thousand years, fallen man had exposed his utter weakness, gross wickedness, and complete inability to put himself right with God. He was now in extremity, and it was God’s opportunity. He intervened. He so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son (John iii. 16).

From the fall onwards, God caused to be shadowed forth what He Himself would eventually do. Let us ponder a little over three or four instances. Firstly, the two sons of Adam, fallen and sinful, approach God. Cain, the elder, brings the fruit of the accursed earth, produced through the sweat of

his brow, and is refused. Abel, the younger, *by faith* brings of the firstlings of the flock, and the fat thereof, and was accepted. It is a forcible picture at the very outset of the only ground of approach to God, namely, *by death*. Nothing but a divinely-approved sacrifice would do. There is no possible way to God but through Christ—*Christ who died*.

Later on, God tested Abraham and told him to offer his son, the promised seed, in whom all the promises concerning Christ centred. By faith Abraham offered him, God intervening at the last moment. As Abraham and Isaac went both of them together on the way, Isaac inquired of his father, “*Where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?*” “*My son,*” he replied, “*God shall provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering.*” A substitute for Isaac was found, and he was received from the dead in a figure (Heb. xi. 19). What a striking picture of what God would do later, of what He has now done! John’s words, “Behold the Lamb of God!” tell of the fulfilment of the prophetic utterance of Abraham: and Christ the Lamb of God, having died, was raised again.

Next, let us notice God’s ways with Israel, Abraham’s seed. In hard bondage in Egypt, God would deliver them and bring them into a better land. Plague after plague falls on the oppressors, the last the slaying of the first-born. But Israel, instructed beforehand of God through His servant Moses, slays the passover lamb, and the blood was sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of the houses. In accordance with the Lord’s faithful promise, “When I see

the blood, I will pass over you," not an Israelite was touched. The angel of the Lord with destroying sword passed through the land, but wherever the blood met his eye, that house was passed over, and death shut outside. Again, what a striking figure of God's blessed ways to-day! God has provided Himself a Lamb. And Jesus died; His blood was shed. It is ever under the holy eye of God, and there in all its infinite value and efficacy, on behalf of any and every sinner this day, Jew or Gentile, who simply confides therein. It is blessedly true as to the precious blood of Christ, for every sinner who reads these lines, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you.*" Are you, dear reader, *passed over*?

In Isaiah xl. 16, we find the prophet saying, "And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering." But in chapter liii. 7 he foretells the coming of the Lamb of God, saying, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." The mightiest and most magnificent trees of far-famed Lebanon suffice not for wood, nor all the beasts which dwell beneath their shadow for a burnt-offering which would meet the claims of and glorify a holy God. All would be utterly in vain to bring back to Him that glory of which Satan and man robbed Him at the fall. He only can provide the lamb. Hence, when the fulness of time was come, He sent His Son. He became man, and offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot to God. As John beholds Him, he says,



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“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” And again, “Behold the Lamb of God !” He points Him out at once as the One who should be both a sin-offering and also a burnt-offering. *He came to bear away the world's sin ; He came to glorify God.*

Perfect, matchless, sinless, holy, no priestly scrutiny can find a single blemish either on or in God's spotless Lamb. At every moment of His blessed pathway, the eyes of God could behold one Man in the midst of this sin-stricken world and see no sin. It was Jesus. Next God's unblemished Lamb was offered upon Calvary. *The whole fire of His holy judgment* came with devouring flame against *the Holy One*, and *He exhausted it*. Forsaken of God as the holy sin-bearer, He bore the judgment, emptied the bitter cup, finished the work of redemption, and bowed His blessed head in death ; His precious blood was shed, and He was buried in the grave. Lebanon and all its beasts sufficed not. But God had provided Himself a Lamb, and on the cross He died and glorified God.

There is not a question, dear reader, that your heart can raise that was not then raised, met, and answered for ever. You are exposed to death, the grave, judgment, and the lake of fire, but Christ extinguished the fire, bore the judgment, robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory ; for His sacrifice was perfect and infinite in its value, and it was not possible that God's holy One should see corruption. He rose again. The guarded cave could not

retain the holy One of God. Jesus lives. "I am he that liveth (or, the living One); and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hades and of death" (Rev. i. 18). He rose, He lives, He ascended, He is seated, He is triumphant, He is crowned, He is the delight of the heart of God, He is the theme of angelic praise, He is Head over all; He is a present, precious Saviour, poor sinner, *for you*. *What think ye of Christ?*

Hear the words of His servant Peter, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with *the precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter i. 18, 19). And he continues, "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, *who by him do believe in God*, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that *your faith and hope might be in God*." What think ye of Him? All the silver and gold in all the banks and safes of the world; all the coined or uncoined wealth of the universe; all the treasures of all the mines of the world, discovered or undiscovered, could not suffice to cancel a single sin of a single sinner before God. But what wealth could not do, *blood can*. The precious blood of Christ, the holy Lamb of God, redeems every one who trusts therein. Without its shedding there is no remission of sins (Heb. ix. 22); with it, there is plenteous redemption. "The blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sins" (1 John i. 7).

God sends His blessed testimony to you this day. See how wondrously it is all linked up with Christ; and every who believes Him comes now and for ever into the full benefit thereof. God foreordained the Lamb, God manifested Him, God judged Him at Calvary, God raised Him from the dead, God gave Him glory, *that our faith and hope might be in God. Without Christ* there is absolutely no hope, but for every one who believes God's testimony concerning Him there is; faith and hope go together. Believing God, I hope in Him, a sure and certain hope in Him who cannot fail. And the believer is pardoned and redeemed to God by Christ's blood. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. i. 7).

And all who are cleansed by the blood of the Lamb are sealed by the Holy Ghost for the day of redemption, when, with our body changed and fashioned like His own, we shall be with and like Christ for ever. Beholding Him, the Lamb of God, in the midst of the throne, the whole throng of the redeemed ones will sing the new and glorious song, “Thou art worthy, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood” (Rev. v. 9). Why should you not begin to praise Him now? The work is done, the Saviour is risen. The Lamb was foreordained, provided, offered, accepted—*the Lamb was slain*. Then why should not you in childlike simplicity rest in faith on these blessed wondrous facts, and sing with others of the redeemed?

E. H. C.

## THE DIGGED EAR.

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IN Psalm xl. we read: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou *digged*" (ver. 6, *margin*). This undoubtedly gives us the birth of Christ—His incarnation; for Paul in Heb. x. 5, quoting this Psalm, writes: "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but *a body* hast thou prepared me." Till He had a body He had been an Actor, a Creator, Lawgiver. When come to do God's will the *digged ear* is the sign of His becoming a *servant* to listen and obey.

In Isaiah i. 4 we read: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." That gives us the dependent character of His *life*, as a servant and listener to the Father, to get the right word for every weary soul He met.

In Exodus xxi. 6, we read of the Hebrew servant, a type of Jesus: "His master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever." This prefigures His *death*. He would not be parted from the objects of His love, and suffers in His body consequently.

Study these scriptures in this light. David describes *His birth*, Isaiah *His life*, Moses *His death*, and each in connection with the ear, the mark of a servant.

W. T. P. W.

## THE STEEL TRAP.

**I**N the battle of Zondorf, which took place between the Russians and Prussians in the summer of 1758, a young German soldier had both his legs shattered by grape shot. He had been a wild, reckless man; and now, as he lay in the hospital, tortured with pain, the sins of his youth set themselves in array before him, and far outweighed the pains of his body, grievous as these were.

The sin which above all others troubled his conscience, was one committed when a schoolboy against his master, which took place thus:—

In one of the high schools of Germany, discipline had for a season been so much neglected, that the boys would rise from their beds in the night, and perform all manner of mischief.

One of the masters, who had become aware of this, was in the habit of rising in the night in order to go about to watch them. By this means many a boy was caught, and afterwards duly punished.

One evening when it was late and dark this master was walking along the private path that led through the garden to his bedroom. Happily for him he had a stick in his hand, with which he felt his way; for, on coming to his chamber-door, his stick was suddenly caught and bruised by the snapping of an iron trap, which had been laid there in his way.

The master himself felt no other injury than that which resulted from fright. But as the motive with

which the trap had been set was evidently no other than that of laming his person, and thus preventing him from exercising his vigilant care over the morals of his boys, a diligent inquiry was instituted to discover the author of this wicked design ; but not the slightest clue to him could be obtained.

Some years afterwards this same teacher received a letter from a young man who had been one of his pupils at the time of this event, and had afterwards listed in a regiment of cavalry. After acknowledging that it was his hand that set the trap to catch his master, he proceeded thus :—

“For a long time I was delighted that, in defiance of all your endeavours to discover the guilty person, I was able to conceal from you my wickedness in the matter of the steel trap. I, a thoughtless youth, little imagined that the almighty power of Him from whom nothing is concealed, could call me to account in any place, and as soon as it should please Him. He has done it, and done it in a way as terrible to my conscience as it is just according to His righteous law. Instead of suffering me to break your legs as I had intended, God was able to preserve you, and has sent me that lot which I had prepared for you. He has righteously permitted both my legs to be shattered by a cannon shot ; and while I lie here helpless and in pain, I cannot help admiring the justice of the Divine retribution.”

Reader, are there not sins on your conscience too ? Are there not deeds done by you, the remembrance of which ever and anon rises up and looks you full in

the face? Are there not acts of unkindness, of untruth, of injustice, of uncleanness, of cruelty, of intemperance, which you have committed; some of them, probably, never known to any human soul but your own, and others forgotten long since by all save you? In the stillness of a sleepless night, in the compulsory inaction of sickness, in the feverish restlessness of pain, do not the sins of your youth sometimes recur to your memory with terrifying vividness, as if they had been committed but yesterday?

And if *you* do not remember, do you think *God* forgets? Has not He marked down, not only the acts, but the words, nay, the very thoughts of sin, that you have loved to cherish in secret, planning in imagination scenes and deeds of evil that you could not and dared not execute in reality? Was not God looking on, when you pursued those trains of thought with eager delight, and when you strove to make them realities to your imagination? Be sure He was. He neither slumbers nor sleeps; and nothing is or ever was present to your mind, of which He was not fully cognizant.

But perhaps you try to persuade yourself that as many of these things occurred a long while ago, they are past and gone, so as never to trouble you more. Many years have elapsed since the wicked youth laid the gin for his teacher, and he had seemed to escape with impunity; yet God found him at last, and made him to prove retributive justice. Even if in this life you escape the consequences of your sin, as many do, do not therefore flatter yourself that all is over. It

is in eternity, in the endless future, that God chiefly deals with sin. Now and then He puts forth His hand in this life just to show men that He sleeps not, and that He marks iniquity ; but, it is *after death* that judgment comes. Then will be the true inquisition for blood ; then will come the grand examination of the deeds done in the body, and then sin will meet its punishment in "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that never shall be quenched" (Mark ix. 43-49).

It may be, however, that you know very little of trouble on account of sin. You look back on your past life with considerable complacency, for you discern along its course no great blots, no foul deeds ; your walk has been upright, moral, amiable ; and you think that while God may and must deal in righteous anger with those gross, vile transgressors whom you read of in police reports and criminal trials, He can have nothing to say to you, except to reward you for your exemplary virtue.

Ah, but your confidence is a treacherous confidence ; dangerously treacherous ; more perilous than the terror which haunts the midnight bed of the openly profane and vicious. *He* knows something of *his* peril, but *you* do not. *He* is aware of *his* danger : *you* are in equal danger, and *know it not*. Conscience does not trouble you ; but that is because conscience is dull. If you would but bring your thoughts, and affections, and motives, to the word of God, to His stern, unyielding law, you would find that you too come short, infinitely short of it ; and therefore that its curses are launched against *you* as mercilessly as



against the murderer and adulterer. God demands the whole heart, the whole life, to be given to Him : you have not rendered this, nor anything like it ; *you know you have not* ; and therefore the curse of the broken law lies heavy upon you.

But I can tell you of One who was made a curse for us ; even Jesus the Son of God. He pitied poor, lost, self-ruined sinners, such as you, and came down to earth—God's representative to man—to magnify the holy law by a perfect human obedience, and then to offer up His life as an atonement for sinners' disobedience. He did this perfectly, spotlessly, unimpeachably. God declared himself well-pleased with what Jesus had done and suffered ; and has decreed that any sinner, of whatever degree or kind of guilt, may have a free and full pardon, an entire and final acquittance from all the guilt of sin, by merely believing on Jesus.

Now, since God makes no limitation in this His free offer, *you* need make none. Accept it without scruple, without doubting. God looks at Christ, and sees in Him such wondrous preciousness, that for His sake He can accept and bless every soul that comes through Him. There is no question about your own doings : the excellency and worthiness of Jesus is what God looks at. Do nothing ; do not attempt to do anything, but simply this :—Go to God, and tell Him that you are a lost sinner, but that you have heard that His dear Son has suffered for sin. Tell Him you will gladly accept salvation *wholly* on the ground of Christ's merits. I say "*wholly*," because if you

think, even in the smallest measure, to mingle your own deservings with it, you will surely be sent empty away.

Whether the poor soldier thus fled to Jesus I know not ; but this I know, that if *you* do, you shall surely find acceptance with God and eternal life.

P. H. G.

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## THE FLOOD AND ITS IMPORT.\*

(GENESIS vi.-viii.)

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**F**IRST of all we will look at the forty days connected with Noah and the flood. I am very well aware that there is a large amount of doubt with regard to this story, but there is no doubt in my mind. I share not the unbelief of the moment. I believe the Word of God. God is too good—too wise—to allow anything to appear in His Word that cannot be absolutely relied upon. Further, I think that if you have had difficulties as to God's story of the flood, you will show yourself to be a sensible person and truly wise, by letting your difficulties drop, and listening to God.

I shall show you, I hope, by God's help, from His Word, that whether the witnesses be patriarchs, prophets, evangelists, or apostles, and, better than all, the Son of God Himself, testimony as to the truth of what the book of Genesis says in relation to the flood

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\* Extracted from *The Forty Days of Scripture*—Noah's Forty Days.

is absolutely to be relied upon. Perhaps I might, ere I go into detail, seek to clear that point.

We will, first of all, hear what a patriarch has to say. I should like to know, how, deeply bedded in the book of Job, came a statement like this: "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job xxi. 13, 14). Now Job was a Gentile, not a Jew, but one whom God had enlightened, and and who lived certainly some eighteen hundred years after the flood. How came he to write after this sort if God had not given him light? Again, note how he describes the fate and the language of the wicked men of Noah's day. "Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?" Now, my friends, if you have never marked this way before, I pray you earnestly to mark it. I do not need to press this upon the Christian. I do not need to press upon the one who loves the Lord Jesus to mark this, but to the careless, heedless man of the world, who lives in pleasure and sin, I think the query Eliphaz puts here is very important. "Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with the flood: which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?" (chap. xxii. 15-17). They did not want God. They did not like God, and even though they heard of God, they would not have His warnings, uttered by Enoch's and Noah's lips.

We are not told in Genesis that they thus boldly and sinfully spoke. No, but we are told by Job. You rarely get the sole statement of the truth or the whole history of a man or of men and their ways in one book of Scripture. Its unity is manifest in the multiplicity of its writers, all moved by God. We get the motives that moved the men of the world told to us by Job, viz., *dislike* of God, while Paul tells us that Noah was “moved by *fear*” of Him (Heb. xi. 7). Job indicates God’s dealings with men, as he quotes, “Yet he filled their houses with good things : but the counsel of the wicked is far from me” (xxii. 18). Well now, there is the testimony of a patriarch.

Let us now go and hear what a prophet has to say. Turn to the book of Isaiah, and note the magnificent way that prophet of Israel speaks. He is unfolding the certain and glorious future of Israel—the rejected nation of God at this moment because of their refusal of their Messiah, whose murder was a national sin—and he describes in the most beautiful way, that as a consequence of the God-glorifying pathway of Christ, delineated in his fifty-third chapter, they are going to be brought into wonderful blessing by-and-by. “In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me : for, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth ; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness

shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee " (chap. liv. 8-10). That is to say, He bears witness by this prophet's pen, that, as "the waters of Noah" had most certainly rolled over "the world of ungodly," so they might depend upon it, that what He promised Israel should yet surely take place.

Now pass to the evangelists, and you will hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says with regard to the flood. He could make no mistakes. Our learned friends, the geologists of the twentieth century, try hard to prove that the story of the flood was a mistake, and not to be believed. The question is, Am I to believe God's Word, or man's inferences? You are wiser to heed God than to pin your faith to a man who has no certain knowledge of what he says, his statements and theories being only deductions from certain given facts, which, after all, he is as likely to misinterpret as his predecessors. We all know how one geological theory after another has arisen, proclaimed loudly its indisputable veracity, and within a century been relegated to the limbo of old wives' fables. You may depend upon it that when God has spoken all is true.

Now hear our Lord Jesus Christ, and note well that, if you give heed to the infidelity of the hour as regards the flood, you have, according to these unbelieving theories, the Lord Jesus Christ committed to a false testimony about a thing that did not happen. He describes what His coming again will be, in view of the Jew—how He their Messiah will come and re-

store His people. He says : " But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away ; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be " (Matt. xxiv. 37-39). He describes what the effect was of all Noah's preaching. I think it is wonderful the side-light that Scripture flings upon the scene. " They knew not. " Had they not had plenty of testimony ? Abundance. For a hundred and twenty years did Noah the " preacher of righteousness " indicate the coming storm, which Enoch too had predicted. They had plenty of testimony, but heeded it not. How dull were their ears ! They " knew not until the flood came, and took them all away, " is the Lord's affirmation regarding the unbelievers of that day. Then He adds, " So shall also the coming of the Son of man be. " And what is that ? People were taken unawares in Noah's day, and so will they be when He Himself returns to judge the earth as Son of man.

Now let us pass to the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, where I find the beloved apostle Paul giving us, by the Spirit of God, his comment upon the flood. The eleventh of Hebrews is a striking unfolding of the history of faith. It shows what faith does, rather than what it is. Abel shows us how to draw near to God, Enoch how to walk with God, and Noah how to be cleared from coming judgment. " By faith Noah,

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being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, 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 " (Heb. xi. 7). Noah was a wise man. God warned him of " things not seen as yet," and he heeded the warning. The world did not.

Possibly you may say—I cannot understand this. There are many things you do not understand, and yet you believe them—I mean things in daily life. Noah believed what he did not understand at first, and acted on his faith. Soon he got understanding. Faith understands because faith believes God. Where unbelief sees a difficulty faith does not. Noah believed, acted, and then understood. The two things that moved Noah were faith and fear.

If faith and fear do not move your soul, you will not meet Christ as a Saviour, and there will never be written about you, that God saved you. The reason, my friend, that you have never been saved is that you have never had that faith in the testimony of God which produced in your soul this sense—I had better reach the spot of safety.

Now, what is faith? It is the soul's reception of God's testimony, no matter what shape that testimony take. In Noah's case it was warning from God. And you are going to get your warning. As a sinner there is before you nothing but judgment, as real and deep and far more terrible than the tale that will pass before us to-night. But you may find a place of safety. You say, Where is it? You have not to

prepare an ark, because God has prepared one. Christ is the place of safety now. He bore all the judgment and the wrath, rose from the dead, and is now at God's right hand. What is the ark for you and me to-day? It is the knowledge of a risen Christ. It is our souls, moved by faith and fear, getting to know the blessedness of safety in Him. Just as Noah "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," so to-day the man who believes God is counted righteous. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 3).

But now one more witness. We will hear what the apostle Peter has to say. Just turn to his first epistle for a moment, where we read, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (chap. iii 18). Now, what could be more blessed than this? If I were to come and only tell you of "judgment to come," that would be a poor thing, if I could not also tell you of a Saviour. There is now for you a living Saviour, a loving Saviour, One who has died and risen again.

Observe how Peter weaves in the tale of the flood in connection with the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins." Whose sins? His own? God forbid, He had none. Well, you say, everybody's. I tell you what faith says, Mine. Faith is always individual. Each soul has to appropriate the truth for itself. "If *thou* shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord



Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, *thou* shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9). But here is the great and glorious truth, that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." To what end? "That he might bring us to God,"—there I get the very essence of the gospel,—“being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

It is not a dead Christ I tell you of to-night. I know that men have usually painted a dead Christ. Nor, again, is it Christ on the crucifix. That is not God's Christ. There is no such Christ. It is not now Christ on the cross, nor Christ in the grave; it is Christ on the throne—Christ living, Christ triumphant, Christ victorious. The blessed glory-crowned Man, who was once in death, bearing sins, having atoned for them, having annulled death and defeated Satan, rose from the dead, and there, at God's right hand, faith sees Him, a living Man and a loving Saviour. Can you say by faith, "Jesus is my Saviour"?

But further, the apostle says that Christ was "quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water" (iii. 19, 20). I know there is an idea current that Christ, when dead, went down and preached to the spirits in prison. Such an idea is, in my judgment, erroneous. It was the Spirit of Christ,

in Noah, which, ere the flood came, preached to those who are now in prison. And this thought is confirmed by another scripture, "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" (1 Pet. iv. 6).

What was waiting in Noah's day? Long-suffering. How did Noah preach? By the Spirit of Christ. What brought Christ from heaven? Love. What did He want? Your salvation. The same Christ that speaks in love by the gospel to men now, spoke in Noah's day; and although judgment was certain, He sent by the lips of His righteous servant a testimony which exactly suited the moment. What was the end of it? Nobody believed. Did Noah get a convert? No, he did not; still he went on with his ark and his preaching. What about the people that heard him? Do you think it will be any comfort for them in eternity that they might have been saved, but are not? You know better. Why did they miss salvation? Because they "some-time were disobedient" (iii. 20). Ah! they will not be disobedient by-and-by, because everybody must bow to Christ sooner or later.

How were the eight saved who escaped the flood? By that ark. You will say, It was very few. I admit it; but is not the fact of the fewness an awful testimony to the power of the world, and the unbelief of man's heart as regards judgment? A man came to Jesus in His day and said, "Are there few

that be saved?" Let me ask you this, Are you among the few? Well, you say, are you? Yes, by the grace of God I am, or I could not stand here and tell you of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ and present salvation. Do you know what the Lord said to that man? "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke xiii. 23, 24). You must get in individually. That is the point, and I say to you, See to it that you personally get Christ.

But the fact of some being saved from the flood is not the only testimony that Peter gives. When I come to the next chapter I find this, "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (1 Pet. iv. 5). The moment is coming when you must meet the Lord Jesus Christ, and you must give account to Him. "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Who were they? The antediluvians. They heard a suited gospel in their day. Judgment was coming, and there was a place of safety. Alas! they despised the testimony! What is the testimony to-day? Judgment is coming, deeper than the judgment of that day; but salvation is preached, and there is a place of safety. It is to be *in* Christ. Many persons have thought they were all right because they have what they call "joined the church." But if you have not been born again, if you have not been brought to know your sins forgiven, if you have not trusted

Jesus as your Saviour, take care lest you repeat antediluvian history. What was God's object with men in Noah's day? That they might "live according to God in the spirit" (1 Pet. iv. 6). Men declined His proffered grace, and perished. Imitate them not.

W. T. P. W.

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## SUBMARINE A1 AND ITS WARNING VOICE.

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"**T**HREE seconds only of miscalculation and the Submarine was sunk and nine valuable lives sacrificed!"

Such was the comment, when the First Lord of the Admiralty stated, "I think I can indicate with tolerable accuracy how the accident happened to Submarine A1.

"In the first place, the instrument for scanning the horizon can only be used to look in one direction at one time, and thus, whilst an eager look-out was being maintained for the ship of the supposed enemy in this one direction, an unlooked-for enemy crept up behind in the shape of the Liner.

"Secondly, when at last the Liner was discovered, only five seconds were available for the officer in charge to decide on his course of action to avoid a collision. He decided to dive under the Liner, but this decision was too late.

"Thirdly, only three seconds more time were needed to have avoided the collision altogether."

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The news of the loss of Submarine A1 came as a horrible shock to every right-minded person. And yet still more gigantic disasters occur daily in our very midst. Are not men and women with great eagerness occupied with the things seen and temporal, whilst at the same time they are all oblivious of the enemy creeping up behind, who, with his icy hand, will lay hold on them and hurl them into an unsaved sinner's eternity.

The blessed God would have us scan behind and before, below and above: behind, our sinful past; before, an eternity of bliss or woe; below, a hell to be shunned; and above, a heaven to be secured.

Friendly Reader, bear with me a moment. Let us together scan the whole horizon. What do we see? Men and women, youths and maidens, boys and girls; like gaudy flowers, they open to the sun, then droop, fade, die, sink into the earth, and they are gone for ever from the moving shifting scenes of earth and time. Gone! Where? And you are going, and I am going—going where?

Oh! do, as you value life, and love both liberty and joy, do think for one moment; *do look all around*. The world entices you, sin hardens you, Satan blinds you; but stop just for one moment further and look *up!* God in His grace has opened a bright heaven for you to look right in and there see Jesus, "once made lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." He beckons you to come to Him, to trust in Him. He died, He lives "that he might deliver you from this present evil

world" and bring you into His bright world of eternal glory.

Dare we look down—down into the bottomless pit, the place prepared for the devil and his angels, not for man? Remember, however, that the broad road of sin and folly leads to and ends in death and destruction. Stop, then, stop! I pray you.

But then notice, it is said that the officer in charge of Submarine A1 had five seconds of time to decide on his course, and his decision fixed his doom.

God has given you in His mercy years and years to decide. His long-suffering has been so great, and yet you have not decided! At any moment, that heart of yours may cease its beating; at any moment, reason may quit her throne; at any moment, grim death, like the lightning flash, may lay hold of you as its prey. And then it will be all too late to decide.

Do, I pray you, heed the warning voice now, and decide for Christ, Heaven, and Glory.

Submarine A1 and its gallant crew might have been alive and well to-day if only they could have avoided the danger by three seconds more of precious—oh, how precious!—time.

"A kingdom for a moment more of time," said a dying queen. How we cling to blessings we have toyed with, when they are being snatched from our enfeebled grasp.

The three seconds which the men of Submarine A1 needed, never were given them, and they went down to a watery grave, and, mourned by a nation, passed into eternity.

**"THERE'S NO HYPOCRISY WITH ME!" 159**

Heaven and earth, angels and demons, saints and sinners, await the moment when "there shall be time (delay) no longer" (Rev. x. 6).

To those who through grace have looked around and within, and have taken their true place as sinners in time's little day, a long unending eternity will be bliss indeed—a day without a night.

But to those who have missed the day of opportunity, that long night will begin with all its untold horrors, never to end.

Again we say in closing, Do let the disaster of Submarine A1 and the fate of its human freight speak to you. It has spoken to me. It is God's voice saying to you, as to Israel of old, "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?"

G. W. H.

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**"THERE'S NO HYPOCRISY WITH ME!"**

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**H**OW slow we all are to get at the truth concerning ourselves! The leading proposition of one of the old philosophers was, "*Know thyself.*" What he may have meant by this, is not precisely stated in his doctrines; but, followed to its full extent, it signifies the knowledge of an inward spring of deception that is really inconceivable.

Self—that is what I am as fallen and sinful—is a

fountainhead of evil. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately (or incurably) wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9); and again, "Our old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. iv. 22). What could be more condemnatory of our nature as children of a fallen head? And yet, when, under divine teaching, self is known, how absolutely true!

The sentence at the head of this paper was the utterance of a young man who had just told me that he attended the church of a certain preacher, but that he had never become a member. To have done so would have committed him unequivocally to the position of a professing Christian, and candidly he admitted that he was not that. His confessing of Christ went as far as attendance on the preaching, but no further. He would not become a member without being truly a Christian. That sounded well, and no doubt he plumed himself on his very clean-cut attitude, feeling that there was no hypocrisy in him!

He seemed to think that no responsibility attached to him as an attender, whilst much would rest upon him as a member. The distinction was fine. A person who attends regularly the preaching of the Word, and to do so is right, is not outwardly dissimilar from one whose name is enrolled on the list of members. The outward and public difference is very small. And let it be clearly understood that neither the mere hearing, nor the enrolment of the name on the list, constitutes the true Christian. No! The new birth is for all an absolute necessity; but



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to be a hearer carries respectability, and we all appreciate a good name. That is clear.

To be a thorough out-and-out follower of Christ, involves suffering for His Name. That no one likes naturally. His cross is a reproach. Now, it was to avoid this that my young friend declined becoming a member.

And yet, forsooth, he was no hypocrite! Poor lad, he was utterly deceived! Satan will give you any amount of religion so long as you avoid the path of true confession. He blinds the minds of them that believe not. They know not what they are.

When self is known, as it should be, then you cease to boast of any merit whatever. You have discovered that your heart is capable of any evil—that it can deceive you in a thousand ways; and therefore you admit that you may be false and deceitful and hypocritical—may be and are.

It is an awful discovery is this heart, this self of ours! Nothing more humbling or necessary; but then having got to the bottom and owned total depravity, how unspeakably blessed to see salvation in Christ! He has, in the cross, gone to the depths. He was made sin for us, and is thus the divine and perfect answer to all we had done, and all we were—our sins and our sin; so that as believers we are cleared and made free to serve and follow Him.

Reader, be thoroughly committed to Christ!

J. W. S.

## A SUDDEN CALL!

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**H**E was a young man, and quite meant to enjoy life to the full. Strong, healthy, and of good physique, he attended a ball on the Friday, went to his work as a woodcutter on Saturday, little dreaming that it would be for the last time.

Following the engine which was dragging trees out of the wood, he was struck in a vital spot by a log and knocked to the ground. Examined and removed to the infirmary of a neighbouring town, the doctor saw at once that the end was not far distant. He passed away early on the Tuesday following.

“How sudden!” you say. “Yes, very sudden,” we re-echo; “and a ball is not a good preparation for eternity.” Whether this young man gave any evidence of a change of heart before he passed away, I know not; but let me ask you, dear reader, “Had it been you, where would you now be?” Do not shirk the question; look it squarely in the face, and answer it to the God with whom we have to do.

“Accidents will happen,” we often say, and you may be the next victim. Who knows? Should it prove fatal, what about your immortal soul? No doubt this young man had heard the gospel often, but, like many others, treated it lightly. God gave him time and opportunity to accept His salvation for three days before he passed away. You may not get so long. Don’t you think it would be better for you

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to close with God's Christ in health and strength, rather than defer the salvation of your precious soul to a dying bed, which perhaps you may never have ?

After the funeral of that young man, the writer heard the following remark : " So you have seen the last of him, Jack ? "

" Yes," said Jack ; " it is all over with him now. "

The last of him ! All over now ! So men would try to persuade themselves, forgetting that after death comes the judgment.

It may be all over in regard to having to do with men, but what about meeting God ? Are you ready for that, dear reader ?

Vain is the delusion of Satan to get men to think that death is an eternal sleep. Your never-dying soul must live on throughout eternity, either in glory with Christ, or in the horrors of eternal darkness with the one who is alluring men on to destruction. The latter need not be : God's mighty, infinite, and eternal love has been made known in the death of Christ, and that same death declares His righteousness and provides a shelter for the vilest sinner who will avail himself of it.

The last grains in the sand-glass of time are fast falling, the day of grace will soon be over, the door of mercy for ever shut, and you may find yourself outside, having missed the golden opportunities of a lifetime. This need not be. If you trust Jesus now, you will be ready to enter the golden gates of the Father's house. Oh, come to Jesus now ! R. P.

## THE HISTORY OF SCRIPTURE.

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**I**N the book of Genesis we have the record of seven men who obtained a good report through faith (see Heb. xi. 1-22). These men lived before God gave any Holy Scriptures to His people, so they had to depend for instruction on divine revelation, given either by Jehovah appearing or calling out of heaven, or by angels or dreams.

In the book of Exodus, God gave Moses communications which He instructed him to write in a book (see Ex. xvii. 14, xxiv. 4, xxxiv. 27; Deut. xxviii. 58, xxxi. 24).

Thus Moses was the first man to write God's records, and his five books cover an immense area of God's dealings with mankind. They begin with God's ways in creation, and His estimate of it before man was created, and end with the yet future blessing of Israel. The Lord Jesus commented on Moses' writings, "he wrote of me," and "if ye believe not his writings, how can ye believe my words?" (John v. 47). Moses was faithful in God's house (see Numb. xii. 7), and so we can trust all he wrote, and profit by his faithful records given by the Holy Spirit.

Concerning the book of the law which was to guide Israel in the ways of the Lord, it is very noticeable where it was ordered to be kept. We read: "Take this book of the law, and put it in the

side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God" (Deut. xxxi. 26).

Now the ark was a figure of Christ, and the book had to be kept in contact with it—a striking figure of how the Scriptures must be connected with Christ Jesus (see 2 Tim. iii. 15). Apart from faith in Christ Jesus they are not much understood.

Joshua was the first man who was shown the importance of the book. We read: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua i. 8). This is an important lesson for God's people to-day, and the judgment-seat of Christ will disclose how far their service has been regulated by subjection to the Holy Scriptures.

Samuel wrote in a book and laid it up before the Lord (1 Sam. x. 25), showing the importance of every inspired writing.

The king in Israel was to write for himself a copy of the law, as we read: "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God" (Deut. xvii. 18).

David was the first king to whom God gave fresh communications, and he wrote most of the Psalms.

His son Solomon, too, was a writer ; King Hezekiah likewise (comp. 2 Chron. xxxv. 4; Isa. xxxviii. 9). In King Josiah's day, we read, "Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses . . . and Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan . . . and Shaphan carried the book to the king . . . and Shaphan read it before the king" (2 Chron. xxxiv. 14-18). How long the knowledge of the book had been lost we do not read, but anyhow so long that its contents were unknown to Josiah until Shaphan the scribe read them to him. In this country most persons have a Bible in their houses, but, alas ! its true teaching seems to be almost as unknown as in the days of Josiah.

If we pass on to the prophets who were instructed to write their messages in order to preserve them for the then future time, all of them regarded what had already been written by former writers, and every fresh revelation was consistent with what had gone before, plainly showing the origin of prophecy of Scripture, and how one mind gave it all. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). Each writer based his statements on the history of either persons or places recorded by former writers, while he himself opened up things yet to come, so far as the Holy Spirit was pleased to give him at the particular time.

The last of the Old Testament prophets was John the Baptist. He was not a writer, but he confirmed

what was written by refusing to apply Malachi iv. 5 to himself, but acknowledging Isaiah xl. 3 had reference to him and to his message (see John i. 21-23).

When Jesus came as the One who was full of grace and truth, He recognised the importance of all the light and truth God had previously given through His prophets, and frequently alluded to what they had said, quoting their sayings as having full authority. He pointed out that the Scriptures testified of Himself (John v. 39), and after His resurrection He expounded to His disciples from the Scriptures things concerning Himself, and further said that "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me. . . . Then opened He their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 27, 45).

Jesus thus most blessedly confirmed every part of the Old Testament, and by His own teachings gave additional light, which only a Divine Person could have imparted, as One who was in the bosom of the Father while He was here on earth (see John i. 18). When He had ascended up where he was before His incarnation, He sent down the Holy Spirit, through whom we have a fresh class of writings. The Old Testament writers spoke of the coming of Christ and the work which He should accomplish; while the Apostles of the New Testament wrote of the same blessed Person as having died, risen, and ascended, and also unfolded the effect of all He had done, as

associating all believers with Christ where He now is. These New Testament writers all quoted from the Old Testament writers, showing the one Spirit permeating every part of inspired writing. Thus the Old and New Testament writings are one whole, and are so woven together that it is impossible to separate any portion without destroying the whole. The enemy of our souls knows this, and works craftily by employing professing Christians, under the name of higher critics, to do his dreadful work of shaking the faith of simple believers.

Bold infidels have for many years rejected the whole of the Scriptures, denying them to be Divinely inspired; so believers do not listen to them. But, alas! those who attack parts of Scripture, under the show of learning, are not so readily avoided, and many believers who were once bright in their souls have fallen under this snare of the devil. Many such are never recovered in this world. However, their breakdown does not affect the faithfulness of the Holy Spirit to remain in them, and the Lord's faithfulness to come and claim them as His own, by virtue of His death and resurrection.

G. W. GY.

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FRAGMENT. — The Bible, though composed of sixty-six parts, is one unique whole. In the Old Testament you have in the historical books the *figures*, and in the Psalms the *feelings*, of Christ presented. In the New Testament you have in the Gospels the *facts* of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and in the Epistles the *fruits* thereof.

W. T. P. W.



**FIRE ! FIRE !**

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**FIRE ! FIRE !**

**T**HE cry of "Fire!" in the still hours of the night is a fearful sound, that sends a thrill through the heart of every one who hears it. Many, who are aroused by it, rush out into the street, to be assured that their own lives and property are safe, and, if so, that they may, if possible, save those of their neighbours. Often as this cry is heard in our great cities, it is never heard with indifference.

In the beginning of August 1855 a fire broke out in London in the house of a publican, which was not subdued till two lives had been sacrificed. Ere the inmates could be awakened, the flames had taken possession of the staircase, and made escape by its means impossible ; and before any effectual help could arrive, the house was one mass of fire. The conductors of the escapes hearing that two persons, Mrs T—— and her little daughter, were in the house, ascended their machines, but were compelled to make a precipitate retreat. Before this, however, the poor woman had had a chance of life, which she had thrown away.

A Christian man that night happened to be sitting reading till a late hour, when, on hearing the awful cry, he rushed into the street, and in a few moments stood before the burning house. The scene he thus described to me :—

"The flames were pouring terrifically from every

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outlet. No fire-escapes had yet arrived; but, observing a female at one of the windows, screaming for assistance, we procured a ladder: while a man was ascending it broke; he fell to the ground, much injured, and thus this attempt to save her failed. There was now no hope for the poor creature, except in throwing herself out of the window. We therefore collected underneath, and entreated her, in the most urgent manner, to cast herself down upon us, promising we would break her fall, and prevent her touching the ground. But it was all to no purpose. She could not summon confidence enough to trust herself in our arms; but, suddenly rushing back into the apartment, became a prey to the flames, which were fast spreading around her.

“After the engines had arrived and the fire was got under, the body was found burned and charred in a dreadful manner.

“‘What a pity,’ said a man in the crowd, as the body was conveyed away in a shell, ‘that the woman did not take our advice and throw herself out! She would now have been alive.’

“‘Yet,’ I observed, ‘just such is the case with those who lose their souls. They have not confidence sufficient in the Lord Jesus Christ to lead them to throw themselves upon Him for salvation, and so they perish everlastingly in their sins.’”

The cry of “Fire!” will one day be heard on a more extended scale. This earth and all its works shall be burned up. God has said it. It is true. Where shall we be in that day?

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In fact, the world is even now in the condition of that public-house on the night of the fire. Mankind are asleep ; they are like those who go to their beds thinking of no danger, and hoping to rise again in the morning to the cares and enjoyments of the world. Destruction is around them, and they know it not. The very smoke and fire that will soon consume them cause them to sleep more heavily. Death is in the world ; the sentence has passed on all ; there is no way of escape by our own efforts,—no staircase leading to heaven, which we can reach by any labours of our own ; every avenue is closed.

Reader, are you asleep ? Are you dreaming in security of the joys of future years, of the success of your speculations, of the honours of the world, or even of a heaven to be obtained by your own virtues, prayers, and righteousness ? If so, awake ! hear the cry of “Fire !” Your house is in flames : there is no escape ; the stairs are burned ; the fireman cannot reach you : you are without hope as to yourself and your resources.

But on firm ground stands One who says to you, “There is hope in Me. Leave the burning house ; trust in Me ; throw yourself into My arms ; I will answer for your safety ; I will assuredly save you.”

This friend is Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. Will you accept His invitation ? It is a universal invitation. He invites all who will, to come.

But all do not come. And why is this ? It is because they have not faith. The poor publican’s wife had no faith in the offers of the men on the

pavement ; she could not trust herself to them. Thus it is with many a poor sinner who fears impending judgment.

How many pass through life careless, happy, thoughtless ! These are like the poor woman. While she slept, perhaps dreaming of her customers ; of how much beer she had sold yesterday ; of how much she would sell to-morrow ; of the bill she owed the brewer ; and of the bad debts that were chalked up on the back of her door against poor labourers and artisans, who had begged credit for a pot of porter for which they could not pay, the fire was closing around her, and she knew it not. Such things keep the sinner's mind engaged, and indispose him to awake to the report of the "fire that never shall be quenched." He is asleep ; he does not wish to be awakened. He enjoys life ; he does not like to think of eternity. He will not believe he is in any danger ; he does not choose to leave his comfortable repose. Thus many perish, and are never awakened till they find themselves in the flames of hell.

But there are others who receive a further warning. They awake to the sense of their danger ; perhaps they hear an awakening sermon, or they find themselves near to death : they are conscious that hell is opening to receive them. They no longer delude themselves into the belief of security : they no longer can say, "Peace ! peace !" But they see destruction coming : they say, "Save us from the wrath of the Lamb ; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ?" Like

poor Mrs T——, they look around and see nothing but flames; they look to the staircase and the window, and see no hope, no ladder, no stairs.

A Christian friend comes to them, saying, "Jesus is waiting to bless you. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." "I cannot, I cannot," they cry. "How can I believe He will save one who is so vile? Oh, I shall go to hell! Oh that I could repent! that I could believe!" And with these vain cries on their lips, and terror in their hearts, thousands upon thousands perish. And why? Simply because they have not faith in God's word,—in Jesus' power and willingness. They cannot feel assured that He will save them; they will not cast themselves on His love.

Reader, is this your case? Are you awake? Do you know that you are in the city of destruction? Are you anxious to flee from the wrath to come? Do you desire to escape the flames prepared for the devil and his angels? Then COME TO JESUS.

Your present repentance, your cries, your fears, will do you no good, unless you have faith to cast yourself wholly and unreservedly on His mercy; unless you believe also that He is willing to receive all who come unto Him, and that He will place them in safety. All He asks of the poor sinner who is awake to his danger, and desires to escape from it, is to cast himself on Him, to throw himself into the arms of His love. So far from rejecting you, or expecting anything more from you before He receives you, it will be the delight of His heart to welcome you. All

heaven will ring with acclamations of joy at the news of your escape. The Good Shepherd will take you in His arms, and carry you safe to heaven.

P. H. G.

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## NO AMENDMENT.

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**I**N the healing by the Son of God of suffering men, as recorded in Scripture, one often finds striking figures of the gospel. A narrative at the end of John iv. is specially interesting and instructive for the Gentile. A certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum, went to Jesus, who had come out of Judæa to Cana of Galilee, and besought Him that He would come down and *heal* his son, for he was *at the point of death*.

The position and state of this youth illustrate forcibly the moral condition of man in general. He is of noble origin. He was originally created in the image and likeness of the Lord God. But he is sick—very sick; he is sick through sin. It is a grievous malady, and it has mastered him. His whole moral being is affected by it. It is a high fever; man's world is one of ceaseless restlessness, thirst, and excitement, and there is no peace. Man is a wreck; sin with its attendant weakness and suffering abounds; moreover, the sinner is *at the point of death*. And the son of a nobleman can no more

escape than the son of a pauper from it, and from the judgment beyond (Heb. ix. 27).

All are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, born of a fallen race, and subject to death as soon as they are born. Babes of a day die as well as old men of a century. From his birth onwards man is exposed to death. The wages of sin are his due; and any one may receive his wages at any moment of his short life. He is always at the point of death. Men sport and play, and dance and sing, but the fact remains, however they may seek to divest their minds of the thought, death is here, and may summon them at any unwished-for moment.

Jesus replied to the nobleman, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." But the dawn of faith was in that nobleman's heart. It was but little that he knew, but there was confidence in Jesus. There was the inward feeling that He and He only could help him in that moment of deep and painful distress. The loved one was dying; the father's heart yearned over him. The help of man was vain. Probably, like others in like circumstances, he had turned to Capernaum doctors for the medical aid of the day; nevertheless, the fever ran its course, and the patient was at the point of death. One only could intervene in this dire extremity. That One was near. The nobleman's heart-felt hope was in Him. "Sir," said he to the Lord, "come down ere my child die."

"Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; *thy son liveth*. And the man believed the word that Jesus

had spoken unto him, and he went his way." The word of Jesus was a word of power. It carried conviction to His suppliant. Without another word he left Him to return to his son. But the heart of man is slow to enter into the perfect ways of God, slow to apprehend the perfection of the blessing pronounced and administered. "As he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth." They repeat the very words he had heard. He receives from the lips of his servants the full confirmation of the words which fell with such solace to his heart from the lips of Jesus. But as yet he has not realised their full force. Looking at the healing of his child from a natural standpoint, he inquired of the servants the hour when *he began to amend*? *To amend!* There was no amendment. It was a sudden and a complete cure. It took no time. Divine power had gone forth with the word of Jesus, the Son of God, at Cana of Galilee, and healed at once the son of the nobleman at Capernaum. It was no gradual amendment, no amelioration of the malady until he was healed, but he who was at the point of death *lived*. "Yesterday," said the servants, "at the seventh hour (the very moment when Jesus spake the word) *the fever left him*" (John iv. 52).

This wonderful miracle sets forth most blessedly how the Son of God heals poor perishing sinners to-day. Sin reigns in our mortal flesh, and it is an incurable malady as far as man is concerned. No human remedy whatever, whether moral or religious,



can either ameliorate or eradicate it. All kinds of efforts have been, and are still, made to improve man after the flesh. But although you may improve him outwardly by civilisation and religion, &c., for this world, all remedies are utterly useless and vain to improve him for God and the unseen world. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and remains flesh till man's last breath on earth. He is a long way past amendment. This has been abundantly proved both without and with law. None but Christ can heal, and He heals perfectly. He does not mitigate the fever—sin,—but banishes its attack. When He speaks, He speaks with power and authority, and banishes for ever the fever from the objects of His mercy and grace. He Himself bore the judgment of sin (2 Cor. v. 21), and has all power to deliver the sinner from its mastery. He does not deliver any from its *presence* till He takes them home to Himself (hence God's gracious provision for His own in the advocacy of Christ and the confession of our sins), but He can and does set many *completely free from its mastery*.

*At the seventh hour the fever left him.* A blessed hour that! Surely the introduction of the seventh hour should speak to us. Seven is the well-known perfect number. Happy indeed is that poor sinner who at the seventh hour hears the Master's voice, and is delivered from the awful power of sin. That man has done with death; he is passed from death unto life. "Thy son liveth," were words of deep joy and consolation for the nobleman; it was

health, rest, strength, liberty, life for the one who had been at the point of death. What must have been the astonishment of these servants, watching anxiously around that sick bed, and dreading that each moment the fever-tossed patient would be stretched lifeless before their eyes, when suddenly, without the slightest sign of amendment, he rose from his couch hale, hearty, and strong, and every trace of sickness departed from him! What a Saviour Jesus is!

And "Verily, verily, I say unto you," are His precious words to every believer on Him, the Son, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). Moreover, the child for whom the father pleaded was henceforth a living son. May we not gather confirmation therefrom of that which we learn elsewhere that the healed soul is a son, who was once perishing in sin, but is now before the face of God in life for ever.

The Son of God was at Cana, the One who could say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John xiv. 6). The One who could and did overcome death, rob it of its sting, and bring life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel. The nobleman's son was delivered from fever and death, and had a fresh start in health and life. Dear reader, the same blessings may become yours spiritually to-day. The same blessed One is in glory to-day, from whence He speaks in power to souls. All who hear Him

live. "The hour is coming," said He, "and now is, when the dead (that is, morally in sin) shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (John v. 25). Have *you* heard His voice?

Now, the father knew that it was the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, "Thy son liveth;" and we read, "Himself believed and his whole house." The father knew. He was thoroughly convinced. His son was healed in body; and he and all his were healed in soul. The whole Galilean household believed. It was a blessed sample of that which was declared later by Paul, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). God, in grace, links the house with the head. Let every believer who has a household hold fast to that. You will surely not regret it. "Himself believed and his whole house." How about you and yours? The world is in a great fever of sin, with all the attendant restlessness, thirst, excitement, and lack of peace and satisfaction; death reigns; the grave is just waiting for the sinner. And there is no way of amendment for God. But the Son, who was and is life, says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47). And that believer is saved from its power and sway, and is passed from death unto life.

"Oh, what a Saviour—that He died for me!  
From condemnation He hath made me free;  
'He that believeth on the Son,' saith He,  
'Hath everlasting life.'"

E. H. C.

**"I SHALL NEVER BE TIRED OF HIM."**

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**W**HILE crossing the North Channel from Belfast to Ardrossan, some time since, I observed an old Scotch lady sitting in the bow of the vessel, her plaid closely wrapped around her. I offered her a gospel book, which was readily accepted. The title was scarcely read, when she sprang to her feet, held out her hand, and taking mine with a warm grasp said, "Do you then know *my Saviour?*"

"Thank God! I do," was my response; adding, "and how long have you known Him?"

"It is over eighteen years since He found me," she replied.

"But are you sure you are quite safe for eternity?" I asked.

"Quite safe, He will never fail," was her happy answer; and straightening herself as well as her age would allow, she added:

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

Seeking to hear more of this bold testimony, I inquired, "You have known the Lord Jesus Christ eighteen long years; have you never become tired of Him?"

I shall not easily forget her look of triumphant joy as she replied, with a ring of certainty in her voice, "Tired of Him? I shall **NEVER** be tired of Him." Then out of a full heart she told us what that glorious

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Person was to her : how He had stood by her—a true Friend—when all other friends had failed ; and how she delighted to meet together with those who love Him, to remember Him.

That dear saint of God had learned, my reader, what it is your privilege to know. She had discovered in Christ one who had met all her need and had filled her heart.

Can you speak with similar happy assurance of having found SECURITY and SATISFACTION in the Lord Jesus Christ ?

Consider the matter seriously ! You can never be truly happy until you know your future is secured and your heart is satisfied ; and if you have not found these blessings in Christ, it is certain that you will not find them outside of Him, for He is the only Person in the universe of God who can make you happy. “Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved.”

He has by His death and resurrection secured a place of eternal joy, where by the knowledge of Himself He will for ever fill and satisfy the hearts of those who put their trust in Him.

May you, dear reader, make His acquaintance Now, and henceforth, throughout all Eternity, you will NEVER be tired of HIM.

“And till I meet Thee in that glory bright,  
And when I walk with Thee in robe of white,  
O Lord, I'll find my sweet, my full delight,  
In Thee !”

F. S. MH.

## “THE WORK OF GOD!”

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**Y**ES, “the work of God!” What is it? What is that one thing which can be called *par excellence* the work of God? An answer is given fully and clearly to the question, “What shall we do that we might work the works of God?”

But, first, think of any one asking such a question! Think of a poor faulty man undertaking to do these works! How utterly ignorant, at least, of his own moral weakness on the one hand, and of the infinite demand of God on the other. Think of fallen man doing the works of God!

And yet this very question was asked by not a few at a time when the Lord was speaking of that life which the Son of man should give, “for him hath God the Father sealed” (see John vi. 27). The immediate query was, “What shall we do?”

Do? Yes! That comes naturally! We like to *do* something—anything—everything! From Sinai, and its Law, to our own day, in one form or another, we are ready to undertake any task and fulfil any requirement which God may see fit to enforce. Man has not, nor ever had, an idea of his own spiritual impotence.

The Lord spoke of life given—they, of works to be done! How different!

No doubt He had also said, “Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat that endureth

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unto everlasting life, which," He graciously added, "the Son of man shall give unto you;" but they, failing to catch the point of *gift*, fastened upon the word "*labour*," and at once asked what they should do! What a difference there is between receiving a *gift* and doing a *work*! How blessed to receive God's gift! How impossible to meet His smallest demand!

An honest attempt at the latter will speedily bring the sincere soul into a state of misery (see Romans vii.). And what was the Lord's answer?

"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

1st. "*That ye believe*;" not a trace of doing, or of working, or of accomplishing anything at all!

2. "*On him*"—the person presented as the perfect object of faith—on whom faith rests!

3. "*Whom he hath sent*"—the Son, coming from God, yea, from the very bosom of the Father, and possessing rightly all His love!

To do this is to do *the work of God*! It is the recognition of the person of the Son of God; and the faith that, through grace, does this, does the work of God. To be right there, is to be right in all else. "He that honoureth the Son honoureth the Father," and *the work of God*, as accomplished by man, resolves itself into a true and God-given appreciation of His Son, the Giver of "everlasting life."

J. W. S.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

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“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.”—Ps. lxvi. 16.

**I**T is twenty-five years since He did it, and it will never be forgotten. “Did what?” asks the reader. Saved the man who pens these lines.

“But why make so much fuss about it?” Not fuss, dear friend. What God did then was so tremendously real, and had such glorious results, that it were impossible to forget it.

See that man! He is drowning; twice he has sunk, and for the last time he rises, when a strong swimmer plunges in and rescues him. He never forgets it, and he never tires speaking of the man who did it.

Reader! I was sinking; God in His infinite mercy opened my eyes to the fact, and rescued me. A servant of the Lord was preaching from the solemn story of the flood. He spoke of man’s wickedness and God’s righteousness; he told us of the love that provided the ark, a way of escape from the coming judgment. He then told us of “judgment to come,” presented Jesus as the only Saviour, and pleaded with us to trust Him. That night a beloved and godly mother’s prayers were answered, and I rejoiced in the knowledge of God’s salvation.

Perhaps some one says, “There is nothing remarkable in that; we have read and heard far more thrilling tales.” That may be, friend; but you never



heard a more thrilling story than that of the *love* that saved me. Every conversion is remarkable. What could be more remarkable than that those who are steeped in sin, in the bondage of Satan, and travelling at express speed to hell, should be saved, and that by the very God against whom they had sinned?

In the twenty-second Psalm we read—prophetically—of the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ; we get a wonderful view of Calvary; we learn what it meant for Jesus to take the sinner's place, when He was forsaken of God. Reader, He suffered in the distance and the darkness, that you and I might see the light and taste the nearness and joy of the Father's presence and the Father's love.

At the close of the Psalm we get a picture of Christ in resurrection; there is a ring of triumph, and it is said, "They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that *He hath done this*" (Ps. xxii. 31). Friend! it is our unspeakable privilege to tell you what He has done. He has died for sinners. He has shed His precious blood to redeem them. He has met every claim of God, He has laid the basis whereby God can be "just, yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26).

The one who has benefited by His death delights, in the words of our text, to say to others, "Come and hear what *He hath done for my soul*." My sins are forgiven, my conscience is purged, my soul is saved, my heart is supremely happy. All the bless-

ing that God has to bestow is ours, and *He has done it*. His grace has preserved us these five-and-twenty years; crooked may have been our ways, unchanging have His been; feeble our love, unbounded His. We give Him glory now, we shall praise Him for ever and ever.

In Ecclesiastes we read, "I know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever" (Eccles. iii. 14). The work accomplished at Calvary will stand to all eternity. What He has done for our soul will endure to the ages of ages.

Reader! are you saved? If so, Hallelujah! you are saved for ever. Live for Jesus now, and soon it will be yours in actuality to live with Him where He is. If you are not saved, you are lost: death is ahead of you, eternity looms near; hell must be your awful portion. Oh, dear reader! wake up! *wake up!! WAKE UP!!!* Just as you are, in your sins, your ruin, your need—come to Jesus just right away. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31).

"Love it was, and deepest pity,  
Brought Him from His glory down,  
On the cross to bear my judgment  
And the thorny crown.  
Deep His anguish, full His sorrow,  
Ere from Him the life-blood flowed,  
Which to God, once and for ever,  
Paid the debt I owed."

W. B. D.

## LAW AND ITS VALUE.\*

WHAT is the value of the law? Scripture replies, "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound" (Rom. v. 20).

It came in to make manifest what man was. God knew what was in his heart, but he did not know.

The Lord had delivered Israel out of Egypt. He had broken the power of the enemy. God had brought them out of Egypt in absolute grace, and His grace led them on right up to the moment when the law was given. You will find their whole history recounted in the Psalms. In Psalm cv. you have their grace-history; it is nothing but goodness and grace, and is all about the Lord and what He did for them. When you read Psalm cvi. you learn what *they* did, how they grumbled and murmured, and how they disbelieved God.

And then what came out? Mercy. But in between that part of their history, when God brought them out of Egypt in pure grace, and the tale of His mercy, manifested when everything was lost through Israel's sin and idolatry, came the threefold giving of the law, in order that God might let man learn what was in his heart. For long I did not know what was in my heart, nor what was in God's heart. The greatest surprise that a man gets in this world,

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\* Extracted from "*The Forty Days of Scripture*"—Moses' Forty Days.

and which I got was this, that when I had sinned, and was far away from God, that God not only could save me, but would save me, and He has saved me. That was what was in His heart. It is a wonderful thing when a person learns that.

Now turn to Exodus xix. It gives us the record of the first giving of the law; and we will see how it came out. Now you know that in His nature God is love as well as light. God's love acts even though man has sinned. That is the way of grace. What is grace? Grace is love in activity after man has sinned. God is love, and God was love, go as far back into eternity as you can. Love is the nature of God. From Israel's start out of Egypt to Horeb there was nothing but pure sovereign grace on God's part right along the whole line. Now there comes another thing. Law is introduced. The apostle Paul distinctly says, "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man." Why? Because a righteous man does not need it. He is walking rightly. Who is the law made for? I am going to quote you Scripture in order that you may not misunderstand me. "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" (1 Tim. i. 9, 10).

The law came in, what to do? To make manifest

what man was. He did not know himself. But it did not put him right. Men were in utter ruin by nature and departure from God before the moment that the law came in, but "sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. v. 13). Again, the law brings in wrath, for it is written, "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. iv. 15). God did not give it with the view of justifying. He says distinctly, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. iii. 20). The object of the law then was not to justify. It was to make manifest where man was and what he was, that he might learn his own helpless ruin, and then turn to God to learn what He is. I believe the giving of the law was distinctly what I may call a retrograde action on the part of God. In the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I find God coming down and talking with these men in the most simple way possible. But when He raises with man the question of righteousness, He has to retire into thick darkness. Notice, the promise of God, which is pure grace, is one thing, and the law is quite another. The apostle Paul works that out in Galatians.

Now, what is promise? It is unconditional grace, though it may be measured by the extent of the promise. God had said to Abraham, "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen. xxii. 17). Moses had got hold of and remembered that promise, for when God

says, after Israel's sin of the golden calf, "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I *will make of thee a great nation*" (Exod. xxxii. 10); he, so to speak, rejoins, "Lord, you will in that case have to recall what you said to Abraham." Note his request—"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever" (Exod. xxxii. 13). Had Moses not been utterly self-forgetful and devoted to God's interests, and Israel's blessing as His people, he would have said, This is a fine chance for me. But look at that man. He declines his own advancement, and puts God in memory of the promise He had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is very fine.

But again I inquire—Why does the law come in? To raise the question of righteousness, and prove that man, on the ground of responsibility, which involves behaviour, has lost all and can claim nothing. I will illustrate. I go into a friend's house and I meet a child, little Mary, whom I know well. I say, "Mary, I am coming back next week, and I will bring you some oranges." Well, when I come back, she is at the gate to meet me, and she gets the oranges, because I *promised* them, and she enjoys them. Supposing, on the other hand, I had said to her, "I am coming back again next week, and I shall bring you a bag of oranges, *if* I learn from mother that there has been a

week of perfectly good behaviour." She is on her behaviour now. Very well, I come back next week, and I open the garden gate, but I do not see Mary. "Where's Mary?" "Oh," says the mother, "I am sorry to say——" "Ah! I understand." I have the bag of oranges all right, but upon her behaviour she has lost them. Upon behaviour, everything is lost before God. But you can get all through grace. There is not a thing the heart of God can furnish you with that you cannot get through grace. Peace, pardon, and salvation may be yours, through grace; but upon behaviour, not one thing. There is where the value of the law comes in. It teaches me that I am powerless, guilty, and lost.

Now we will go back to the nineteenth chapter of Exodus. "In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." That was the expression of His own goodness. That was unconditional grace. "Now therefore, *if* ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" (vers. 1, 3-5). There is a condition—obedience—brought in. And now mark, without even waiting to hear what the demands of the

law were, as given in chapter xx., look at the blindness that leads Israel to say rashly and boldly, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (ver. 8). And what was it? They were to obey His voice. It was quite right that God should make claims, and there is not a man in this hall whose conscience does not tell him that the claims of the law are right. And what does the law tell me? It tells me what I ought to be as a responsible creature of God. It tells me my responsibility to God and my neighbour, and ensures a curse on failure therein. "And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Now do you not see their blind folly? They did not even wait to learn the character of the claim that God was going to make, nor the responsibility that they were going to accept. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever" (ver. 9). Ah, it was not now face-to-face work. It was not like the Lord coming down to Abraham and speaking to him as in days gone by. No. I retire, says God. As far as the unfolding of what God is in His nature, save as to holiness and righteousness, the introduction of law was a retrogression on God's part. Man could only fail, and then God could only judge.

And now see how the law is unfolded in what Moses elsewhere calls "the day of the assembly" (see Deut. ix. 10, x. 4, xviii. 16). "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes,



and be ready against the third day : for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it : whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death " (vers. 10-12). Look at that. "Draw near to me," says God, "and you die." And that is why the apostle says it was the "ministration of death" (2 Cor. iii. 7).

The people then said to Moses, We would rather you spoke to God, than have to do with Him ourselves. They look for a mediator. "And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off" (Exod. xx. 18). Law must drive you from God. It does not draw to God. It is the full revelation of God's claims upon me as His creature, claims which, if I know myself, I am sure I cannot fulfil. "And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (ver. 19). They could not face God. Upon that ground—the fulfilment of the creature's responsibility—no one can face God.

You have the ten words unfolded to you in chapter xx. The first table of the law gives you man's responsibility, and his due God-ward. Then you get the responsibility of man with his neighbour. You remember the lawyer who came to the Lord Jesus in His life and said, "Master, what shall I do to inherit

eternal life?" The Lord says: "What is written in the law? How readeest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live" (Luke x. 25-28). Who has done it? No man here to-night could say, I have done it. You know your own heart. Have you loved God with all your heart? You have not. And your neighbour as yourself? No, my dear friend, if you take that ground you never can know what God's salvation is. You may be interested in your neighbour, but have you loved him as yourself? No. Does anybody think they are going to get to heaven upon that ground? I am certain that I shall get there, but not on that ground, and I will tell you why.

One night, a few years ago, when I was in a hotel seeing a patient, there was a knock at his bedroom door. His wife went to the door, and then came back. Soon some one knocked again, and again she went to the door. Shortly there came a third knock, and again she went, but said nothing to me. I began to wonder whether I was the person wanted, and having finished my visit left. Outside on the landing stood a waiter, who said, "Doctor, your house is on fire." I flew down the stairs and out into the darkness, for my wife was very ill at the time. It looked very like my house at a distance, as I saw flames breaking forth from the roof, but as I got up the hill some one met me and said, "It is not your house, doctor, it's your

neighbour's." "Thank God!" came right out of my lips. I was honest, but it showed me that I cannot go to heaven on the ground of loving my neighbour as myself. Nor can you. No man can stand on that ground before God save the Lord Jesus. If you fancy that you can, you will wake up to find out by-and-by that you are in hell, not heaven. If you are going to heaven, it will be by the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ only. But if any have an idea they are going to wend their way into heaven by works, they will eventually discover that it is all a mistake. Oh, no, you cannot get to heaven on that ground.

Do you think that the law can help you or save you? Let the apostle Paul give you one little word as to this: "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man *is not justified by the works of the law*, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and *not by the works of the law*, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. ii. 15, 16). How then can God justify a guilty sinner? On the ground of the finished work of his own blessed Son on the cross, and of the simple faith on the sinner's part in His Son and the work of His Son, which the charming figures Exodus and Leviticus portray so beautifully. Understand this, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). Failure on one point brings

me in guilty of all, as says the apostle, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. ii. 10).

I tell you, my friends, there is only one man fit for God, and that is the Man in the glory, the Lord Jesus Christ. He kept the law perfectly. And did He not keep it for me? I do not think that is the way in which Scripture presents it. The point is this, He proved what He was in all His blessed obedience, and when He had manifested what was in Himself, He went to the cross and died for the man that had broken the law. And what did He do? He wound up and ended the history of that man, when He died on the cross for the guilty sinner who had broken it, and then He rose from the dead, the head of a new race. Notice what the apostle Paul says: "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 11-13).

If you are going to have blessing it must be on the ground of faith, not works. Christ has hung on a tree, and He has taken the curse for us. I see that Christ has endured the curse of a broken law, and that I am clear through His death, so, "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. iii. 14). W. T. P. W.

## A HEAVY SINNER SAVED.

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**I**N a northern portion of Great Britain there once lived a man who was known in the district in which he resided as a sinner indeed.

The people in the neighbourhood had very little intercourse with him, and were not on the best of terms, owing to his wicked practices. His was a life of "open sins" indeed. His wife waited on him as only a Christian wife could, and received, in return for her kindness, nothing but ill-treatment, filthy language, and even cruel blows.

Let us in thought approach the dwelling. A knock at the door brings an old woman of nearly ninety summers, small and careworn.

"Come through, come through," she says. We must enter to find the subject of our narrative lying on a wooden "resting chair," covered with a rough blanket, looking not too comfortable. He takes little notice of our entrance; possibly he has not heard us, being very deaf. His wife approaches him, and shouts in his ear, "Turn thee, turn thee, the ministers ha' come to see thee."

The old man turns over with a groan, and says, "I'm glad they have come; I'm happy to see ye."

A word or two about his soul, and the prospect beyond, brings from his lips: "I'm going to be with Jesus. He has suffered for my sins. Praise Him! Praise Him!"

But, you may ask, how is it that a man whose life

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had been so dark, even in the sight of his fellow-men, could be going to spend eternity with Jesus? Well, it was not *his* goodness clearly—far from that. His face still bore the marks of sin. Ninety years in the devil's service had left a deep impression. But now, as he nears the grave, he can be quite calm and fearless. Why is this?

A short time previously a Christian woman urged a young man, a preacher of the gospel, to go and see him. Godly men and others had often spoken to and warned the old man, but all apparently to no effect, and long ago he had been given up by all around as indeed past redemption point. But, thank God, if men had given him up, God was not to be thwarted, and was about to show in him the power of His salvation.

On his first visit, my friend spoke in his ear the solemn words, "Prepare to meet thy God," and pointed out that he would have to meet very soon the God he had sinned against with such a high hand. Then, after a few more words, my friend left, promising to call again.

After he had gone, the old man told his wife that he had not heard a word, but he really had, as it was afterwards proved.

At first he began to be uneasy as to his departure, and then, as his past life of sin was reviewed, he saw that he well deserved the judgment of God, and with a deep sense of his need he turned to and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ.

After this he was often heard to say: "I've been a

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great sinner, I've been a heavy sinner, but Jesus has suffered for my sins. I'm going to be with Jesus."

What a triumph of God's redeeming grace: "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?"

Formerly his cruelty to those around him had been surprising. But all was different now. Tears of joy often run down the cheeks of the aged wife, whom he used to strike and kick and spit upon, but whose joyful lot now is to see what God's grace can do, even for the most sinful.

And now, my reader, let me ask, Has this change taken place with you?

It may be quite true that you have not gone to such lengths of sin as the one above referred to, but there is no doubt that *you have sinned*. Then remember, because of sin your life on earth is forfeited: you cannot remain here long, and heaven cannot receive you in your sins few or many, for nothing that defileth can find an entrance there. But, thank God, the One who received the sinner of ninety-three years is just now waiting to receive you. Why then delay longer and run the risk of being shut out for ever? Or why attempt to make yourself more fit to come?

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

Do not refuse again His offered pardon and thus add to your sins.

To-day a Saviour waits at the right hand of God—waits even for you. He may not be waiting to-morrow, for His people may have been gathered

home, and then all who have refused the gracious world-wide invitation will stand and knock *outside* the closed door.

Christ sits at God's right hand, a Prince and a Saviour. He has taken the sinner's place in death. "He died for all" so that He might offer you all the joys that accompany salvation now, and give you an eternal place with Him.

Will you not follow the example of this aged sinner and trust your all to Jesus? C. J. R.

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"OH! IF ONLY I HAD——"

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**I**N a State lunatic asylum of America for years a wretched man has walked the same passage, and continually the same words come from his lips. If you address him, his eyes glare upon you as though they would start from their very sockets, and he shrieks in your ears, "Oh! if only I had—if only I had—Oh! if only I had——"

Formerly he was a railroad watchman in charge of a drawbridge. He had been telegraphed to one day by the superintendent of the line to keep the bridge closed, as a special train might be expected between certain hours, the exact time unknown.

The watchman fully intended to obey orders, and rigidly refused many temptations offered by captains of vessels to induce him to let them pass.

At length, however, a friend of his, the captain of



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a small craft, entreated him to open the bridge. His case was urgent, he would not be delayed, time was everything to him.

With considerable reluctance the watchman was prevailed upon to consent. He opened the bridge, and the vessel made ready to pass up the river, when a shrill whistle pierced his ears, and thrilled him with horror. The train swung round the curve and was then making straight for the river. Oh ! what would the watchman have given if only he had heeded the orders received from headquarters. But it was *now too late*.

The poor man threw up his hands and stood petrified to the spot, and in the anguish of his soul cried, “Oh ! if only I had—if only I had.” Reason tottered from her throne, and he was from that hour a raving maniac ; whilst the whole train with its precious freight of passengers was precipitated down to its awful destruction, and hundreds of persons perished. One warning, but that warning unheeded ! One order, but that order disobeyed ! There was no lack of *good intentions* and *good resolutions*. But he thought there was *time enough*, and he risked it and *lost all !*

How many men equally mad as regards their eternal interests have just so risked salvation. They were not wanting in promises and vows. They intended to be Christians some day, but that day never came, and death overtook them. And now they lift up their eyes being in torment, reserved in that awful asylum unto the blackness of darkness

for ever. It is all too late now, they are where hope is never known. But we still hear their deep and earnest wail, which ascends from the caverns of the damned: "Oh! if only I had—if only I had accepted pardon and trusted Christ as my Saviour at that time when I listened to His gospel, and when the Spirit was striving with me—oh! if only I had—if only I had."

A message comes to you, young man, from the very throne of God: "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not thy heart." It will be too late by-and-by.

"Ho, all ye heavy-laden, come!  
Here's pardon, comfort, rest, and home;  
Ye wanderers from the Father's face,  
Return, accept his proffered grace.  
Ye tempted, there's a refuge nigh—  
'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.'

But if you still this call refuse,  
And dare such wondrous love abuse,  
Soon will He sadly from you turn,  
Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn;  
'Too late! too late!' will be the cry,  
'Jesus of Nazareth has passed by.'"

The Lord Jesus says in Matthew xxiv.: "Watch therefore. Be ye also *ready*: for in such an hour *as ye think not* the Son of man cometh."

May you accept now the free, full, and eternal salvation of God through the blood of Jesus!

ANON.

## THE BRIDGE OF LIFE.

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“**A**S I was resting near the top of a mountain which I had ascended to spend a time in meditation,” says the writer of an Oriental manuscript, “I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast mine eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd. As I looked upon him, I observed he beckoned me and directed me by the waving of his hand to approach the place where he sat.

“I drew near, and conscious of the superiority of the stranger, with reverence fell at his feet; but with a look of compassion he lifted me from the ground, taking me by the hand, and said, ‘Follow me.’

“He led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on it, said, ‘Cast thine eyes eastward and tell me what thou seest.’ ‘I see,’ said I, ‘a huge valley with a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.’ ‘The tide of water that thou seest,’ said he, ‘is part of the great tide of Eternity.’

“‘What is the reason,’ said I, ‘that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at the one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?’ ‘What thou seest,’ said he, ‘is that portion of Eternity which is called Time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation.’

“‘Examine now,’ continued he, ‘this sea that is

bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is the bridge of Human Life; consider it attentively.'

"Upon a more careful survey of it I found it consisted of three score and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, making up the number to about one hundred. As I was counting, he told me the bridge once consisted of nearly a thousand arches, but after a great flood it was left in its present ruinous condition.

"'But tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it?' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.'

"As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived that there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon than they fell through into the tide, and immediately disappeared.

"These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud than many fell into them. The trap-doors grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together toward the end of the arches that were entire. There were some persons, but their number was very small, that

continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches ; but they fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent after so long a walk.

“I spent some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure and the great variety of objects which it presented, and my heart was filled with deep melancholy to see several dropping *unexpectedly*, in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them, to save themselves.

“Some were looking upward in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of their train of thought stumbled, and fell out of sight.

*“Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before before them ; but often when they thought themselves within reach of them, their footing failed and down they sank.*

“‘There you see,’ said my guide, ‘man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for Eternity ; but cast thine eyes on the thick mist into which the tide bears the mortals that fall into it.’

“I looked and I saw the valley opening at the farther end and spreading forth into an immense ocean, which had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two parts.

“While the clouds still rested on one part, I discovered that the other was a scene of perpetual happiness, a vast ocean where the harmony of singing and voices of joy were heard.

“I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on this happy scene, but at length I said, “Show me now, I beseech

thee, the secrets that lie hidden under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' I turned to receive my answer, but as I looked, the vision faded, and I was left alone."

Consider, my reader, the brevity and uncertainty of life, and the vastness of eternity. You are, through the long-suffering of God, still on the Bridge of Life, but soon—perhaps ere another sun set—you will be launched into the great forever. On which side of that impenetrable boundary will you then be found? Either with Christ in the home of bliss, or shut outside in the darkness and distance from God for ever.

It was an inspired writer who asked, "What is your life?" and answered his question thus, "It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away!" Many writers in God's Word refer to the uncertainty of human life. "Swifter than a weaver's shuttle," was Job's description; whilst the Psalmist solemnly records that "as for man, his days are as grass; as the flower of the field, so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more."

Beware! lest, engrossed in the pursuit of glittering bubbles, which can never afford a moment's satisfaction or true joy, you miss your opportunity of salvation and have to join in the awful lament of those who will say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are NOT SAVED!"

It is the joy of those who know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour to commend Him to you, as the One alone who will blot out your guilty past, fill your heart with present joy, and secure for you a future of eternal happiness if you will come to Him.

God, who is full of compassion, is sending out His servants with the grand news that in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins. He, the Saviour-God, willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that all should turn to Him and live.

Be assured that if a warning word is given, it is in the interest of your precious soul, in order that the one priceless jewel you possess may be eternally saved; for "what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Marvellous as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that there are thousands of people on the earth at this moment who have no dread or uncertainty as to their eternal future, but who can with the confidence of faith in God say "WE KNOW that when he (Christ) shall appear, WE SHALL be like him, for WE SHALL see him as he is."

Do you desire that this joyous certainty may be yours? Then surrender wholly to Christ! Trust Him, the Friend of sinners, and "receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus."

F. S. MH.

## A RANK OUTSIDER.

“**I** DON'T want you to think that I am a rank outsider, sir,” said John S——, a fine young fellow, one Sunday evening after the gospel meeting. He was no doubt a real soul, an earnest seeker, and his presence at that meeting was evidence of both.

John S—— is an engineer by trade; not an operative merely, but a man who uses his brains as well as his hands. He has gone from shop to shop in most parts of the world, to see what could be learned of his trade, here, there, and everywhere. But down deep in his soul all the time there was a sense of need; and he had used the many opportunities afforded him for attending the preachings of the Lord's servants of every kind and creed. The eloquence of some tickled his ears; the pathos of others moved his heart; but still his unrest of soul remained.

Three years ago, he was working at his bench near to a man who was a Christian, one who enjoyed and lived in the power of divine things. John S—— watched with interest the bright unclouded sunshine of this man's life, and secretly longed for the same.

One day during the dinner hour, he noticed his fellow-workman reading a small book, and his beaming face emboldened him to ask that he might join him in his reading.

Nothing loth, the Christian workfellow at once



acquiesced, and began reading on from the part he had reached in the third chapter of John's Gospel. It was a stumbling reading, and yet whenever there appeared to be any hesitating as to proceeding, John would encouragingly say, "Do please go on."

The chapter finished, its lovely and salient points were for a few moments discussed, and then, the dinner hour over, they both resumed their work.

Soon after this, John S—— left England for the West Indies, and while there, continued his search after the "one thing needful."

It was but a few weeks ago that he returned to his old home and workshop, and made it almost his first business to search out the bright Christian who had read the Scriptures to him three years previously.

A hearty greeting and earnest inquiries as to the state of his soul, led to an invitation to go with his friend to a gospel preaching at the Mission Room, where the remark at the opening of this narrative was made.

John S—— arranged to meet his friend and conductor at a given spot on the following Sunday evening, and exactly to the minute he was at the trysting-place, and with business-like eagerness the two came to the meeting. The subject of the discourse that evening was Mark v.—Christ undoing the work of the devil—the Satan-possessed soul delivered; the poor diseased woman healed; and the dead daughter raised to life again—a wonderful chapter telling out the heart of the blessed God for man, and how that

now "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

The meeting over, John S—— and his friend stayed behind, and I greeted them both, the one as a well-known brother in Christ, and the other with an inquiry as to his soul's state. At first John was quite silent, but after a little pressure, replied, "I don't want you to think that I am a rank outsider, sir."

"My friend," said I, "believe me, you are either a rank *outsider*—as you term it—or a rank *insider*; in other words, either lost or saved; bearing your sins or knowing they are forgiven you; going either to hell or heaven; in Adam and under judgment, or in Christ and in divine favour. And more than this, I would add that I feel confident *you know exactly where you are and what you are*. Come, tell me now, are your sins forgiven for His name's sake?

"I could not say that," he owned, "but at the same time I am not so very bad."

"Are you anxious to be saved?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, I am really, and I have sought this everywhere."

There was an eager earnest look in the man's eyes, and the perspiration was streaming down his face. The two or three present felt it was a moment fraught with eternal issues.

I broke the little silence by saying, "Shall we pray?" We then all went down on our knees, and prayer after prayer went up from hearts and lips to a throne of grace, cries for the salvation of this precious soul, which God was soon to answer.

We rose from our knees, and read together John v. 24; Romans x. 8-11; and as we opened up the Scriptures to him, God let the light of His truth into his heart. It was joy indeed to see "the perfect love casting out all fear," and the once troubled face now at peace, the heart resting in a new-found joy.

We grasped one another's hands, and turning our faces heavenwards, rang out our Hallelujahs to the "One who loves us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

The meeting over, and as once more we clasped hands and said good-bye, John turned and said, "Thank you, sir, I shall never forget May 15, when you treated me as a rank outsider, and God saved me."

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Dear reader, have you ever had the grace to take the place of "a rank outsider," a lost sinner?

Time is passing, the dawn of that long long eternity is breaking. *Now* is the only time God gives you for salvation. Why delay accepting freely that which your soul so deeply needs, and that which the blessed God so graciously offers—a full pardon, present peace, eternal life, and glory with Christ through the rolling ages of eternity.

Come! Accept!! Believe!!! and that *now*!

G. W. H.

## WISDOM'S HOUSE.

(Read Prov. vii. 24-27, viii. 1-26, ix. 1-18.)

**Y**OU have the ways of the "strange woman" in Proverbs vii., the voice of "Wisdom" in chapter viii., and the voice of the "foolish woman" in chapter ix. The strange woman and the foolish woman simply mean the world.

Both the connections and the contrasts of Scripture are very interesting, and I do not think any person could read these chapters without at once seeing their striking connection, the continuity of the subject, and, withal, the intense contrast between the voice of Wisdom and the voice of the foolish woman.

All these three chapters, it is very striking to notice, end with death, and death is an awful thing. Of the house of the strange woman we read, "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death" (vii. 27). Thank God, you have not yet landed in hell, my unsaved reader. You are on the way to it though, that is the point. If you are not converted, you have never heard Wisdom's voice, hence you have never been blessed, and never been brought to God. Whose house are you in? The house of the strange woman, the world. Do not forget, "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Ah, thank God, you have not yet gone down, my friend, but remember that God is going to deal with those sins of yours. Your life is not for much longer, and death is ahead of you. Thank God, it has not yet gripped you.

There is one thing, sinner, after death, and what is that for you? Hell! You may say: "I do not like that word. I do not believe in hell." Very likely, you are not the first infidel that has said that. I should like to give you a bit of comfort. There is not a single infidel in hell. "Oh," you say, "I thought, according to your doctrine, that all infidels went there." You are mistaken. There is not a solitary infidel in hell. Do you know why? Because all the infidelity is knocked out of their souls as they enter the doorway. Ah, my friend, hell is a reality. I believe in it. God believes in it. The devil believes in it. The Spirit of God believes in it. It is only your enemy the devil—always a liar—that will tell you there is no hell.

I believe in the Word of God, every line of it. I find it says, "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." "That is not the gospel," you will say. I know it is not. But it is a terrible reality from which the gospel will deliver you. Surely it is enough to be warned, is it not? Sinner, God bids you stop in your downward course. Hence He warns you of what is its end. Heed His warning.

My unsaved friend, God wants you. His heart is toward you; hence we read in chapter viii., "Doth not wisdom cry?" Who is Wisdom? Jesus. He is Wisdom. He is the Wisdom of God. It is the voice of the blessed Son of God that speaks. "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way

in the places of the paths" (vers. 1, 2). It is beautiful to see the activity of Wisdom. I never read this scripture that I do not feel rebuked. How little am I like Wisdom. Oh, look at this divine activity. Are we in this spirit? Where does she stand? "In the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors" (ver. 3). Anywhere, everywhere, there is no place, so to speak, that you cannot find Wisdom or one of her maidens, according to these chapters. And what does she cry? "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men" (ver. 4).

It is the voice of God to the unsaved children of men. It is the voice of the living God to the unsaved, unblest sinner. Dear friend, do you think it wise still to refuse? Do you think it wise to make light of God's call? "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart" (ver. 5). God calls us fools. Aye. A man pressing on to ruin when he might be going to glory is indeed a fool. A man that is going to eternal penalty instead of turning to God, and going to everlasting joy, what do you think of that man? I think you also would call him a fool.

Have you not heard of the man in the New Testament who thought of nothing but the things of this world, and who was going to build new barns to hold the golden grain that was to turn into golden sovereigns? He had only lived for the world, and he was just dropping asleep when, all of a sudden, he

heard a voice saying, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke xii. 20). That man was a fool. He has many imitators. Friend, you listen to God. Hear His Word: "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." All that God wants you to do is to heed His voice. If He gets your ear, He will be sure to get your heart. Do you know why? Because it says, "Hear, and your soul shall live." It says also, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Oh, I believe in the mighty power of God's Word, used by His spirit, to wake men up. I believe in the almightiness of that Word.

Wisdom says, "Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things" (ver. 6). Then Wisdom is described. Read Proverbs viii. carefully, and you will find it describes the person of the Lord Jesus, and unfolds the eternal glory of the Son of God. His blessed voice says: "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it" (vers. 10, 11). If you had your house filled with rubies, you would have to leave them behind. But if you have Wisdom you will not leave that behind, and when the Lord comes back for His people He will not leave you behind.

This chapter describes where Wisdom was when God made the heavens and the earth. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from

the beginning or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water" (vers. 22-24). He is an Eternal Being. And He came into this world in blessed grace, the Word was made flesh that He might glorify God, and the shedding of His blood meets all the claims of God in respect of man's sin. It is an Eternal Being, the Son of everlasting God, who, in grace, became a Man that He might win your heart and mine. He says, "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him" (ver. 30). Here is the Son of God, here is the blessed One who was ever the joy of the Father's heart, and we find that He says, "Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men" (ver. 31). He had His eye upon us then in the purpose and counsel of His heart.

Let us listen attentively to His words. "Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways" (ver. 32). How He seeks to win us. "Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me" (vers. 33, 34). The same voice said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John v. 25). These were His own blessed words when here upon earth. This hour of gracious blessing began when He was on the earth, it goes on still. Although He has gone, as a Man, to the right hand of God, His blessed voice still



speaks, and His heart is unchanged, His thoughts toward us are quite the same. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord" (vers. 34, 35). The listeners to His voice are in His grace. "But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (ver. 36).

Now which of these verses, my reader, are you in, verse 35 or verse 36? You do not care for Jesus? No. Then you love death. You do not love the Lord? No. You love death. You are doing an irreparable injury to your own soul. I do not know anything more touching than this expostulation of the blessed Lord. Can anything be more touching or tender? Note well His words, as He says, "For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." Everything turns on personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

Dear fellow-Christian, you have life. Possibly you may say, "I was brought to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ only last Sunday night." Be it so. You found life then. Life is a sweet thing to get, and it often is gotten in a gospel meeting, or by reading a paper like this.

You may say, undecided one, "I do not believe in sudden conversions." You will when you are converted. You may get saved where you are, and as you read this page, by simply trusting the Lord Jesus. Mark this, if you are not saved by the belief of the gospel, you will be eternally damned in your

sins because you have not believed it. You say, "I cannot believe it." Cannot believe God? Cannot believe the Word of God? That is a very serious acknowledgment. I think I know why you cannot. Another voice has hitherto commanded you.

You have heard about the "strange woman." Her voice is heard in the ninth chapter. The world has a loud voice, and, alas, you can understand the voice of the foolish woman. Just look for a moment at her first. Only, I must say, she is an imitator. "A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing" (chap. ix. 13). I am always struck with the variety with which Satan floods and caters for the world. There is usually a noise, and there must always be something new, something fresh. The world could not go on if you did not give it fresh novels, fresh plays, and fresh songs. This is all in keeping with the character of the foolish woman. "For she sitteth at the door of her house, on *a seat* in the high places of the city" (ver. 14). She has got the highest place, if I might say so. Do you know where Wisdom's maidens are? She sends forth her maidens, and she stands in the high places of the city, but she has no seat. She moves on. But this woman has a seat, she is at home. It is the world, it expects to abide, and promises you what is abiding.

Hence, "She sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, to call passengers who go right on their ways." And what does she say? "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither."

She will promise you pleasure and amusement. They are but "the pleasures of sin for a season." God alone can fill the heart with abiding peace and joy. "Pleasures for evermore" He furnishes. It is nearly forty-four years since I first tasted them, and they get better and better as time goes on. The foolish woman can never give you rest and peace. It is impossible. But she calls vigorously to passengers, "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (vers. 16, 17). A stolen thing is what belongs to somebody else. "Stolen waters are sweet." What is the idea of stolen waters? Let nobody know. "And bread eaten in secret is pleasant." There is the secrecy of sin.

Reader, forget not that all will come out. All will come out by-and-by, that is not blotted out now by the blood of Jesus. Remember, every secret of the heart will come out by-and-by. That is a serious thing. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant," is the language of the careless world. "But he knoweth not that the dead are there." It is a house of the dead. Oh, unsaved friend, dear unsaved soul, take heed to the voice of the Lord. He here details simply but most solemnly what is the end of the world. "Her guests are in the depths of hell." Supposing you scorn His word, what will be the end of it? He says, "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself." I think that is beautiful. That is, the truth is always individual. If I am

wise I get it myself. It is not that I cannot tell others. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it" (ver. 12). I want you to see how intensely individual everything is in relation to the things of God. Are you still going to be the guest of this foolish woman? Better far be the guest of Wisdom.

And now let us see in chapter ix. what Wisdom has done. Wisdom has a house, and oh, it is a wonderful house. "Wisdom hath builded her house" (ver. 1). Ah, it is a wonderful house is Wisdom's house. It is the house of God. It is where God is known. It is where His character is known. And look—"She hath hewn out her seven pillars" (ver. 1). It gives the idea of that which was a sort of canopy. And how many pillars? Seven. I know a good many of the pillars. The canopy over my head is glory. What supports this structure is the pillars. I would fain describe this house to you. You can get in through any of the pillars. I think that the first pillar is the *Purpose* of God. God had a purpose in His mind. It is a house where God is known, Christ is enjoyed, and every heart is profoundly and eternally happy. What is the second pillar? I see how the truth has all come out, in Christ, and I label my next pillar, *Love*. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."

And what is the next pillar? You know God cannot put up with sin, and cannot make light of sin. His holiness forbids that. There is no sin

there, it is all outside. There are plenty of guests, all perfectly happy, but there is no sin in there. The third pillar is *Holiness*. But there is more. There is the pillar of *Righteousness*. God's claims have all been met by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, by His atoning blood. I have the *purpose* of God, the *love* of God, the *holiness* of God, and the *righteousness* of God. But there is more than that. We have in Christ the revelation and unfolding of the *Truth* of God. There is another wonderful pillar, *Mercy*. Oh, the mercy of God! Of this house, I say, one of its pillars is mercy. There is yet another pillar, *Grace*. And are those the seven pillars of the house? Well, they are seven very solid pillars, and they are very sound pillars, and, thank God, the house they sustain can never be moved. Everybody in that house is divinely happy. Have you got in yet? If not, you come just now into God's house.

After Wisdom builds her house, she furnishes it right royally, and invites her guests. We read, "She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table" (ver. 2). What is the idea? "Come, for all things are now ready." Yes, the feast is spread. And what is the feast? The revelation of all that God has made known in the gospel. And what have you to do? Come in and eat. You have nothing to bring. Come in, poor sinner. Do I hear you reply, "I am such a sinner, I am a dreadful sinner"? Never mind. You may come in, if you so please, by the Grace pillar, or the Love pillar, or the Truth pillar, but you can come in.

And to Whom do you come? To God, revealed in His blessed Son. How do I know this? When everything was furnished, what was Wisdom's next action? "She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." Where? Into scenes of joy and satisfaction. Oh, turn into this scene where joy is deep and abiding. It is like the feast of Luke xiv., and the feast in the Father's house of Luke xv. What a welcome you will get. Oh, come. "As for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled" (ver. 5). That is beautiful.

Now, beloved reader, will you not hear Wisdom's voice, because although it is her maidens that come out and address you, still it is Wisdom's voice. It is all her work. It is all Christ. It is the activity of the love of Christ going through the various channels.

How blessed would you be if you respond to the call—"Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." You would be saved and satisfied. Observe, it is not stolen bread. It is not that which the voice of the clamorous woman urges you to eat of. Wisdom's bread is eaten in public. There are no secrets in God's gospel. It is all abroad in the world now, God has loved the world, and His Son has died for it. "This thing was not done in a corner," Paul says. No, Jesus died in view of the whole world. What for? To save a sinner like you, or me, from the depths of hell.

Wisdom's call closes with great emphasis. "For

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sake the foolish, and live." There will have to be decision on your part, and then instruction for the pathway follows: "And go in the way of understanding" (ver. 6). Friend, come in and feed. If you never took the gospel before, take it just now. If hitherto you never got hold of the fact that Christ has died for you, believe it now. Christ wants to save you. What do you say? Fain would I hear you reply, "I will take Him at His word." That would mean present pardon of your sins, and eternal joy to your heart.

W. T. P. W.

## DEATH.

**G**EORGE HERBERT once wrote: "Old men go to death; death comes to young men." We look upon death as the natural end of old age, and some men think that when they have their span of life, they will be ready for death. But death often comes unexpectedly.

You were reading your newspaper this morning and glancing down the list of deaths. Did you not notice the name of a child there? Did you not read of the death of that young fellow in his early manhood? Death comes so quickly and so silently, that before the hands of your watch point to the hour, your soul may be in eternity.

A tram conductor started off to his work one morning, and he jumped on to a passing car, as he

had often done before, I suppose. But while his foot was still on the step, the car swung past one of the posts carrying the overhead wire, and the man was crushed to death.

My reader, however young you are, *you* are not too young to die, and were you to be hurried into eternity without a moment's notice, as this man was, what would happen to your soul? To meet death in your sins means eternal ruin, for after death is the judgment.

Death came into this scene as the fruit of sin, and we, lying under sentence of death, were in danger of everlasting perdition. But God intervened. He sent His own Son to bear the punishment of sin, and Jesus by dying conquered death. The Prince of Life became subject to death, but death had not dominion over Him. God raised Him from among the dead and seated Him at His own right hand in heaven.

Now the one that comes to Christ as a helpless sinner may know that Jesus bore on Calvary's tree the punishment due to his sins. Thus trusting in Christ's finished work, the believer need no longer have any fear of death, for Jesus has conquered death and the grave.

My reader, can *you* join in saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"? M. L. B.



"THE GATE IS SHUT; THAT SETTLES IT." 225

**"THE GATE IS SHUT; THAT  
SETTLES IT."**

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A FRIEND of the writer was hurrying down the street that leads to the ferry at Windsor, Canada, hoping to catch the steamer for Detroit that was about to start. As he reached the gate the gateman closed it. Mr H—— said, "Can't I enter?"

"No; the gate is shut; that settles it."

Of course he had to wait until the next boat, but, as far as the boat that was just starting was concerned, he was too late, the gate was shut, and the words of the gateman, "The gate is shut; that settles it," showed the uselessness of any attempt.

This little incident may serve to illustrate to us another gate, and the necessity on our part of prompt action in order to enter. We like to see a man in dead earnest, even in natural things. A slothful man will not accomplish much. We hear sometimes of "an up-to-date" man, and we know what that means. It speaks of a man who is ready to seize hold of anything that is legitimate, and to avail himself of everything that the mind of man has brought about in order to make what he is undertaking a success.

And when it comes to the things of eternity shall we be in less earnest? Shall we not be "up-to-date" in the matter? Shall we allow Satan to hide from our eyes the infinite gain that will be ours by

closing in with God's offer of salvation on His own terms and having the matter settled for time and eternity? Satan objects to any such dead-earnest decision. He would prefer a thousand times that we remain indifferent to the whole thing. His word is, "Plenty of time yet." He would not have you strike the bargain right away with God to "buy of him wine and milk without money and without price." He hates the song—

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done,  
I am my Lord's, and He is mine ;  
He drew me, and I followed on,  
Charmed to confess the voice divine.  
Happy day, happy day,  
When Jesus washed my sins away."

Friend, shun Satan as you would a serpent, a thief, a murderer, for he is all three. He is a serpent to deceive, a thief to rob, and a murderer to slay.

Everything says, be in earnest. Time says, Be in earnest ; death says, Be in earnest ; eternity says, Be in earnest ; heaven says, Be in earnest ; hell says, Be in earnest ; your passing years say, Be in earnest ; your grey hairs say, Be in earnest ; your increasing infirmities say, Be in earnest ; the graveyard says, Be in earnest ; your dying neighbour says, Be in earnest ; the question of your salvation says, Be in earnest ; the tremendous question, Where shall I spend eternity ? in heaven or hell ? says, Be in earnest. And lastly, the blessed Son of God, whose love no one can question, says, "Strive with earnestness to

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enter in at the strait gate.” And why? “For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know ye not whence ye are.”

Instead of being curious to know how many are to be saved, thus seeking to satisfy man's curiosity, we are to “strive with earnestness to enter in at the strait gate” ourselves, lest, awful thought! that gate should be closed against us, and closed for ever.

We may rest assured that “once the master of the house has risen up and shut to the door,” there will be no possibility of entering. “The gate is shut; that settles it.” Knocking, and pleading past privileges, and even that of His presence, will not avail, for just then will His master say, “I tell you I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity” (Luke xiii.).

*Now*, then, is the time to enter; *now* is the time to be converted to God; *now* is the time to be saved; “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).

*Now* is God's word. By-and-by is Satan's word. Which are you going to act upon? Which are you going to believe—God or Satan? The one who desires your salvation, or the one who seeks your damnation? Oh, friend, be wise, consider your latter end, now enter the open gate and be saved. Be up-to-date in this matter. Be a rational, earnest

man, and decide to be saved this very day; and while thousands choose the wrong, do thou choose the right; and while the multitude barter away their soul for some trifles on earth, do thou accept the salvation that has been obtained for thee at the infinite cost of the Saviour's blood shed upon the cross of Calvary.

Across the river of death, in the eternal world, where our condition is fixed for ever, there is either joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure, "weeping and gnashing of teeth," or the eternal sunshine of God's love and presence. Listen, oh, listen, to the Saviour's words: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and ye yourselves (appalling thought!) thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last" (Luke xiii. 23-30).

Friend, which is it to be? God or Satan, now or never, salvation or damnation, heaven or hell, weeping and gnashing of teeth or the joy of His blessed presence for ever?

"Into the depths of endless woe  
Rejecters of the Saviour go;  
Forbid the thought that you, who read,  
Should longer have no sense of need  
Of th' only way to realms of bliss—  
O sinner! hast thou thought of this?"

E. A.

## THE FUTURE.

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**M**AN anticipates; he looks ahead; he has expectations beyond to-day. It is the natural result of intelligence that he should do so. His expectations may be fanciful, still he expects. He is governed, more or less, by the future.

Not so a dog! He has no future; he lives by the moment. As to the morrow, he has neither fear nor joy; he is destitute of prospect. His life, whatever the effect of memory, is spent under no influence but one of present pain or pleasure.

And so with all lower animals. They have no regard for the future, and that because they are under no moral responsibility. They live their little lives; they die and are no more. They are "beasts that perish."

But man is responsible to God; he has conscience; the knowledge of good and evil is planted in his bosom. He associates himself, however unwillingly, with a day of reckoning. He feels that he must give an account of his stewardship, and owns that, in justice, he must reap what he has sown. Hence he looks beyond this life; he may fear, or he may hope, none the less he is governed by the future. He reasons, naturally, that if the present life has been spent well, he will be rewarded; if ill, he will be punished. Such is his natural reasoning, nor is it, in one sense, wrong. Philosophy would give it an

unqualified approval; but then the great question is :—

How much good must he accomplish in order to merit reward, and how little evil should he do in order to escape punishment? These difficulties are insuperable, and leave the hapless enquirer in despair. Philosophy—that is human wisdom—is utterly unable to shed a single ray of light on the subject.

But, thank God, revelation can do so. A light from heaven has streamed over this dreary chaos. Truth, clear and faultless, has spoken. A way from out of the hopeless morass has been made. Who will hearken? who will respond?

Notice, first and foremost, God says that “There is none righteous, no, not one”! Second, He adds: “There is none that doeth good, no, not one”! (see Rom. iii. 10-12). There is “not one,” either in nature or in practice, whom God can call good! This is humbling! It levels all of us to one common platform of sin and guilt. It dashes in pieces all hope of reward for personal goodness. It makes salvation impossible—absolutely impossible—except on a ground entirely different from our deserts.

This may appear staggering, but it is the very basis of all our hope.

The proved and demonstrated ruin of man is the occasion for the display of the grace of God! Let me quote from the same chapter, two more verses which place the truth of each of these facts in juxtaposition—side by side—so that the reader may see at a glance the divine solution of the difficulty :—

“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God”—that shows where we are. “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”—this gives God’s wonderful provision. His grace is the spring. Redemption in the blood of Christ is the ground. Justification, and that from all things, is the result—for all who believe, and trust, *freely*, as apart from every idea of merit on our side. This is revelation! Oh! how it beggars all human philosophy! It clears the way for the further truth of chapter v. 1-2, where we are “justified by faith,” “have peace with God,” and “rejoice in hope of his glory”! Our past is justification! Our present is peace with God! Our future is His glory!

Such is the Christian’s future! And a certain one it is, bright and blessed! It is all of grace, and therefore all, and wholly, to the glory and praise of God.

Then is there no reward? Surely there is. We shall receive according to the deeds done in the body and have our place in the *kingdom*. This is accordingly a solemn fact—but for *heaven* we are fitted by sovereign grace alone—like the thief on Calvary—whilst for the sinner there remains only “a certain looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation.” How dark his future—a long, dreary night without dawn or break of day—for ever.

Each of us has a future. Dear reader, what shall your eternal morrow be? You know the way; enter now! You know the truth; believe it now!

J. W. S.

## THE LITTLE EMIGRANT.

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**I**T was a hot day in July, when I was seated in a long car, travelling for thirty miles through the north-west of Ireland.

On looking round, I saw a boy on the opposite side of the car. A big tear stood in his eye as he pulled out his little bundle, containing a tin-plate, a knife and fork and mug, together with such other necessaries as emigrants generally carry. These were neatly tied up in a clean white cloth, out of which he took two slices of bread. One slice he handed me, the other he began eating himself.

“Ah! I know who put that up for you,” said I.

“Yes, sir; mother thought I’d want it on the way. She said, ‘Maybe, Tom, you’ll feel hungry on the journey.’”

I asked if he were going far.

“Yes, sir; I’m going to New York.”

“Are you leaving behind any that you love?” I inquired.

“Yes, sir; I’m leaving my poor mother and three sisters in Mullaughmore. And mother’s a widow, sir; I’m her only son; and she does take it to heart so, my going away. Still she says, ‘Tom, it’ll be for the best by-and-by.’”

One tear after another ran down the little emigrant’s cheek; and, putting my arm round his neck, I told him how I had come from America a few weeks



before, and wondered he, so young, should go all alone to that strange country.

"Oh, but, sir, I've got two sisters across there, who wrote for me to go, and sent six pounds for my passage-money; and in their letter they said they'd meet me at the landing-stage."

"And are you *sure* that they will meet you?"

"Yes, sir; and why wouldn't they, when they said they would? Sure you don't think they'd break their promise?"

"Now, tell me, my boy, why don't you think they would deceive you?"

"Oh, 'cause I know they love me; they really want to have me with them; and in order that I might go they paid my journey in the "Europa," that sails from Londonderry to-morrow."

"That is the very same reason why we trust God," said I, "because He loves us so much that He paid the passage-money to take us to heaven. What your sisters in New York paid was only six pounds, but God gave His own Son to die for us. You will not have to pay a second time, because your sisters have paid fully; and we do not, nor can we, pay what Christ has paid to take us to heaven. And God really wants to have such sinners as we are with Him, to be happy for ever. You cannot see your sisters—they live more than three thousand miles away—but you got a letter from them, and so you act on it. That is faith.

"But, you see, Tom, it is possible your sisters would not be *able* to keep their promise; but our

Great Friend who said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out' (John vi. 37), certainly will keep His; because besides His love being boundless, His power is almighty. If we trust Him now, as you trust your sisters, then we shall have a Friend to welcome us across in the other world, where all things are made new by the glory of His presence."

It is strange how we doubt God! ANON.

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### "WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"

(Read Isaiah lii. 7, 13, 14, 15; liii. 1-12.)

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**T**HERE was a man once seated in a chariot crossing a sandy desert, and as he went, reading Isaiah liii., he was startled as a voice rang into his ears, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" That was the eunuch of Acts viii., and the man who spoke to him was Philip, the only man that I know of in Scripture who is called an evangelist. I should like to be an evangelist, above all things under the sun, because the Scripture above quoted gives us God's estimate of an evangelist, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation."

The seventh verse of Isaiah lii. closes, you notice, with "that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." We

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cannot say that yet—the day is not come for Jerusalem to hear the good tidings, and God does not reign in Zion yet. I wonder whether He reigns in your heart. Has the One of whom this wonderful Scripture speaks got the right place in your heart yet? Of whom does it speak? you may say. Philip told the eunuch that it was Jesus. This man had gone a thousand miles—all the way from Abyssinia—to the ordered condition of religion at Jerusalem, but he did not find peace there. He found formalism and ritual in abundance, but that did not meet the need of his soul. You too, my reader, will not find rest in creeds, kirks, congregations, or ritual of any kind. Life, rest, peace, and joy are wrapped up in the Person of the living Man, who was once dead, but now is at God's right hand.

I can quite understand the eunuch saying as he read Isaiah liii., “Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?” The Spirit of God opened Philip's mouth and furnished the answer, as he preached unto him Jesus. Everything is wrapped up in Jesus; if you have not got Him, you may be what you like, bear what name you like, but you are still a sinner on the road to an eternal hell. You say, “That is plain speaking”—yes, and that is what men need to-day. Am I going to address you as a saint if you are not one? That would be wrong and unkind to you. But indeed I have glad tidings for you. These are lovely words, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth

peace.” That is the kind of publishing business I like to be a partner in—publishing salvation. You say, “What do you mean by that?” Telling everybody that there is salvation for them in Christ. If you have not got it, you need it, and thank God, what you need His love furnishes in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now get hold of that, I pray you, for it is only in Him.

This remarkable seventh verse of Isaiah lii. Paul quotes in Romans x., where he says, “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved” (ver. 1). He then unfolds the way of salvation: “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” (ver. 9). God has a way of saving man, and you cannot be saved except in God’s way, *i.e.*, believing in your heart, and confessing with your mouth. Why the heart? Because I get right with God in my heart. Not my mind—no, it is in the affections. And how do I get right with man? With my mouth. If I have not confessed before men it is no use saying I believe, for I am a liar. The apostle puts the two together, and then he goes on to say, “For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed . . . for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (vers. 11-13). You turn to the Lord, and you will be saved. There is only one way of getting saved, and that is by turning to the Lord. And when you have turned to the Lord you will confess Him. People generally do not know

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that they are lost, and that Christ came to seek and save the lost. The reason you have not yet known salvation is that you have never cared to hear, been prepared to own, or been driven to the point of owning—I am a downright lost sinner.

Paul says, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? (You would not call upon a person in whose existence you did not believe.) And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (vers. 13, 14). God sends the preacher, and what does he preach? Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch; he heard, turned to the Lord, and was saved. I should like you to do the very same just now.

Notice now the quotation: “It is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (vers. 15). Paul applies, in the energy and power of the Spirit of God, this lovely Old Testament scripture. Oh that you, my reader, may receive the application. What does God send to you? Peace. On what ground? Your doings? No; they are deadly, they will bring you into judgment. You may get peace through the life and death of Another. The tale of Jesus and His love, His atoning death and glorious resurrection, are glad tidings and good news for weary, sin-burdened, self-condemned men. The question is, who will believe this news, for Paul adds, “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias

saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (vers. 16). Now I am going to ask you, Have you believed the report? If not, let me give you the report once more, and if you believe it you will say, like the Queen of Sheba, "The half was not told me."

What I have found in Jesus is infinitely better than what was told me. The report comes to you in your condition of darkness and distance, as a sinner before God, in which you have lived to this very hour. The report is of Jesus, of His love, His grace, and the atoning efficacy of His death. If that report affects and moves your heart, you will come to His feet, you will get into contact with Him, and you will get what the eunuch got—salvation on the spot. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (ver. 17). I have great faith in God's Word, hence I love to face a company of people if I can only bring before them God's Word, for the entrance of His Word brings light, and you will never forget it.

Now look at Isaiah liii. and see the importance of listening to God's testimony. The end of chapter lii. is intimately connected with chapter liii. I want you to notice that there are two speakers—Jehovah, and the voice of a believing company, a company that have had their eyes opened—Israel really. It is the voice of Jehovah on the one hand, and Israel on the other, but they are both talking of His servant. The dialogue in these beautiful chapters begins with one of the ringing "Beholds" that calls attention—it is God speaking of His blessed Son. "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted

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and extolled, and be very high” (lii. 13). That is what the Holy Ghost is doing to-day. God has exalted Him, and the Holy Ghost, in the Christians upon earth, is extolling Him. Then God describes what was to take place, “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” Why were they astonished? Men could not understand Jesus. There never was anybody in this world who had outwardly so little of the expressed favour of God as He. Born in one man’s stable, nailed to another man’s cross, and buried in a third man’s tomb, He, who made everything, had not a penny to call His own. If it was a question of paying the tribute money He must needs say, “Show me a penny.” Why? Because He did not possess one. The Son of God was a penniless stranger in the world that He had made.

Men were very astonished when they saw Him down here in lowly grace; they shall be yet more astonished when they see Him in glory. The Man that died on Calvary’s cross, crowned with thorns, is yet to wield the sceptre of the whole world, and from pole to pole shall His name be acknowledged, for to Him shall every knee bow, and every tongue confess. God, speaking in Isaiah xlv. 23, affirms this of Jesus as God, but what is His due as God shall be rendered to Him as Man, and because He has been the humbled man. “God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should

bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11). Every knee shall bow to Him, angelic beings, men, and demons shall all, by-and-by, bow at the name of Jesus. Did you hear what Paul said, "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"? If I were you I would anticipate that day, and confess Him now.

Then the Spirit of God leads the prophet to put this question, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (liii. 1). That is a very serious question. Paul said, "They have not all obeyed the gospel." Are *your* sins forgiven? If not, you have not obeyed the gospel, for to all believers the arm of the Lord is revealed, and if He gets you in His arm, there is no fear of you. It is an arm of salvation. "Who hath believed our report?" says God's Spirit. Who has doubted it? might also be said. There are plenty of doubters. Perhaps you have been a doubter—religious, but unsaved; respectable, but unpardoned; having a name to live all this time, and yet all the while dead in sins. Unserved reader, it is high time you were aroused.

"To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" is the second query of the prophet. I will tell you—to the people whose voices are heard in the next five verses of Isaiah liii. These verses reveal the feelings of a certain company of people, who un-



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mistakeably are believers. They describe what once was their condition, and how they were delivered from it. “He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him” (ver. 2). This is the language of those who had been unbelievers in days gone by, and been indifferent to Christ. They are describing what were their thoughts and feelings when they were in darkness. You say, That is rather like me. Yes, the words, “And when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him,” describe your past. I have no doubt that a yellow-backed novel has more interest for you than Christ, and if I were to draw near and talk to you about Christ in the middle of your novel, you would feel very uncomfortable, and wish I would leave you alone. The man of the world does not see beauty in Christ. The man that loves money sees beauty in it, but not in Christ. You have only to carry Christ into the world, and you will soon find out what it thinks of Him. If you are having a gospel meeting in the open air, you may be asked by a policeman to move to another spot. He does not interfere with the German band, however. The world likes music, but not Christ. There is no beauty in Jesus to any of us at first, but by-and-by, when God comes and works in your soul, and you see you are a sinner in His sight with a lost eternity before you, things begin to alter, and then you do desire Him.

But our chapter continues: "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (ver. 3). Who can deny it? "A man of sorrows"—that is what Jesus was. Now why and to what end was He such?

Have you a grief? Many, you may reply. Have you learned how to turn to Jesus in them? Have you had the support of His arm, have you learned the love of His heart? Good for you is it if you have. But for long we all "hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not," for then we had not learned that "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." What that exactly means the Spirit of God tells us in the Gospels, where we read:—"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. viii. 16, 17). Notice there is no mention of sins in these verses. He never bore sins in His life—in His earthly pathway—till He was on the cross, and not even then till the sixth hour. It was on the cross He bore our sins, and on the cross He died for sinners, and was cast off by God for sin. During His life He bore the sorrows of others, and their sins in His death. He took up all my sorrows in His life, that He might sympathise; and then in His death He bore all my sins, that He might save me. Blessed Jesus! What a Saviour! Who would not have

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Him? Who would go on longer without Him? You are never right till you get to Him, and know Him.

So blind and perverse were Israel that they thought the sorrows He carried in His spirit were from God's hand, saying, “Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted” (vers. 4). No, He was bearing the sorrow of the human heart that He might sympathise with those who were in sorrow; hence now He is able to *succour* (Heb. ii. 18), to *sympathise* (Heb. iv. 15), and to *save* to the uttermost (Heb. vii. 25).

And now the question of sin is touched on as the speakers say:—“But 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” (ver. 5). All this involves sin-bearing. Did not we hear a moment ago, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him . . . . that publisheth *peace*”? How could God send out people to preach peace if peace had not been made? Who made it? Christ! You never could make it, for you cannot meet God's claims. “The chastisement of our peace was upon him,” that is how peace with God was made.

“And with his stripes we *are healed*,” not hope to be healed. That may do for you: it did not do for Isaiah, or for Peter. Hear what he says as he quotes this very Scripture: “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree . . . . by whose stripes ye *were healed*” (1 Pet. ii. 24). This is not

the healing of the body, but the healing of the soul. Matthew speaks of the healing of the body, Peter of the healing of the soul. The terrible wounds sin has made, the blood of Jesus alone can heal. The atoning death of the Saviour, meeting all God's claims, alone can make peace, "and with his stripes *we are healed*," is the glorious result. How much the Spirit of God makes of Jesus, and how He loves to extol Him. Is He not worthy of your confidence?

And now particularly notice the next allegation beginning with "all," and closing with "all." "*All* we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us *all*" (ver. 6). I remember a man once telling me that after long soul-exercise and difficulty he got deliverance through this verse. Said he, "I got into one end of a verse of Scripture with all my sins on me, and I got out at the other end with them all gone. '*All* we like sheep have gone astray,' I saw, took me in with all my sins, and 'the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us *all*,' showed me that Jesus had borne them all and put them all away." That man was simple. You had better imitate him. He took God at His word. "Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," is a wonderful statement. Many souls have been brought into peace by understanding verse 6. May you be another, my reader.

The speakers in verses 2 to 6 tell us much about Jesus, and of the blessed effect of the work He did, and in verses 7, 8, and 9 Jehovah again speaks of

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the One who has done the work. He affirms, “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.” That was the verse which arrested the eunuch. Then follows, “He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living.” If He be cut off, if He die, who will declare His generation. The Spirit of God has come down and brought light, liberty, and joy to the hearts of countless thousands, and they are busy declaring His generation. He is no more dead, He is alive. “For the transgression of my people was he stricken,” says God, telling us that His death was atoning, and though men “appointed his grave with the wicked, yet he was with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth” (ver. 9) (N.T.). You will remember that when the blessed Lord had died, Joseph begged His body, and buried it in a new tomb, “wherein never man before was laid.” Thus Scripture was fulfilled. I have no doubt the Jews thought they would cast the body of the blessed Lord into the common malefactors’ grave. But God said, No, “He shall be with the rich in his death;” and the moment He was dead, the man who had been half-hearted before, one who was a disciple secretly for fear of the Jews, went in boldly and craved the body of of Jesus, and put Him in his own new tomb.

God has been very careful to tell us thrice over that

His Son was laid in "a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid" (see Matt. xxvii. 60 ; Luke xxiii. 53 ; John xix. 41), and for this reason. We read in 2 Kings xiii. that they were burying a man, when a band of Moabites came in sight, "and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha ; and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha he revived, and stood up on his feet" (ver. 21). That is what happened then, and if God had not arranged and declared that Jesus was put into a "new tomb," the devil was quite clever enough to have told the Jews to say, when He rose from the dead, that His body had touched the bones of some prophet, and that was nothing new. It was love that rolled a stone to the door of His sepulchre, but it was fear that sealed it and set a guard round it to keep Him in. Vain hope ! When they opened it He was gone. Thank God for a risen, victorious Saviour. Christianity is inaugurated by an empty tomb—death annulled, a victory won, and the Victor risen, and ascended to God's right hand.

In the tenth verse of our chapter Israel's voice is again heard, saying—"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he hath put him to grief : when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed—(yes, there shall be wondrous fruit of all his sorrow) he shall prolong his days — and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." And then God speaks once more, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied : by his knowledge shall my righteous servant (not "justify

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many,” but) instruct the many in righteousness.” That was the ministry of His life—He preached righteousness in the great congregation (see Ps. xl. 9). The Sermon on the Mount is the expression of this, *i.e.* instruction in righteousness. “And he shall bear their iniquities.” That was his death. In His life He ministered the truth; and in His death He atoned for our iniquities. Now the Spirit of God has come and told us that the Saviour who thus lived and died is at God’s right hand, after having died for sins and for sinners. Thus we get righteousness proclaimed in His life, and sin put away by His death.

Further we read in verse 12, “He bare the sin of many”—how many? I do not know, but I know *I* am one of them. Will that “many” let you in? If He does not bear your sin and put it away, *you* will bear it, and never put it away. If He has not borne those sins of yours He never will do it, because He will not die again. Have you ever in faith stood at the cross, where the Son of God died, crowned with thorns? Can you not detach yourself from the turmoil of the world sufficiently long to listen to His words, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?” There it was that He “made intercession for the transgressors.” What a Saviour! “Who hath believed our report?” Have you? See to it before you put your head on your pillow to-night, that you believe God’s report of His Son. Then will the arm of the Lord be revealed to you, and you will say, “He has saved me.”

W. T. P. W.

## “GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE.”

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“GOOD morning, sir ; so glad to meet you after all these many years ; why, surely it must be more than a quarter of a century ago since we last met ; I hope you are well.”

I had offered my hand in a mechanical manner to the person who thus addressed me, but found it held in a mighty grip from which I could hardly disengage it, and the above greeting given me.

“Forgive me,” I replied, “I seem to have some faint remembrance of your face, but I cannot recall under what circumstances we previously met.”

“Oh ! I will soon explain it,” said Mr R—— ; “but first of all perhaps we had better finish the business we have in hand.”

I agreed, and was nothing loth to set to work, as I was merely visiting the town where this interview took place, in order to inspect with the Surveyor to the Local Council some property on which alterations were to be made. The Surveyor was Mr R——, who had so warmly greeted me on my arrival.

The inspection over, and the arrangements all completed, Mr R—— and I stood together beside his horse and trap ready to say good-bye, when I asked : “By the way, what about our having met more than a quarter of a century ago ? I have been doing two things ever since we met, one of them the necessary work connected with this inspection, and the other



trying to recall to memory your face and that quarter of a century ago of which you spoke."

"Surely," he replied, "you remember the village of C——, and what a godless place it was years ago, and how every shop was open in it early and late, week-day and Sunday all alike?"

"Well, I do remember it," I said, "and I also remember it was in that same godless village that God won my poor heart for Himself."

"Yes, yes, that was it; and then you will remember you tried to get every one else to see as you did, and we had some stirring times in C——. Don't you remember the first move you made?"

"Well, really I have forgotten," I replied.

"But I remember well enough, and I can never thank God sufficiently for it. It was you who helped me to take that first step which has been the cause of my spiritual and temporal prosperity; I shall never, never forget it. You first came into my little shop, which was a sort of general curiosity store, a poor affair, and you asked me to sign a paper agreeing to close my old shop every Sunday thence-forward, and to post a printed notice to this effect in my window.

"I hesitated—what would the neighbours say, I thought; but I promised to do so if all the other shop-keepers would do the same; and I remember how you tried, and how they all refused, generally saying they would shut up on Sundays if the others would, but no one would make the start.

"Then you came to me again and pleaded with me, and preached a little sermon to me, and at last I felt

I could refuse no longer, and I signed the paper *first*, right at the top, and you put up the notice in my window.

“Well, you had no sooner left the shop than I regretted the whole thing, and felt I had made a fool of myself, and yet dared not pull down that paper in the window. The devil fought hard with me, but that paper seemed to have broken his power, and I conquered.

“On Saturday night up went the shutters, and there they stayed until Monday morning.

“At that time you held a little gospel meeting in a big room in the house of a relative of mine, and I thought as I had nothing else to do on Sunday I would—well you know—just drop in to see my friends. I really believe now that I wanted to hear what this gospel was, and it was not like going to church to just drop in to see a friend; nobody could upbraid me about this. The result was that God spoke to me there, and my soul was saved.

“Soon after this I sold my little business, and engaged myself to an engineering firm. This firm sent me to look after some work they were doing in D——.

“Now you will call to mind that just about that time you pitched your big gospel tent at C——. I did not attend these meetings, but my wife did. You conducted the singing at the harmonium with a choir, and I shall never forget my wife coming down to D—— to see me with her heart full to overflowing with the blessing she had received in the tent. You

sang a solo which was quite new in those days, 'Almost persuaded,' and my wife got the blessing; she talks to this day about that singing; she is *quite* persuaded now, and has been, thank God, for twenty-five long years, but even now if you will only go and visit her you will find her always ready to tell you about 'Almost persuaded.'

"On my return from D—— I came to reside here, and found a set of earnest Christians, and now I, with my wife and children, are all busily engaged in the Lord's work. But more than this, I gave my attention to surveying, building, and kindred work, and five years ago was appointed Surveyor to the Council, an assured position of trust and importance which I never in the years gone by dreamed ever could be mine.

"Now, sir, tell me have I not good cause in every way to remember you? Surely to-day you are seeing the fruit 'after many days.'

"Now let me tell you too, before we part, that I am responsible for a Men's Bible Class; a large number of working men and others meet every Sunday afternoon for reading the Word of God, and once a month we get some one to address us. Will you come next month? Do! It will be a real pleasure to us all."

I agreed to go, and have fulfilled my promise. They were a bright, happy company of men from sixteen to seventy years of age. How they did sing, with evident delight, the songs of Jesus and His love, and it was good to see my friend Mr R—— on the platform generally conducting the meeting.

How God works! How He is to-day putting before souls questions which, if only answered according to those wondrous divine leadings of His Spirit to which at one time or another we are all subject, will lead us along the pathway of present good and into eternal glory.

H.

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**"THESE WORDS WERE FORCED OUT  
OF MY HEART." \***

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**D**RAW down the blinds!—One more departed—  
Taken away to his heavenly rest;  
No more dependent on earthly blessings,  
Sweetly at peace on His Saviour's breast.

Nothing but Christ he has taken with him—  
No one but Christ has cleared the way;  
Trusting alone on His grand atonement,  
Ready for Glory—eternity's day.

Praise to the Father for His gift so precious—  
Glory to God for His boundless love;  
Millions and millions of tongues will proclaim it  
Through countless ages in raptures above.

S. G. G. H.

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\* [The composer was just passing into eternity when he ejaculated these lines, saying regarding them, "These words were forced out of my heart." Truly "the sting of death" had gone, and "victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" was blessedly manifest.—ED .G. M.]

"MY ANCHOR VERSE."

"CAP'N LEVI," began the pastor in a voice that faltered a little in spite of him, "there's—there's something that I think you ought to know. I met Dr Wiley just now, and—and—he——"

The gray head on the pillow turned quickly. "What is it, Elder? Does Doc. think I'm a-goin' t' die?"

"Yes, Cap'n; he's afraid that this is your last sickness; and——"

But the upraised hand checked him.

"How long afore—afore——"

"Not long, he thinks; a few days, perhaps; not more than a week at most. I can't tell you how sorry I am, Cap'n, and how I long to say something to help and comfort you."

"I know it, Elder, I know it; 'n' I thank ye kin'ly. But I hope ye'll not take offence at an ol' man, 'n' dyin'—'n' dyin'—ef I ask ye not t' say nuthin f'r a spell. Ye see, it's a new idee. Hadn't thought o' it afore, 'n' I must kinder git uster it a leetle. It's like startin' on a new course; I've jes' got t' hol' her es she is ontill I git my bearin's. Ye unnerstan', don't ye, Elder?" And there was a piteous appeal in both voice and eyes.

"Perfectly, old friend; it's just what I should want myself. I'll go away now and come back after a while, if you'd like me to."

K

"'Thet's it ; thet's what I want. Leave me alone an hour or so, 'n' then come back, f'r I'll want t' talk with ye 'bout a good many things afore I—I—go. 'N' I wish ye'd pass th' word forrud es ye go out, not t' hev nobody come in here f'r a spell."

Left alone, the old man faced the Mystery which had suddenly drawn near. How strange it all seemed ! He could not realise it. He had faced death a hundred times, but there had always been a fighting chance until now ; but now there was no chance. He knew that Dr Wiley never gave a man up so long as there was the least possibility of pulling him through. No, he must just lie here and wait for death. He wondered how it felt to die. He remembered the faces of dead men that he had seen ; one in particular came persistently before him, full of frozen horror. Would he look like that when he was dead ?

Then his thoughts took another turn. He was a child again, in the old home just up the road ; and mother was there, and the boys, and the one wee sister ; and father was off at sea, as he usually was. Odd pranks forgotten for half a century came trooping into his mind. He heard his mother's half-laughing reproof of some of them—bless her heart ! she never could really scold.

And there came to him, too, the recollection of the day when they carried mother away and laid her under the pines in the village cemetery—"buryin' ground" it was called then. How dark the day seemed, although the sun was shining ! And when

the funeral was over, and everybody had gone home, he remembered how he went back and stretched himself out beside the new-made grave and threw his arm over it, and sobbed himself to sleep there. Ah, well—and a smile lighted up the wrinkled face—it would not be long before he would do that again; only they would not waken him this time. Mother was there, and father, and Joe, and Jim, and Matt, and Mary,—all but Sam, who was lost at sea, and himself, the last of all. It wouldn't be so bad to die, after all; it was only getting the family together again.

But *would* they all be together again? The Knapps had been pious, God-fearing people—all but the Cap'n. He had never been a "perfessor"; how often he had said that, and with what pride, comparing his straightforward life with that of some weak and inconsistent church members! How hard he had always been upon those whose living seemed to give the lie to their professions! But where was he now? What had he to depend upon? The inconsistencies of Christians were of no consequence to him now; he saw that clearly enough.

Then Cap'n Levi drew forth a little bit of experience that he had kept carefully hidden from the sight of everybody, the existence of which he had hardly dared confess even to himself; just the merest glimmer of a hope and a faith that needed always to say, "I believe; help Thou my unbelief!" But as he turned these over in his mind and pondered them, lo! that hope grew strong enough to draw the other

world of life and glory near, so that all fear of death was lost; and that faith groping in the darkness grasped and clung fast to a strong Hand; and the old man's heart was comforted, and he turned his head on the pillow and dropped off to sleep like a tired child.

When he awoke, Elder Doane sat by his bedside.

"Waal, I d'clare f'r 't! This ain't very hospiterbul, me a-sleepin' here when I've got comp'ny. Why didn't ye wake me up?" he asked.

"That's all right," protested the minister. "I am glad you can sleep; it will do you good. Besides, it shows that you're not greatly troubled about what we were speaking of before I left. How is it, Cap'n; are you afraid to die?"

"N—o—o," replied the veteran slowly; "I don't think that I am afeard t' die. I can't say that I've got it all straightened out in my min' yet; seems kinder cur'us, 'n' I don't seem t' take it in. Never died afore, ye know," with a humorous twinkle in his eye; "but es f'r bein' afeard—no, Elder, I ain't skeered. It's all right."

"But how do you know? What makes you so sure?" persisted the minister.

"Why, ye see, it's jes' like this. I've put into many a bad harbour in my time, full of rocks 'n' shoals, 'n' I couldn't 've foun' my way in no more'n nuthin' at all. But when the pilot come aboard I jes' give ev'rything right up t' him 'n' didn't bother my head no more 'bout it. It was his bizness to bring me in, 'n' he allus done it. Thet's 'bout the way I feel now."



"But has the Pilot come on board?"

"Yessir, He's aboard; 'n', Elder, He's bin aboard a long spell, although ye didn't know nuthin' 'bout it, 'n' I wasn't allus plumb sure of it myself. But, lyin' here 'n' thinkin' it over, I'm dead sartin of it. Yessir, the Pilot's aboard, 'n' I ain't afeard weth Him at the wheel."

"Tell me about it, Cap'n."

"Waal, there ain't much t' tell. Only one mornin' a spell ago you was prayin' in church f'r sailors thet they might all ship weth the Great Cap'n; 'n' it come over me all of a suddent thet thet was what I wanted more'n anything else in the world; 'n' right then 'n' there I signed articles weth Him."

The pastor's head was bowed upon his clasped hands, and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. "Thank God! Thank God!" he murmured. It was all that he could say.

"Ther's jes' one thing thet's troublin' me," said the Cap'n, "'n' thet is thet I hain't come out 'n' let folks know 'bout it. Seems t' me 'tain't quite square not t' put on the uniform 'n' line up weth His crew. I'd like t' git well 'nough t' go t' church once more 'n' h'ist His flag up t' the peak so thet ev'rybody'd know I was sailin' under Him. But it's too late f'r thet now."

"Let me do it for you, Cap'n," said Mr Doane eagerly. "Let me tell the people to-morrow from the pulpit what you have just told me!"

"Will ye do it, Elder?" asked the old man as eagerly; "will ye do it? Waal, thet takes the last

load off o' my min'. I couldn't bear the idee of slippin' away wethout throwin' up my hat f'r the Cap'n at least onct. Yes, I know I orter done it afore, but I kep' a-puttin' it off. Wisht I hadn't, now. But I'm gittin' a leetle tired, I guess. S'pose ye jes' give me a bit 'f the Bible t' think over, 'n' I'll go off t' sleep ag'in."

The pastor began that wonderful psalm of trust and triumph: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me——"

But the wasted hand was lifted.

"I hope ye won't think I mean anything wrong," said the Cap'n hesitatingly. "Them's fine words, but—somehow—they don't seem t' hit me jes' right. Ye see I wa'n't much of a farmer, 'n' I don't know nuthin' 'bout sheep 'n' their ways; never hed much to do weth 'em until they was cooked. Ain't there suthin' f'r sailors? Suthin' 'bout an anchor? Seems t' me I ric'lect suthin' 'f thet sort thet my mother uster say."

"Is this it: 'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil'?"

"Thet's it!" he cried in delight. "Thet hits my case to a T. An anchor; thet's what I need, sure 'nough. Enterin' into thet within th' veil; goin' out 'f sight, 'n' ketchin' hol' on suthin' 'n' holdin' on. Yes, thet'll do; couldn't be nuthin' better. Which hope—an anchor—sure——" he murmured drowsily. And so he drifted out upon the sea of sleep, carrying his anchor with him.

It was well advertised through the medium of the store that the Elder would have a message from Cap'n Levi at the service on Sunday morning, and all the village was there to hear it. Everything went on as usual through “the preliminaries” and the sermon, until the last hymn had been sung. Then, bidding the congregation to be seated again, Mr Doane told of the life that was ebbing away, of its calm confidence in the face of death, and of its reason therefor. Then he spoke of the Cap'n's one deep regret—that he had seemed ashamed of his faith—that he “hadn't h'isted the flag 'f Jesus,”—and of his desire to do so now, and in this way. The speaker's voice broke here with a great longing, not for the dying man, but for the living men before him.

“O men!” he cried; “this message from your comrade comes straight to you. You must soon launch out on your last cruise as Cap'n Levi is doing. You need the Pilot who is sailing with him. Why not take Him aboard now? You must have the anchor that will hold: why not ship it to-day? Perhaps some of you are secretly trusting in the Lord, but are not willing to make it known. Come out openly for Him. Who will run up Christ's flag to the peak here and now?”

It sounded like a direct challenge; and in the breathless silence that followed, men could almost hear the beating of their own hearts. Then Bill Dunnett slowly rose to his feet, with the tears running down his bronzed face.

“Elder,” he said, brokenly, “I dunno ef it's th'

proper thing to speak out in meetin' this a-way, but 'pears to me I can't help it. Me 'n' Cap'n Levi's bin shipmates 'n' frien's f'r many a year, 'n' we ain't a-going to be separated now, not ef I c'n help it. 'N' I want ye sh'd tell him next time ye see him thet Bill Dunnett's shipped weth Jesus same's him, 'n' thet he'll meet him in the harbour 'f heav'n bimeby."

"Me too!" cried Sam Gallup. "An' me!" came from two or three others. Then silence again, broken finally by the pastor's voice:

"Men, this is a solemn moment! It seems as though Cap'n Levi were right here among us, shipping a crew for the Lord. How glad he'll be to hear of these who have taken service! But there are others of you who ought to be with him. Come along and sign the articles! If you will take Jesus as your Captain, stand up!"

And one after another, slowly, soberly, without excitement, but with the flush of a high purpose on their weather-beaten faces, they stood on their feet—a dozen of them, Cap'n Levi's old-time mates and cronies. With a few words of fervent prayer the service closed.

Cap'n Levi's face lighted up with a great joy when the Elder, hurrying to his room, told him the news. It seemed too good to be true, and it had to be repeated again and again before he could really take it in.

"Waal! waal!" he said finally; "ef thet don't jes' beat all creation! Bill Dunnett! 'n' Hy Stacey! 'n' Jim Webster! 'n' the hull caboodle 'f 'em! Jes'

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think 'f it ! Why, Elder, I'm fair skeered ! It seems too wunnerful. Here I've bin mournin' b'cause I'd got t' go alone, wethut any one thet I'd helped t' fin' the Lord, 'n' He's give me a hull crew ! An'—'n'—Elder, I'm 'shamed, too. T' think thet all this time I ain't bin willin' t' fly His flag or show His lights !"

And the old man broke into tears of mingled joy and grief.

It wasn't long waiting after that. Swiftly the end drew near. By the doctor's orders no one was allowed to see the sick man—no one, that is, but Elder Doane. To him Cap'n Levi clung with such pathetic earnestness that finally the minister took up his residence in the house, and left it no more until all was over. To the pastor the Cap'n clung, and to his "anchor verse," as he called it. Much talk the two men had those days concerning things beyond, and much reading of the Word. But always at the end of the talking or reading, when the Cap'n was tired, and would rest or sleep, he would say, "Now let's hev my anchor verse, Elder." And although he knew it by heart, its repetition always seemed to comfort and delight him.

One day Mr Doane read him Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" :

"Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me !  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea !"

He listened with interest, but made no comment. To the question "How do you like that, Cap'n?" he answered :

“It’s very purty, but it don’t seem t’ tetch me much. Fust place, it don’t make no diff’rence whether they’s any moanin’ at th’ bar or not. T’ain’t th’ moanin’ thet hurts ; it’s th’ bar itself ; ’n’ ef th’ Pilot’s on board ’n’ knows His bizness, they ain’t no call t’ be afraid ’f thet. Then, ag’in, them last lines ’bout seein’ th’ Pilot face t’ face when he hes crossed th’ bar—them ain’t right. What we want is t’ know thet th’ Pilot’s there, whether ye see Him or not ; ’n’ ye want t’ know *thet* while ye’re crossin’ th’ bar, not wait till afterwards. But mebbe I’m all wrong. I dunno much ’bout this poetin’ bizness ; I’m lookin’ at it from a sailor man’s p’int ’f view. Anyways, it ain’t so good t’ me as thet verse ’bout th’ anchor. How does it go, Elder ? ”

And the Elder repeated the well-loved words, and tried him with no more poetry.

Then came one of those bleak, drear nights not uncommon in late November. All day the wind had been blowing a half-gale from the south-east, and the sea was running heavy. The booming of the breakers on Heron Ledges sounded like distant thunder, while the Martin’s Reef whistling buoy sobbed and moaned like a spirit in despair. There was a hint of snow in the air, and a cold, clammy mist held the village in uncanny embrace. Altogether, it was a night in which to be thankful for a snug home and a roaring fire, and for no necessity for leaving either.

Nevertheless the store was full. It had been whispered about that the Cap’n was not likely to live

through the night, and sorrow for his going had drawn his old companions together in a kind of death vigil. He was, of course, the one object of thought and conversation. Many a half-forgotten story was told in which he played a part. "'Member th' time——" some one would say; and then would follow the recital of some incident well known to most of them, but taking on a new significance now that its chief actor was passing on.

As the evening wore on silence fell upon the group. Nobody felt much like talking; each was occupied with his thoughts. Finally Jim Webster said, "Doc. thinks he won't pull through th' night, eh?"

Somebody nodded.

"Waal, he'll go out weth th' tide, then. Lessee; low water's at 1.30. This wind'll hol' it back some, but not much. Yessir, Cap'n Levi won't be weth us at two o'clock."

Nobody questioned the assertion: for it is a tradition of the coast that the souls of those who have loved the sea, and have lived on it or by it, pass from life with the ebbing of the tide.

Up in the little cottage on the hill Dr Wiley and Mr Doane were watching by the bedside of the sick man. He had lapsed into semi-unconsciousness in the afternoon, and now lay without sign of life, except a troubled and uneven breathing. But as midnight drew near, he grew restless and uneasy, turning from side to side, picking the quilt, and muttering broken words under his breath. Many

things seemed to be passing through his mind. Now he was a child, at home again with his brothers. Once he was kneeling at his mother's knee, for the listeners heard him whisper, "Now I lay me down to sleep." Then he was at Eph Stiles's store, playing checkers with his old crony, Cap'n Bob. But oftenest he was at sea, in stress and storm; and louder rang his voice in question and command.

Presently he was drawing near some harbour, some harbour strange and unknown to him; and the pilot had not come. Anxiety showed in his pinched face, and his hands were tightly clinched. "Where is he?" he muttered; "why don't he come? He must 've seen th' signal." Then loudly, "Forrud, there!" he shouted. "Keep yer eye peeled f'r th' pilot! Sing out 's soon 's ye see him! What's thet on th' sta'b'rd bow?" And he raised his gaunt form up in bed, and peered eagerly forward, shading his eyes with his hand. "Ah, thet's him," he said, sinking back with a sigh of relief. "Glad t' see ye, sir; was a leetle afraid we'd missed ye. Now we're all right. Lucky ye've come, f'r I don't know th' course 't all."

Then he was silent for a little; but they knew that he was following the windings of the narrow passage, noting its rocks and shoals, but resting with serene confidence on the pilot's knowledge and skill.

Outside the gale rose higher and shrieked louder. The dying tide fought fiercely for its life, and flung



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its billows with thunderous roar on the rocks and ledges. The wailing of the buoy was like the fiendish laughter of demons from the pit. It was half-past one, and the tide was out.

Suddenly the Cap'n sprang up in bed again ; it almost seemed as though he would spring from it. A glad light shone in his sunken eyes, and a satisfied smile played over his wasted features. "Forrud, there !" he called ; 'Forrud, there ! stan' by t' let go th' anchor !" Silence for a moment. Then, looking up into the face of Some One, he said quietly, "Anchor's gone, sir !" and sank back upon his pillow.

Cap'n Levi's last cruise was ended ; his anchor was down in heaven's peaceful harbour. "So he bringeth them unto their desired haven."

J. K. W.

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 FRAGMENT.

THE paschal lamb, as the ground of Israel's peace, is a marked and beautiful type of Christ as the ground of the believer's peace. There was nothing to be added to the blood on the lintel ; neither is there anything to be added to the blood on the mercy-seat. The "unleavened bread" and "bitter herbs" were necessary, but not as forming, either in whole or in part, the ground of peace. They were for the inside of the house, and formed the characteristics of the communion there ; but the blood of the lamb was the foundation of everything.

C. H. M.

## THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD.

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"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."—1 PETER v. 10-12.

**G**OD is made known to us as the "*God of all grace*," and the position in which we are set is that of "*tasting that he is gracious*."

How hard it is for us to believe this, that the Lord is *gracious*! The natural feeling of our hearts is, "I know that thou art an austere man"; there is the want in all of us naturally of the understanding of the *grace of God*.

There is sometimes the thought that grace implies God's *passing over sin*, but no, grace supposes sin to be so horribly bad a thing that God cannot tolerate it: were it in the power of man, after being unrighteous and evil, to patch up his ways, and mend himself so as to stand before God, there would be no need of *grace*. The very fact of the Lord's being gracious shows sin to be so evil a thing, that, man being a sinner, his state is utterly ruined and hopeless, and nothing but *free grace* will do for him—can meet his need.

We must learn what God is to us, not by our own thoughts, but by what He has revealed Himself to be, and that is, "*the God of all grace*." The moment I

understand that I am a sinful man, and yet that it was because the Lord knew the full extent of my sin, and what its hatefulness was, that He came to me, I understand what grace is. Faith makes me see that God is greater than my sin, and not that my sin is greater than God. . . . The Lord that I have known as laying down His life for me, is the same Lord I have to do with every day of my life, and all His dealings with me are on the same principles of *grace*. The great secret of growth is, the looking up to the Lord as *gracious*. How precious, how strengthening it is to know that Jesus is at this moment feeling and exercising the same love towards me as when He died on the cross for me !

This is a truth that should be used by us in the most common everyday circumstances of life. Suppose, for instance, I find an evil temper in myself, which I feel it difficult to overcome ; let me bring it to Jesus as my Friend, virtue goes out of Him for my need. *Faith* should be ever thus in exercise against temptations, and not simply my own effort ; my own effort against it will never be sufficient. The source of real strength is in the sense of the Lord's being *gracious*. The natural man in us always disbelieves Christ as the only source of strength and of every blessing. Suppose my soul is out of communion, the natural heart says, " I must correct the cause of this before I can come to Christ," but *He is gracious* ; and knowing this, the way is to return to Him *at once, just as we are*, and then humble ourselves deeply before Him. It is only in *Him* and from *Him* that

we shall find that which will restore our souls. Humbleness in His presence is the only real humbleness. If we own ourselves in His presence to be *just what we are*, we shall find that He will show us nothing but *grace*. . . .

It is Jesus who gives abiding rest to our souls, and not what our thoughts about ourselves may be. Faith never thinks about that which is in ourselves as its ground of rest ; it receives, loves, and apprehends what God has revealed, and what are God's thoughts about Jesus, in whom is *His rest*. As knowing Jesus to be precious to our souls, our eyes and our hearts being occupied with Him, they will be effectually prevented from being taken up with the vanity and sin around ; and this too will be our strength against the sin and corruption of our own hearts. Whatever I see in myself that is not in Him is sin, but then it is not thinking of my own sins, and my own vileness, and being occupied with them, that will humble me, but thinking of the Lord Jesus, dwelling upon the excellency in Him. It is well to be done with ourselves, and to be taken up with Jesus. We are entitled to forget ourselves, we are entitled to forget our sins, we are entitled to forget all but Jesus.

There is nothing so hard for our hearts as to abide in the sense of *grace*, to continue practically conscious that we are not under law but under *grace* ; it is by *grace* that the heart is "established," but then there is nothing more difficult for us really to comprehend than the fulness of *grace*, that "*grace of God wherein we stand*," and to walk in the power and conscious-

ness of it. . . . It is only in the presence of God that we can know it, and *there* it is our privilege to be. The moment we get away from the presence of God, there will always be certain workings of *our own* thoughts within us, and our own thoughts can never reach up to the thoughts of *God* about us, to the "*grace of God.*"

Anything that I had the smallest possible right to expect could not be pure, free *grace*—could not be the "*grace of God.*" . . . It is alone when in communion with Him that we are able to measure *everything* according to *His grace.* . . . It is impossible, when we are abiding in the sense of God's presence, for anything, be what it may—even the state of the Church—to shake us, for we count on God, and then all things become a sphere and scene for the operation of *His grace.*

The having very simple thoughts of *grace* is the true source of our strength as Christians; and the abiding in the sense of *grace*, in the presence of God, is all the secret of holiness, peace, and quietness of spirit.

The "*grace of God*" is so unlimited, so full, so perfect, that if we get for a moment out of the presence of God, we cannot have the true consciousness of it, we have no strength to apprehend it; and if we attempt to know it out of His presence, we shall only turn it to licentiousness. If we look at the simple fact of what *grace* is, it has no limits, no bounds. Be we what we may (and we cannot be worse than we are), in spite of all that, what God is

toward us is LOVE. Neither our joy nor our peace is dependent on what we are to God, but on what *He is to us*, and this is *grace*.

Grace supposes all the sin and evil that is in us, and is the blessed revelation, that through Jesus, all this sin and evil has been put away. A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins—nay, than all the sins in the world are to us; and yet, with the fullest consciousness of what *we* are, all that God is pleased to be towards us is LOVE.

In Romans vii. the state described is that of a person quickened, but whose whole set of reasonings centre in *himself* . . . he stops short of *grace*, of the simple fact that, whatever be his state, let him be as bad as he may, GOD IS LOVE, and only love towards him. Instead of looking at God, it is all “I,” “I,” “I.” Faith looks at God, as He has revealed Himself in grace. . . . Let me ask you, “Am I—or is my state the object of faith?” No, faith never makes what is in *my heart* its object, but *God’s revelation of Himself in grace*. . . .

Grace has reference to what God is, and not to what we are, except indeed that the very greatness of our sins does but magnify the extent of the “*grace of God*.” At the same time we must remember, that the object and necessary effort of grace is to bring our souls into communion with God—to sanctify us, by bringing the soul to know God, and to love Him; therefore the knowledge of grace is the true source of sanctification.

The triumph of grace is seen in this, that when

man's enmity had cast out Jesus from the earth, God's love had brought in salvation by that very act—came in to atone for the sin of those who had rejected Him. In the view of the fullest development of man's sin, faith sees the fullest development of God's *grace*. . . . I have got away from grace if I have the slightest doubt or hesitation about God's love. I shall then be saying, "I am unhappy because I am not what I should like to be:" *that* is not the question. The real question is, whether *God* is what we should like Him to be, whether Jesus is all we could wish. If the consciousness of what we are—of what we find in ourselves, has any other effect than, while it humbles us, to increase our adoration of what God is, we are off the ground of pure grace. . . . Is there distress and distrust in your minds? See if it be not because you are still saying "I," "I," and losing sight of God's grace.

It is better to be thinking of what God is than of what we are. This looking at ourselves, at the bottom is really pride, a want of the thorough consciousness that we are *good for nothing*. Till we see this we never look quite away from self to God. . . . In looking to Christ, it is our privilege to forget ourselves. *True humility does not so much consist in thinking badly of ourselves, as in not thinking of ourselves at all. I am too bad to be worth thinking about.* What I want is, to forget myself and to look to God, who is indeed worth all my thoughts. Is there need of being humbled about ourselves? We may be quite sure that will do it.

Beloved, if we can say as in Romans vii., "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no *good thing*," we have thought quite long enough about ourselves; let us then think about Him who thought about us with thoughts of good and not of evil, long before we had thoughts of ourselves at all. Let us see what His thoughts of grace about us are, and take up the words of faith, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

J. N. D.

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"NO ONE CAN KNOW THAT."

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"I SHALL get in here." The speaker was a bright, pleasant-faced, young Scotch lassie, who approached the open door of the railway carriage at which I was standing, at Craigellachie Junction (in the North of Scotland) ten years ago. With a few friends I had been having some evangelistic meetings in a town near by, and we were now returning south.

Our party of seven very well filled the compartment in which our belongings had been placed. Every other compartment in the carriage was empty, but the young traveller had evidently made up her mind that she would travel with us. She saw the number of articles lying on the seats, and I said, "We are a large party; there is plenty of room elsewhere, where you might be more comfortable, perhaps."



She paused a moment, and then emphatically saying, "I shall get in here," stepped in, and took her seat by the window at the farthest side of the carriage.

The next minute my party got in, and feeling sure that God had His eye on this girl, I took my seat by her side, and, just as we started, gave her a little gospel book, entitled (if I remember aright), "Saved." The train moved off, and she at once began to read the book. Its contents evidently impressed her, and when she had finished it she looked steadfastly out of the window. After a minute or two I said to her, "Well, is it all settled?"

"What do you mean?" she replied.

"I mean, is the salvation of your soul a settled matter yet? Are *you* saved?"

She flushed intensely, while a tear sprang from her eye, as she almost passionately replied, "No one can know that."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," I said, "that is a great mistake. It is quite possible *you* may not know it, but a great many people *do* know it. I know through infinite grace that *I* am saved—why should you not know it likewise?"

"But no person can be sure of that in this world," she argued, "we are all such sinners."

"Quite true," I rejoined, "but the blessedness of the gospel is this, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15). You and I cannot save ourselves, but He can save us. He has saved me, and if you are willing to believe and receive Him, He will save you likewise."

"But surely we have a great deal to do to get salvation?" was her eager reply.

"No," was my answer, "that is another mistake. When the Lord Jesus died on the cross, He cried, 'It is finished.' He bore the sins of sinners, and sustained God's judgment thereof. He alone could make atonement for sins, and that atonement He effected when He died on the cross. It says, 'He bare the sins of many' (Isa. liii. 12). It is written, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many' (Heb. ix. 28), hence all those who believe on Him are entitled to know that their sins were borne by Him, and blotted out by Him. All believers who simply trust God's word *know* that their sins are blotted out, for 'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John i. 7). The work that puts sins away is finished.

"If there be any work on our side it is very simply described thus, in the Lord's own words, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent' (John vi. 29). Further, we read, 'But to him that *worketh* not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness *without works*, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered' (Rom. iv. 5-7). The gospel is this. First, that we could not do anything to save ourselves. Secondly, that God does not want us to do anything to save ourselves. Thirdly, when we could not do, and God did not

want us to do anything to save ourselves, His blessed Son died to save us. He has done all the work, and now the one who believes in Him is brought into the enjoyment of the salvation which He has secured, and which becomes the portion of all those who trust in Him."

My listener was very deeply interested, and tears began to roll down her cheeks, as she heard of the love of God, and the present salvation which faith in Jesus brings to the soul.

At length she said, "I should like to be saved. I will try and do my best to get salvation."

"That will not do," was my answer. "You will never get it that way. You must take it as a gift from the Lord. 'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. vi. 23). And more than that, you must understand that 'now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation' (2 Cor. vi.).

"But it must take some time surely. I could not get it now?"

"Oh, yes, you may, before you leave this railway carriage. Where are you going?"

"To Grantown," she replied. "I have come from F—— this morning, and I am going to a situation in Grantown."

I looked at my watch, and said, "We shall be in Grantown in twenty minutes. It will not take twenty minutes for you to get your soul saved. If I were you I would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ just now, and reach Grantown a pardoned, delivered, saved, soul,

and not a sinner in your sins, as you were when you left your home this morning." This exhortation evidently greatly moved her. She turned her head, and again gazed out of the window. After a few minutes' silence she turned and said, "I will believe Him now; I will trust Him now," and peace and joy filled her heart as she uttered the words. By this time we had reached Grantown. She gave me her name and address, thanked me very warmly for speaking to her, and out she stepped.

Six weeks after I received a letter from her, saying that she could not forbear writing to thank me for having spoken to her that morning, adding, "You were God's messenger to my soul that day in the train, and I shall always be thankful."

Two years later I was attracted by a very bright face, among my listeners, in a large gospel meeting in Edinburgh, and thought I had seen its features somewhere, but could not recall where, till, at the close of the meeting my young friend L—— came up to me to renew acquaintance, and remind me of the railway incident. Her heart was full of gratitude to God for His grace to her soul. Frequently I have seen and heard from her since, and what she learned in a railway carriage is always fresh in her memory.

Reader, are *you* saved? If not, why not? Let the above incident of God's grace lead you to receive the Lord Jesus as your own Saviour just where you read this little paper.

W. T. P. W.

## MORE THAN A MOTHER'S LOVE.

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SOME years ago there lived in the State of New York a woman and her little boy, Johnny. He was her only child. Times being bad, her husband had left his home to seek a better fortune in California. At last, after months of suspense, the promised letter arrived. It brought the news of brighter prospects, and the desire for the wife and child to join him by the next vessel. They accordingly took the train to New York city, and thence embarked for California. Sailing out of that beautiful bay, passing along Staten Island, everything seemed bright to hearts buoyed up with hope. For two or three days they had lost sight of land, and not a sail was to be seen on the far distant horizon, nothing but the wide waste of ocean, stretching all around. Johnny sat close beside his mother upon the deck, when suddenly he started to his feet, and for a moment stood to listen to the awful cry of the passengers and crew below. The ship was on fire! In spite of every effort to check them, the flames carried everything before them; and, worst of all, beyond the fire were barrels of gunpowder.

When all hope was lost, the captain ordered the boats to be lowered. The last boat was lowered and as quickly filled. At that moment the mother and her little boy ran to the bulwarks of the vessel, and begged to be taken into the boat. Their boat was full and they could take no more, was the cry from a

score of voices as the oars splashed in the water. The poor frantic woman turned away in despair, as the flames made their way on deck. But one man's heart was moved by the pitiful entreaty and the boy's scared look as he clung to his mother's gown. "Comrades," said he, "it seems cruel to leave that woman and her child without trying to help them, let us make room for *one*." Upon which they shouted, "We'll take one of you, but we can't possibly take you both; make haste and one come, there is no time to be lost." For a moment the mother looked at the boat; there was her only hope of deliverance, and life was sweet to her. For a moment she looked at her child, and *he* was dearer to her than life itself. She could waver no longer; she caught him in her arms: "Johnny," she said, "when you land safely in California, and you see your father there, tell him, with your mother's dying love, how she stayed on the burning ship that you might be saved. Farewell, and may God watch over you, my darling boy!" He kissed his mother, who was loath to part with him; but with a last "good-bye" he was lowered into the boat.

The sailors rowed away, and as the boy still waved his handkerchief in answer to the oft-repeated kiss of his mother's hand, the barrels of gunpowder blew up and the ship was shivered into a thousand pieces, and Johnny saw his mother no more. But could he ever forget that last interview? Would not the impress of that last loving look be branded on his soul with a hotter fire of love than even the flames of that burning ship? Yes, surely; for if, when I was in

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California, I had met that boy, now a young man, and I had said to him, "John, do you remember your mother? do you ever think of her?" he would have looked at me with scorn. How could he ever forget her? And yet what was that love? It is but a shadow! It fades before His love, who gave Himself for His enemies; even the love of Jesus.

ANON.

## FRAGMENT.

DID you ever hear of a creditor who longed to remit his claims—one who positively yearned to cancel all the debts of his debtors. Such an one there is—even God Himself. He is your creditor. You are His debtor; and you are a bankrupt: you have nothing to pay.

But God delights in mercy. It will give Him deepest joy to pardon all your sins; He longs to be gracious unto you, and would give you full and free forgiveness if you would but accept it.

Blessedly is this set forth in the precious little parable propounded by the Lord Jesus in Luke vii. 41, 42. "A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay he frankly forgave them both."

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

J. T. M.

## ETERNITY! WHERE?

A MAN, after suffering some months from that terrible disease cancer, lay dying. As he was nearing the end, his family and friends, after doing all in their power to relieve his suffering, gathered round the bedside to watch their loved one breathe his last. Presently the tired eyelids opened, and looking round on them all he said, ‘*You think I’m going to die, but I’m just going to live,*’ and so he passed away from this world of sin and sorrow, to live for ever and ever with the One that died for him.

“Do you think you will get better?” was a question asked to a young man in consumption. “*If I do it will be all grace, and if not it will be all glory,*” was the answer. Not many months after and it was all glory for him.

What about you, dear reader, should you leave this scene in a few months or weeks, or even less time than that? What if it should be to-day? It must either be like those two you have just read about, to spend eternity in the bright glory above, or to be for ever lost with those in despair.

“Where will you spend eternity?”

This question comes to you and me!

Tell me, what shall your answer be—

Where will you spend eternity?

Eternity! eternity!

Where will you spend eternity?”

E. D. B.



“GOOD LUCK, FISHERMEN.”

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“GOOD LUCK, FISHERMEN; COME ALL  
SAFE HOME.”

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ANY one passing along the seaside, close to a certain little Scotch fishing village, cannot fail to see the above words, painted in plain white letters just above high-water mark. They have probably been an encouragement to many a poor, hardworking fisherman as he has sallied forth to toil in his daily calling mid the dangers of the great deep.

A passer-by, being greeted by an old man standing at the corner of one of the little streets with a friendly “Good-morning,” entered into conversation with him.

“I was struck with those words painted on the rocks; do you know what they reminded me of? I hoped, as I read them, that many in this village will not only come home safely from the fishing, but *come home safe to the glory above* at the end of their life’s toil here? Are *you* clear about that?”

“I am doing the best I can,” was the familiar stereotyped answer. *A poor do* probably, as is generally the case with those who reply thus.

“But you can never reach the glory of God by that road. Has it never struck you that if it depended on *your* doing there was no need for the Son of God to have come to accomplish the mighty work of redemption?”

The old man gave a sort of half assent.

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“Supposing now,” he continued, “you were on a ship wrecked on the rocks in a storm, and far from the shore, and a lifeboat came alongside. Would it not be very foolish to keep on trying and doing the best you could to get ashore? Would it not be far wiser to give up doing, *and to get into the lifeboat?*”

This brought back to the old man’s memory some similar circumstance at sea in which he had had part, and which, alas! seemed to interest him a good deal more than how his soul could be saved.

“Well, friend, it is high time you got into the lifeboat. This world is a wreck, and a complete and irretrievable one. It is, so to speak, on the rocks, and we were all on board that ship till the lifeboat took some of us off. The Lord Jesus Christ is the true lifeboat, and He only can save. If you stick to the wreck, you may *do* what you may, but down with it you will surely go—and where? *Eternal judgment* follows death (Heb. ix. 27, vi. 2); but if you cast aside your own doings, and believe on Him, you may leave the wreck, and He will transport you safely home. Good luck, if we may use the poor fisherman’s expression, will then indeed be yours, and the Father’s house your blessed home for ever.”

The painter of the words on the rocks desired that *all* should come safe home as to their bodies. And the heart of the Lord Jesus is surely even so large as to our souls. He died *for all*, and offers salvation *to all*. God is not willing that *any* should perish (2 Peter iii. 9). He would have *all* to be saved

(1 Tim. ii. 4). It is *a wonderful lifeboat* that God has provided to save the wrecked (*there is plenty of room for all*)—*it is Christ*.

A more complete wreck than fallen man—spirit, soul, and body—could not be, for sin and corruption and death have mastered him. And a more complete salvation than the salvation of God could not be, for it is *from all the effects of sin*, and *for glory*. But, alas! how many choose their own delusion, continuing to do, and work, and strive, and try to save themselves, instead of simply believing God! All such efforts are utterly useless.

If this is *your* thought then, dear reader, *give it up* at once lest you perish in the wreck. *Take God at His word. Venture your all on Christ*. He is the *perfect lifeboat* of God's faithful and gracious providing. Many are in it already, daily travelling farther and farther from the wreck, and nearer and nearer to the heavenly harbour in glory. Are you one? If not, why not, why not *now*? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," &c. (Acts xvi. 31). God grant that it may be the blessed portion of all who read these lines that *they all may come safe home*.

"Behold, what wondrous love and grace!

When we were wretched and undone,  
To save a ruined, helpless race

The Father gave His only Son!  
Of twice ten thousand gifts divine  
No gift like this could ever shine."

E. H. C.

## THE END.

“The end of all things is at hand.”—1 PET. iv. 7.

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A VERY great deal of interest is at present being centred in that far-away country Manchuria, where an enormous expenditure both of lives and money is taking place, and where the two great nations are endeavouring to secure by the force of arms what they failed to accomplish by diplomacy; and I suppose the question uppermost in the minds of most people as they think of the conflict is, “*What will the end be?*”

Whether this is the first link in the great chain of events very soon to take place upon the earth, to which allusion is made repeatedly in the Scriptures, or not, it would be folly on the part of any one to say. But it is quite within the range of possibility, dear reader, that before the end of this great struggle comes *your end* may have come.

All the things around us, of which we are able to take cognizance, have had a beginning, and will, sooner or later, have an end, and man is no exception to this.

Now in this little interval known as Time, and in view of Eternity, there is something to get and something to lose.

Let me pause here and ask thee, friend, Is it well, is it well with thy soul? If not, “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee” (Prov. v. 25). Never mind the present,

but make sure about the future. Think of the man in the twelfth of Luke, in the very zenith of what the world would call happiness—eating, drinking, and making merry. In his reverie he left God out altogether, and God calls him a fool. You cannot be happy, friend, without the knowledge of God, with your sins unforgiven, and with death in front of you.

Again, the Lord Jesus in the sixteenth chapter of Luke draws aside the curtain and lets us see the end of a man who made the most of the present, and neglected the future. Fool! you say. Yes; but is it not exactly what you are doing? “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. xvi. 26).

How is it then that people on every hand, having such a keen eye for seen things—temporal, have neither the heart nor the eye for unseen things—eternal?

The reason is, that “the god of this world (the devil), hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor. iv. 4).

Now, though the enemy is working, busily working, bent upon the destruction of souls, blessed be God, He, too, is working in all the activities of His love and grace, and desires to bless *you*.

Listen to what Peter says. “Unto *you* first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless

*you*, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts iii. 16).

Ah! iniquities and sins! These are the things that hinder souls from getting blest.

How did the five thousand of that day get forgiveness? They repented before God. They acknowledged their guilt. And that is just the way the man in the thirty-second Psalm got forgiveness. He said, "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (ver. 5).

Then why should you remain unforgiven, unblest, unhappy?

For whom did the Lord Jesus die? Clearly not for good people.

Can you say "for me"? Thank God if you can. That is the language of faith. I can say, "For me, Lord Jesus, Thou hast died."

Now, if all your sins were laid upon the Lord Jesus, and He has suffered the judgment of every one of them, and more, has glorified God about them, how many remain? You cannot tell by looking within. Look right away from yourself and from things material right up to the place which no human eye can see nor any telescope of man's construction can reach, but which is reached by faith, and see Jesus seated and crowned at God's right hand, proof of His complete victory and triumph over every foe—Satan, Death, and the Grave; and of God's good pleasure and delight in Him, the Son of His love. Then

hearken to the words of the Spirit of God in Acts xiii. 38, 39, "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, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Is the blessing limited to this? No. If you are left on earth to await the coming of the Lord Jesus from heaven, you will prove not only that God's salvation is a salvation of the soul, but a present salvation from the difficulties and dangers with which you will find the path so thickly strewn; whilst you await the moment, fast approaching, when "the Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord " (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17).

Let me ask, in closing, friend, will you participate in this bright and blessed hope, and be amongst the number of those who sing the first recorded song in heaven, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"? (Rev. v. 9).

If not, then what shall the end be of them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?

A. V. P.

## THE RULER AND THE BEGGAR.

(Read Mark x. 17-34, 46-52.)

THESE is a very striking contrast between the two men whose history the Spirit of God gives us in this chapter. The rich man and the poor man present an immense contrast, and I think if you see the point of the contrast, you will take your place with the poor man, because the rich man declined to get rid of the thing that was the hindrance to his getting eternal life.

Now I daresay you would like to have eternal life. You say, "Oh, yes!" But how are you going to get it?—that is the question. Perhaps you will say to me, "How are *you* going to get it?" Thank God I have it. "How did I get it?" I took simply, in faith, what God's love presented to me in the person of Jesus.

"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). What God gives I took. That is how *I* got it, and I should like you to get it too. Do not think you must work for it. You do not deserve it, you cannot buy it, you cannot earn it, and yet you can get it. Let Jesus have His own way with you, and you will surely get it.

Get hold of this distinctly, that the Jesus who now sits crowned with glory at God's right hand is the same Jesus of whom this gospel tells us. There is no change in the Lord. His circumstances are changed, His surroundings different, but He Himself



is the same. The Jesus I know is the Jesus Bartimæus saw. I have not seen Him yet: I am going to. And *you* too are going to see Him, because Gods says, "Every eye shall see Him." Godless reader, get hold of this—"Every eye shall see him" (Rev. i. 7).

"When?" That is another question altogether. "When will Christians see Him?" When He comes into the air for His saints (see 1 Thess. iv. 15-17), and one of these days He will come. Will you meet Him then? If not, you will see Him by-and-by at the great white throne, and then it will be in the character of Judge.

But before any of us see Him we have to get our eyes opened. You say, "How do you know?" Because for many a long day I was as blind as Bartimæus, but one night the Lord opened my eyes. Oh, that He may open yours now. You would like to see Jesus and have eternal life? How are you going to get these blessings? The young ruler shows how they are not reached. Truly he is a beacon. God has told us this tale that we may say, "I will not try to get eternal life that way." Observe how he came to the Lord; it is very interesting, and I do not know that I could find two men who were more in earnest than he and Bartimæus. The young ruler came "running"—not with stately pace, moving slowly, as though his quest was not of any importance. Note this, "Then came one running, and kneeled to him." And he was not ashamed to get down in public on his knees before the Lord. Were

*you* ever yet seen down on your knees looking to Christ? You say, "No; I would be ashamed." Ah, the day of your real shame and the day of your damnation will go together by-and-by if you are not careful.

The young ruler both ran and kneeled—no man could say he was not in earnest. Observe his query, "Good Master, *what shall I do* that I may inherit eternal life?" That question of *doing* comes twice in this chapter. The rich man says, "What shall I do?" and the Lord says to the blind beggar, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" conveys the conviction that he thought he was capable of earning it. How does the Lord answer him? First all He says, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." He wanted to see if he knew who He really was. "There is none good but one, that is God," gave him his opportunity. If he had really known who Christ was, he would have acknowledged His Godhead; but he did not believe that He was God, and perhaps *you* do not believe it. *He* was mistaken, and *you* are mistaken. Jesus is God. If that man's eyes had been opened to the glory of Christ's person, he would have said, "Thou art God."

The Lord then adds, "Thou knowest the commandments," and He names them. The young man replied, "All these have I observed from my youth." He had been outwardly most proper; there had not been the slightest thing that any one could put his

finger upon. You, my reader, may be all right outwardly; but what are you inwardly? Are you a sinner? Well, sin is a very serious question. The will of the creature is a very serious thing, and "the wages of sin is death." You may glibly talk about getting eternal life; you are going to get the wages of sin, death. I want you to face that. Through sin you have forfeited your life upon earth, hence you are a dying man. And you talk about eternal life. Stop—what about your sins, those many sins of thought and action? "You say, Nobody saw them." God saw all of them. And your conscience knows they are many. You will have to get that question of sin settled.

This young man proposed to get eternal life by "doing." Very well, says Christ, you know what you should do. He replies, "I have done all that. I have not infringed the commandments with regard to God or my neighbour." He did not know himself. Now there are two tables of commandments. One relates to God, the other to one's neighbour. The Lord tested him and exposed him to himself, by the latter. He could not have loved his neighbour as himself, for he was a rich man. If he had loved his neighbour *as* himself, he must have shared his riches. Hence Jesus said to him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and *follow me*." This meant, "If you mean to get eternal life by doing, do not make a

long business of it ; get it done right away. If that is the ground you are on, take action at once." Alas ! he thought more of his money than of eternal life. This rich man was told to follow Christ, and he would not. The blind man was *not* told, and he did it. My heart always warms up to Bartimæus. The Lord says to him, "Go thy way"; and his reply is, "Lord, Thy way is my way from this day forward." Because he had tasted the grace and love of Christ, had come under the hand of the Lord, and got his eyes opened by Him, his heart was attached to Christ, and he followed Him untold.

"One thing thou lackest" is a solemn indictment. Is that true about you? You may have respectability, religion, money, station, but if you have not Christ "one thing thou lackest." Do not avoid this statement. If God were to cut short the pulse of life in your case, and you were to pass into eternity without Christ, what would you lack for ever? Christ, the knowledge of Christ, and the enjoyment of the love of Christ. Let me beseech you, be in earnest. If Christ says, "One thing thou lackest," let your heart be saying, "That one thing I should like to have just now." And what is it? Christ Himself. Be not like the young ruler. We read, "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved." The fact was this—Christ tested him. You will always find that the Lord took people up on the ground upon which they approached Him. If there was reality they would learn from Him, but if not they would turn away from His ministry, like this

poor fellow, who valued his possessions more than eternal life. They gave him a status, a place in this world. If a man be a millionaire people will run after him. A man who is poor is neither wanted nor waited on. That is the world. The ruler, in effect, said, I should like eternal life, but I have something that gives me a position in this life. Get rid of that, says Christ. He could not. He valued his money more than eternal life. He is not the only person who has acted similarly.

Perhaps you are exactly like him. You know you are a guilty sinner before God, and the question of eternal life is unsettled, and your relationship with God unsatisfactory. But you think, If I have to give up the world I am not prepared for it yet. Do not think that I am telling you to give up the world to get Christ. I never knew a tree that had much difficulty in shedding its leaves in autumn, because the sap had ceased to flow, and the leaves very easily fall off. If you get Christ, get to know His love, get the sense that He loved you, and gave up everything for you, all becomes simple. He does not ask you to give up anything for Him. He does not bid you give up, He says, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" He wants you to let Him act after the dictates of His own heart. He gives life, you receive it and then follow Him. Eternal life is the gift of God, and you get it not by works, but just as the blind man got his sight. The grace of Christ conferred sight on him, and life to you when you trust Him.

If you want to know how to be saved, you will have to learn that you cannot save yourself, but that what is impossible with men is possible with God. His mind, His attitude, is that of a giving God. So said the Lord to Samaria's daughter, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John iv. 10).

Now let us look at the beggar. "And they came to Jericho," the place of the curse, and there sat blind Bartimæus, begging. A blind beggar moves one to pity. There sat this man, and as the crowd came along he heard their voices, the hum of the multitude, the clatter of their feet, and he wondered what it was all about. He asks what it meant, and is told, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." This was lovely gospel for Bartimæus. Forget not also that He is passing by you to-day; will you have Him, will you receive Him, will you believe Him? You had better. He had passed by Jericho once before; but He never passed through it again, and as Bartimæus heard it that day, see how it moved him. The Lord sometimes puts Himself in people's way, and if they miss Him they do not get the chance again. I could tell you of many who have had an opportunity and missed it. Do not you be like that; but be like Bartimæus who, right away, says, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." He had heard of His love, His mercy, His goodness, of His raising the dead, healing the leper, and

opening the eyes of the blind. All that stirred him to action. Have not *you*, too, heard wonderful tales about Jesus of Nazareth? Have not you heard of that worldly friend of yours getting converted. You say, "Yes; but I do not believe it." You have an opportunity now of receiving Jesus—I would urge you to it.

As Jesus passed by, Bartimæus lifts up his voice and cries with all the energy of his soul, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." I think I behold that scene—the crowd passing on, and the Lord in the midst. There is the hum of many voices, but above all the noise one clear, shrill voice is heard, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." What does Jesus do? He "stood still." Blessed Lord. I believe that if just now He were gathering up the folds of His garments to leave the Father's throne, and descend into the air, to catch His beloved people up, and heard from earth an anxious sinner's cry, "Jesus, have mercy on me," He would pause to let that one get to His feet and get the blessing. Mark—He is coming, and coming quickly, and then when He has come into the air, there will burst from your lips, my procrastinating friend, a piteous cry for "mercy"; but there will not be an echo to bring it back, and no record in your case that the Saviour "stood still."

Some one carried the gospel to Bartimæus that day, and I have the privilege of telling you it just now; but you must avail yourself of the gospel and come into contact with Jesus yourself. That day the

people rebuked Bartimæus, and told him to hold his peace; but he would not, he was in such earnest. Do you say that he was excited? Forget not that men in numbers go down to hell quietly, respectably, and unmoved as regards their soul's need. Why is this? They are blind, but know it not. Bartimæus was blind, knew it, and desired his sight. I am not surprised that some said, "Hold your peace." There never is a knock at heaven's gate that the echo does not ring through hell, and out comes every demon to try and stop the knocker. But Bartimæus "cried so much more a great deal." The man was in downright earnest, and he got what he wanted. The reason you have hitherto not got God's blessing is that you have not been in earnest.

And now "Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be brought." That is lovely—the blessed Lord understood what he wanted, and commanded him to be brought.

And now they say to him, "Be of good comfort." Are you an anxious sinner? "Be of good comfort." A minute ago it was "Hold your peace," and now it is "Be of good comfort. Rise; he calleth thee." Does He not also call you? Indeed He does. He calls you now. He has His eye upon you, knows the deep need of your soul, and the writhings of your conscience, and He wants you to get near Him. Imitate Bartimæus. "And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus." Mark that word, "casting away." I have no doubt something has hindered you up to now; but this man is very wise, he says: "I want



to get to Him; my garment may hinder me: I will fling away everything." The rich ruler, rolling in wealth, will not give up anything, and loses everything; the poor beggar gives up his little—his purse would be in his garment—that it might not hinder him, and he gets everything. He was in downright earnest.

If you were in earnest, you would get blessing likewise. You know what is the hindrance. "I should like to be saved," says a young woman, "but I am keeping company with a young man who is not converted, and if I got converted what would he say?" This has hindered many a soul coming to Jesus. To all such I say, "Look at Bartimæus." "And he, *casting away his garment*, rose and came to Jesus." Many a young man says, "If I turned to Jesus, I should be laughed at in the shop, at the warehouse, and by those at home." What others will say is his hindrance. Bartimæus would not be hindered; so "*casting away his garment*, he *rose and came to Jesus*." That is the kernel of all blessing. Have you come to Him yet? Come just now. Where you are hear the sweet news, "He calleth thee."

Now look at this scene. There stands the poor, sightless beggar, and there stands the blessed Son of God—God incarnate, God manifest in flesh. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" It is not what shall Bartimæus do, but Jesus saying, "What shall *I* do?" Put yourself in that scene, get into His presence, and

hear Him say, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" What is it you want? Bartimæus wanted his sight, and simply replies, "Lord, that I might *receive* my sight." First of all he said, "Jesus, thou son of David;" but as he got near Him, and before he got his eyes open, he got a sense of the glory of His person, and said, "Lord." Have you ever noted these words, "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"? When on earth Jesus had spoken about dying and rising again the third day. It has all taken place now, and the Holy Ghost has come down to say, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 9, 10).

Now note the Lord's response to the earnest, needy seeker. "And Jesus said unto him, *Go thy way*; thy faith hath made thee whole." He no sooner told the blessed Lord what he needed, what he wanted, than he got it. Do you want Christ? Then do not sleep to-night till you get Him. When you see that God is made known to you in Jesus, and that He has died on the cross to bear your sins, and blot them all out, your eyes will get opened, and you will say, "I see." So it was with the beggar. "And *immediately he received his sight*, and followed Jesus in the way." Luke's Gospel puts it this way, "*Re-*

*ceive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God."*

His eyes were opened to see Jesus. I think that is very beautiful. The first object that poor man saw when his eyes were opened on earth was the Person of the blessed Son of God—a Man, in grace come down to meet all his need. And Jesus would act the same to you, and you may be saved now. Can you trust Him? Can you believe Him? Will He not be as good as His word? Will He not surely receive, bless, and pardon you? Most certainly. Come then, this very hour. You trust the Lord Jesus Christ and He will receive you, and give you what you want. Come to Him, trust Him, and then follow Him, as Bartimæus did.

"They spake to him of old who sat  
In blindness by the way,  
Of Christ the Lord, who, drawing near,  
Could turn his night to day ;  
But still he lingered, trembling there,  
Till o'er that living sea  
The words of welcome reached his ear,  
'Arise, He calleth thee !'

And still those words from heaven fall  
On every sinner's ear,  
And still the Lord delights to bid  
The trembling soul draw near ;  
The old, the young, the rich, the poor,  
He calls from wrath to flee ;  
Friend, from the death-like sleep of sin,  
'Arise, He calleth thee !'"

W. T. P. W.

## ONLY A WORD IN THE TRAIN.

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“**Y**ES, it is wonderful how God opens up the way and gives opportunities to help souls, if only we are really waiting on Him for this, and ready for it.”

“It is so,” said my friend, with whom I was comparing notes, “and many times I have proved it to be true. Only a short time since I had the following happy experience which has encouraged me greatly.

“I was on my way to A——, and just opposite me in the train sat a lady, reading one of the monthly Christian magazines. I noticed that it was a book issued in the interests of Sunday-school work. Presently the lady laid aside the paper she was reading, and I felt constrained to speak to her. It is not always easy to open a conversation with a stranger, but in turning the eye and heart upwards we always get the needed wisdom and strength for every emergency. And so I opened the conversation by saying, ‘Forgive me, but I presume from the paper you were reading that you are interested in Sunday-school work?’

“‘Oh yes, I am greatly interested,’ was the reply.

“‘How long have you taken up this work, may I ask?’

“‘For a number of years.’

“‘And are you happy and blest in it?’

“ ‘Well, yes, I think so,’ was the rather hesitating reply.

“ ‘How long have you known the Lord Jesus yourself?’ I ventured to ask.

“ A long pause ensued, and evidences of embarrassment ; my new friend was evidently unable to answer at once, but at length slowly repeated my words, ‘known the Lord Jesus for *myself*,’ and then added, ‘Why, I cannot say I even know Him now.’

“ ‘Not know the Lord Jesus, and you a Sunday-school teacher!’ I exclaimed ; ‘surely you must see how impossible it is for you to teach the children of your class about the Lord Jesus, if you do not know Him yourself?’ I then most earnestly pressed upon her the necessity for personal contact with and interest in a personal Saviour.

“ She told me she was on her way to visit a dying, unconverted sister, and to take charge of the home and children for awhile. I pointed out to her what an opportunity God was giving her of leading the dying sister to Christ, and again urged the necessity of immediate decision.

“ The train stopped, and my friend allowed me to take her name and address, as I wished to send her a little book which I thought might be helpful, and we parted.

“ On my return home I at once wrote to enforce the points of our conversation, and enclosed ‘Just the Saviour You Need,’ by Mrs M——, and then committed the whole matter to the Lord, who I felt sure had begun to work in the heart of this lady in whom He had so sincerely interested me.

“In a few days, I received a letter in reply to mine. It was full of the deepest gratitude to God for His great goodness in having, in such an unexpected manner, reached her soul and blessed her. She told how she had gone to her sister’s home in the deepest distress, and that all was darkness within ; then came the letter and the little booklet enclosed, and God used the one and the other to give her light and liberty.

“Further, she told how her sister had also read the book with similar results, and she too was now happy through faith in the finished work of Jesus.

“A few weeks later a black-edged envelope enclosing a letter, told of the death of the sister, and how her last hours were bright—oh, so bright!—through believing. ‘Neither my sister nor I,’ continued the writer, ‘can ever thank God and you sufficiently for the blessing following that little talk in the train ; the dying couch was bright with the sunshine of heaven. My sister called her children around her, and, one by one, committed them to the loving care of her Saviour and Friend, bidding them each and all give their hearts and lives to Him she now loved so well.’”

May I ask you, dear reader, Do *you* know the Lord Jesus? If He could so brighten the life and give sunlight in death itself to those two dear sisters, He is able to do this and more also for you. Hide nothing from Him. Trust only to Him. He is able ; He is willing ; let Him save you *just now*.

G. W. H.

## A WELL-KNOWN FRIEND AND "THE GREAT UNKNOWN."

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**L**ET me introduce you, dear reader, to the sick-room of an aged Christian, and tell you what took place there. Sixty-four winters had whitened her hair, and long-continued ill-health had weakened her frame. This day she had been a little better, after a week of more than usual suffering, and had been up for a few hours and in the next room. But now the cold March day had closed in with a heavy fall of snow, and her son had just come home with well-whitened garments. To the surprise of all she did not much notice this, though usually it would have given her some concern. She appeared drowsy, and it was hoped that one of the long sleeps that had so often brought restoration after these frequent turns of distressed and sleepless nights was coming on. The fortieth chapter of Isaiah was read to her, and after there had been prayer, she said, "I should like to see ——," her son-in-law, a devoted servant of Christ, then in very feeble health.

It was explained that, the night being so stormy, he dared not venture out in his delicate state. "Well, well," was her reply, "the Lord Jesus is always in His place." For more than forty years she had known Him, and had never sought *His* face in vain. No! she had, since first she believed in His love, seen much sorrow, passed through many trials, but in all she had ever found Him faithful, a present help

in every time of trouble, and so now she could turn to Him, as to a tried, true friend. Before retiring for the night her son read to her the hymn ending with the stanza—

“Just as I am, of that free love  
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,  
Here for a season, then above,  
O Lamb of God, I come!”

Preparations for the night were speedily made, so that quiet might be secured to favour the sleep so much needed. There were no apprehensions of any change, and though, after a sudden turn of sickness, the one who was to spend the night in her room stood listening to her breathing and again went to listen, she felt no alarm—all seemed to be as she desired. On waking in the night, and again when in the morning the household began to stir, she kept quiet, thinking that all was doing well. And so it was, *well indeed*. For when at last, alarmed by the continued silence, she knelt on the bed to ascertain whether her dread suspicion was correct, she found the loved form in that last and blessed sleep “from which none ever wakes to weep.”

Who could speak of death in such circumstances as the “King of Terrors”? There *was* bitterness to those who were left, in the thought that they had allowed her to go without a parting word. But it was a comfort to know that to her there was not one drop of the bitterness of parting. Some of her friends in the Lord spoke of it as a translation, and wished that in some such way they might depart.



## "THE GREAT UNKNOWN."

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And to more than one this has almost been granted ; they have already followed her, peacefully, happily followed her, and are now with her, and with Him who loved them, waiting for the morning of the resurrection.

At her funeral were sung these lines :—

"This name shall shed its fragrance still  
Along this thorny road ;  
Shall sweetly smooth the rugged hill  
That leads me up to God.

And there with all the blood-bought throng,  
From sin and sorrow free,  
I'll sing the new eternal song  
Of Jesu's love to me."

Of the first stanza she had fully proved the truth ; for the second she waits with Him who shall then "see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

Again a few more years, and a handsome oak coffin was carried into a house in the immediate neighbourhood of the one already spoken of. It was carried upstairs into a room where lay the remains of one just entered upon manhood. Lovingly, tenderly, as a nurse laying her infant to sleep, the workmen lifted the lifeless form into its narrow bed. As they lingered over it, arranging everything with the most careful attention, settling the wavy hair over the handsome forehead, they spoke of his amiability and of his kindness, expressing a wonder that such a one should be taken from the earth. He was one, they thought, who could only be a comfort and blessing to those who had to do with him, while so many

were left to be only a curse. Much they said in praise of their young master, and feelingly was all echoed by those who stood around. But where was the spirit that had animated that loved and lovely form? Yes, *where?* Some hearts even weep as they ask the question, for some of his last words, when taking his farewell of those dear to him, had been, "*I am going to the Great Unknown!*"

Reader, how is it with you? How would it be were you to be found to-morrow morning cold and stiff? Could those who know you call it a "translation" to the presence of a KNOWN SAVIOUR?

Would they *know* where you had gone? Or would it, to you, be going to the presence of AN UNKNOWN GOD? Oh, God will not hold you guiltless if, to you, His great salvation is unknown. No amiability, no life, however blameless it may appear to others, can justify a sinner in His sight; but He is sending the good news of His salvation far and wide. He is crying aloud, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." The Lord Jesus is saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." How, then, shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation? H. S.

## HEARTACHE AND HEARTSEASE.

**I**T is of the last importance to read the Old Testament with the light which the New flings on it, and I have no doubt that in the very arrangement of the books we find divine order. Take, for instance, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. We have in these sections of Holy Writ a most wonderful setting together of truth that meets the various component parts of our moral being. In the Psalms you get the exercises of the conscience ; in the Proverbs you have the furnishing of the understanding ; while in Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon you have the feelings of the heart introduced. Every man has a conscience, and it always tells you when you have done wrong. Your conscience lets you know where you are in relation to God.

Now, in the Book of Proverbs, on the other hand, we see the furnishing of the understanding, and you read therefore a great deal in that book about understanding and wisdom. "Wisdom is the principal thing ; therefore get wisdom : and with all thy getting get understanding" (chap. iv. 7). It is an immense thing to understand. In the Gospels the Lord says, the way of salvation is when one "hears the word of the kingdom, and *understands* it." What is understanding? Well, it is the legs of a table. A child can understand that. It is what supports the superincumbent structure. So is it with the soul and the

truth. I stand under it. It has impressed me. And what shall I learn? I shall learn first of all my need of salvation, and then how God meets that need, and quiets both the conscience and the heart.

Man has a heart as well as a conscience, and the world can never fill it. Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon deal with the heart. Do you know what Ecclesiastes is? It is an empty heart. I can label that book with one word, "Heartache." It is the most disappointing book. "Oh," you say, "I never read that book." Why? "It is all disappointment." Exactly so. Do you know why? Because the heart (and it speaks about it forty times) is too big for the object—*i.e.*, the world—to fill it. When you come to the Song of Solomon we have the reverse. There the object, Christ, is too big for the heart. We there get into the atmosphere of love. I only find the heart spoken of three times, and it is full. Christ is the Object there, and as a consequence the Object is too big for the heart. Hence the heart is filled to overflowing, and rests in love. I call that book "Heartsease."

"Thou treasure inexhaustible!  
 Thou source of true delight!  
 What care I for the world's applause  
 Or for its diamonds bright?  
 More prized by far one smile from Thee  
 Than all earth holds most dear;  
 I want for nothing man can give,  
 For I have Jesus here."

W. T. P. W.

## THRICE WARNED, AND WON.

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**I** WAS favoured beyond many in this world in that I had kind and Christian parents, who sought to bring me up in the fear of the Lord.

It was their constant habit to get their children all together each Sunday evening to read the Scriptures, and on one occasion we read Matthew xxiv., verses 36-41. For the first time in my life was I aroused to the fact that things were not right with me, and the peace my parents were in possession of was not known to me.

This uneasiness went on for some time, until one night I had a dream in which I thought my long anticipated fears were to be realised. I looked from my bedroom window, and saw firemen working, dressed in their red coats, getting their instructions from One in the sky, which was all in a flame of fire, and shedding its red rays on the earth. "How terrible!" I said as I looked around for my father and mother, only to find that the other members of the family had gathered around father, and that he was reading and praying with them, no one paying any heed to me.

In my excitement I awoke to find it only a dream, but one that greatly affected me at the time; but I knew not the voice of the Saviour that was sending such warnings to me. The reader may be surprised when I say that the effects both of Matthew xxiv. and of the dream had well-nigh

M

worn away, when the Lord spoke to me again. The Blessed One who had His eye upon me was not going to give me up; so if warning number one and warning number two would not do, warning number three must be resorted to.

One evening after work and tea were over, and father, who had gone to town, had not returned, we children were having a good time to ourselves. In the midst of our glee and excitement there came a sudden hush, and we all stood looking into one another's faces to know what had happened to cause such a sudden stop. Thinking it might have been a knock at the door, I opened it at once to see, and was met by my younger brother coming in crying.

I inquired in haste, "What is the matter?" but got no reply. I insisted upon having an answer as to what was the matter, and he said, "Mother is gone, and I do not know where she is gone to." Search was immediately made, but no mother could be found.

"There now, it has come at last," I said to myself "father went to town this morning, and he has not returned at this hour of the night, and while we were having our home concert the Lord has come, and he and mother have been taken away to glory, and we are all left behind." A painful silence ensued, and then the cries of some members of our family were most pitiable, as we were made to taste, in a very real way, what it would be to be left behind when the Lord takes His saints away.

Mother, who had left the house to go and meet

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father on his return from the town, heard at some distance our cries, and returned as speedily as possible, and of course at the appearance of our parents all our fears were quelled.

Several of our family date their spiritual history as having begun from that night. As for myself, this was the third warning voice; yet I was still unreached, for I knew not that the One who was sending such warnings was really seeking to win me for Himself.

Leaving home soon afterwards to live in a town, my state is well described in these lines—

“I wandered on in the darkness,  
Not a ray of light could I see,  
And I wondered if Christ the Redeemer  
Could save a poor sinner like me.”

There I was met one day on the street by a Christian friend, who said to me, “Well, George, are you saved yet?” “No, I’m not fit to be saved,” was my reply. He smiled at my ready reply, for I had made up my mind to improve myself by saying my prayers and reading my Bible and trying to do good, and then surely the Lord would not shut me out.

My Christian friend then said to me, “Do you know what Jesus said: ‘I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance’?” (Luke v. 32).

Oh! the sweetness of these words, “I came not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance.” My friend spoke to me for some time, but I do not remember another word he spoke. These sweet words, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,” rang in my ears. A ray of hope appeared,

but soon it gave way to greater darkness and distress, so I determined to call on my Christian friend and have a talk with him. We went into a room alone, and I felt how true were the words of the hymn—

“ A guilty rebel lone and sad,  
I trod destruction's road ;  
Earth's follies failed to make me glad,  
I groaned beneath sin's load.”

Time fails me to tell all that was said, as my Christian friend sought to bring relief to my troubled heart ; but at length he repeated to me these words—  
“ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the JUST FOR THE UNJUST, that he might bring us to God ” (1 Pet. iii. 18). Light flashed into my soul as I saw Christ, the Just, suffering for the sins of such an unjust sinner as I saw myself to be. Throwing up my hands I said, “ I see it all now,” and from that moment I could sing—

“ No longer in darkness I'm walking,  
The Light is now shining on me,  
And now unto others I'm telling  
How He saved a poor sinner like me.”

This short account of the Saviour's dealing with the writer is penned with a view of encouraging some poor sinner, who is like what the writer himself was, to come and trust the same loving Saviour.

Reader, you may be certain of this, that you will never be disappointed in Him. G. A. D.



## A STORY OF LONG AGO.

A PARTY of young men set out for a day's holiday many years ago, among whom was a young man eighteen years of age. The first object that attracted their attention was an old fortune-teller. They immediately engaged her to tell theirs, after having given her enough drink to intoxicate her. The young man of eighteen was told, among other things, that he would live to be very old, and see his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren growing up around him.

Though he had helped to qualify her for the fraud, by making her drunk, yet he was foolish enough to take notice of what she predicted about him.

“And so,” quoth he when alone, “I am to live to see children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren! At that age I must be a burden to the young people. What shall I do? There is no way for an old man to render himself more agreeable to youth than by sitting and telling them pleasant and profitable stories. I will then, during my youth, endeavour to store my mind with all kinds of knowledge. I will see and hear and note all that is rare and wonderful, that I may sit and entertain my descendants; thus shall my company be rendered pleasant, and I shall be respected in my old age. Let me see, what can I acquire first? Oh! here is the famous Methodist preacher, George Whitfield;

he is to preach they say to-night, I will go and hear him."

From these strange motives he went. Mr Whitfield preached that evening from Matthew iii. 7, "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come." "Mr Whitfield," said the young man, "described the Sadducean character; this did not touch me, I thought myself as good a Christian as any man in England. From this he went to that of the Pharisees, and described their exterior decency, but observed that the poison of the viper rankled in their hearts. This rather shook me. At length, in the course of his sermon, he abruptly broke off, paused for a few moments, then burst into a flood of tears, lifted up his hands and eyes, and exclaimed, '*O my hearers! the wrath's to come! the wrath's to come!*' These words sank into my heart like lead in the waters. I wept, and when the sermon was ended I retired alone."

For days and weeks he could think of little else; those awful words, "*The wrath's to come! the wrath's to come!*" followed him wherever he went, with the result that he publicly confessed Christ, and in a little while became a very notable preacher.

Beloved reader, are you one of that happy number who can say, "God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with him" (1 Thess. v. 9, 10)?

M. A. D.

## WILL YOUR ANCHOR HOLD?

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**I**T was at the close of a bright Sunday in August that a few of us were seeking to make the good news of God's salvation for man known on the pebbly beach of Deal in Kent. As we preached the night darkened, and our acetylene lamp was hardly sufficient to enable us to see our hymn papers. With the darkness the wind began to rise, and very soon so increased that we were driven to the shelter of our homes. Looking seaward the lights of many yachts could be seen as the boats strained at their moorings, and as we gained our haven for the night we thought of those big and small boats tugging and tugging away at their rock-embedded anchors, and wondered how they would fare during the fast approaching storm.

The lightning flashed, the dull, heavy rolling thunder followed, and the rain pelted down, being driven by a stormy wind which seemed to threaten with destruction all found in its path. That night we slept little and were glad of the morning light.

At an early hour we hastened to the beach; the waves were breaking one over the other in majestic style. How small and weak we felt in the presence of such greatness and power. Scanning the beach line our eyes rested on a group of boatmen partially in the surf, all pulling at ropes which were connected to the hull of a large yacht. The masts were broken

off short, and were being dashed about by the waves at either side.

We soon joined the group of men, and then saw that the wreck was one of those fine yachts which only a few hours before we had seen so proudly riding at anchor. Sea after sea dashed against and over the doomed bark ; spars, rigging, deck fittings, one after the other were being washed ashore, and in one short hour the mighty waters did their fell work, and the boat once so trim and taut was smashed into a thousand pieces. We stood and watched the whole work of destruction, being utterly unable to prevent it.

A wrecked ship led to a train of thoughts on wrecked lives, wrecked hopes, wrecked futures, and the great wreck which had fallen on the whole race of man, the result of Satan's power and sin's insidious workings.

Passing amongst the boatmen we found one man greatly agitated and discussing with those around him the many bearings and causes of the wreck. During a lull in the conversation we said, "Well, captain, can you tell us how this"—pointing to the wreckage—"happened?"

"That is very simple, sir," he replied; "she dragged her anchor, and I was not aboard. If I had been aboard she would have been quite safe now."

Just two things were needed for safety:—

(1) The anchor in a sure place.

(2) The captain aboard.

But both these things were missing!

Reader, have you, may we ask, these two indispensable things connected with your frail ship? You, yea, we all, are out on life's changing sea, and the storm will most surely arise; the day and the time are appointed. Will *your* anchor hold in that day? If firmly grounded on the Rock of Ages, your little bark will withstand every storm.

Have *you* the Captain aboard?

The *Rock* is *Christ*. The *Captain* is *Christ*. With Christ as the object of your soul's faith, with Christ enthroned in your heart, the winds of satanic rage may beat upon you, the storm of the Day of Judgment may fall, but you shall safely gain the harbour of eternal rest, and home.

Have you let the Saviour in? If not, do so *now*. Have you let your anchor down deep on to this eternal and unmovable Rock? If not, do so *now*.

Why *now*? you ask. Does not the sun shine? is it not all fair and beautiful and calm? Yes, and so it was in Noah's days; but in a moment "the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened," and all were *lost*, except eight persons whose refuge was in the Ark, and whose Captain was Christ.

So it was too in the days of Lot—not a movement in earth or sky; and yet in a moment the sky was overcast with fire and brimstone, and the cities of the plain and their teeming inhabitants were *lost*, except those persons whose Rock and Captain was Christ.

You say that is an old, old story. Thank God! it

is, but it will be told out for the last time soon. Christ is coming. His people are going to meet Him in the clouds, and *you*, what about you? Will you be with Him eternally secure, or will you, who have heard the gospel and refused it so often, be left behind to meet the soon-coming storm, to be dashed into eternal ruin?

Stop! Consider! Drop your anchor on to the Rock. Take the waiting Captain aboard, and present peace and eternal glory shall be your portion.

“Will your anchor hold in the straits of fear?  
When the breakers roar and the reef is near;  
While the surges rave, and the wild winds blow,  
Shall the angry waves then your bark o’erflow?”

Seek grace to place yourself in the “we” of the refrain—

“We have an anchor that keeps the soul,  
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,  
Fastened to the Rock that cannot move,  
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour’s love.”

G. W. H.

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#### FRAGMENT.

AN old saint once said to me, “There’s twa ways o’ reading God’s Word—the butterflee way, an’ the bee way. The butterflee lichts a wee while here, an’ a wee while there, hurryin’ awa’ afore it has got richtly doon on’t; but the bee settles doon, and winna rise until it sooks the honey oot o’ the flooder.”

ANON.

## DARKNESS—DEATH—DELIVERANCE.

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“**K**EEP your son from the card-table,” were the words of an aged sinner, dying “without hope,” to the father of a young man. “Gambling and betting have damned my soul!”

Young man, shun the devil’s baits! lest, being ensnared, you become the slave of every vile passion, and sink irrecoverably into the morass of sin.

On certain parts of the coast of Brittany a man walking on the beach at low tide, far from the land, suddenly notices that for some time he has been walking with difficulty. The strand beneath his feet is like pitch. The beach is perfectly smooth and dry, but at every step he takes, as soon as he lifts his foot, the print which it leaves fills with water.

The eye, however, has noticed no change; the immense strand is smooth and tranquil: all the sand has the same appearance. The man is not anxious, for he sees no danger, only somehow he feels as if the weight of his feet increased.

Suddenly he sinks in, at first two or three inches, now his feet are covered. He will retrace his steps. He turns back, he sinks deeper. The sand comes up to his ankles. He pulls himself out, throws himself to the left, here the sand is half a leg deep. Then he recognises with unspeakable terror that he is caught in the quicksand. The sand gains on him, the land is far away.

The victim attempts to sit down, to lie down, to creep. Every movement only helps to inter him. He howls, he implores, he wrings his hands. The sand reaches his breast, he throws up his arms, clutches the beach with his nails, sobs frenziedly. His face alone is visible. Now he cries aloud for help; the sand fills his mouth. Silence. The eyes gaze. The sand shuts them. The scene closes in

### DARKNESS and DEATH.

What a terrible end! One false step on that treacherous shore—his doom is sealed.

“That cursed drink has been my ruin,” said a young man to me a few days ago. Thousands might echo his words. Young man, take care it be not yours!

“You do not intend to be lost,” certainly not! You pride yourself on knowing “how far to go.” But, “Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned?”

Thousands have said the same before you, and found that while they knew “how far to go,” there was a power impelling them onward, carrying them beyond their prescribed limit.

Beware lest the occasional indulgence in sin’s pleasures, ripen into habits which will sink you lower and lower into the quicksand. What you need, my friend, is

### A DELIVERER

from the power and effect of sin. Praise God, one has been found! The blessed God says, “Deliver



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him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom” (Job xxxiii. 24). In JESUS, the deliverer, is your only hope. His grace can meet you just where, and as you are, delivering you from the effect of sin, and giving you victory over every onslaught of the enemy.

Delay not! Make haste—make haste to be saved. Now! NOW! is the accepted time; behold, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION. J. W. H. N.

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“REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS.”

(Luke xxiv. 44-53; Acts x. 39-44, xvii. 29-34.)

**T**HE last chapter of Luke's Gospel gives us the Lord's commission to His disciples. The two chapters in Acts show how two of His servants carried out the commission, and what the effect was of the preaching He bade them preach. Luke xxiv. is the Resurrection Day, and had we only Luke's Gospel we should think there had been only one day that the Lord was on earth after He rose from the dead. In the morning He rose from the dead, and in the evening He went out as far as to Bethany, and lifted up His hands and blessed His own, and while blessing them He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. We know from other scriptures that He was forty days on earth after His resurrection. The great truth of Christianity

is that everything is in resurrection. I know I live in an infidel day, and that men are now saying that resurrection is a delusion, and that Christ is not risen.

Well, I believe God ; I also believe Peter and Paul. They both saw the Lord—Peter on earth, for forty days after He rose ; Paul in glory, and He could tell very simply and distinctly what he had seen. Do you think those men were deceived ? Do not *you* be deceived. They were not deceived. You may be deceived by men to-day, but God's Word will never deceive you. What a grand thing is the truth of resurrection ! Because when men die it is all over with them. What a crushing blow does death inflict, when the dearest object of your heart is removed by it ; therefore what an amazing comfort it is to have the truth of resurrection !

Luke xxiv. is emphatically a resurrection chapter. Resurrection is a divine reality. God has taken out of death the only man that death had no claim on. He was sinless, and perfect, and He went into death, in grace, for man, because man was under the sentence of death. And then, having glorified God about our sins, of which death and judgment were the direct consequences—having sustained the judgment and died the death—God raised Him from the dead.

And then He came in among His disciples and breathed peace, and said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms

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concerning me” (ver. 44). He had opened up the Scriptures in a wonderful way to the two going to Emmaus that day, and now He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. If you understand the Scriptures, you will find in the Old Testament the most beautiful testimony to the sufferings and death of Christ, and that He must rise from the dead. If you do not see this, it is because your understanding has not been opened. Multitudes do not understand Scripture to-day, because their understanding has not been opened to see that all blessing is in resurrection, *i.e.*, in life the other side of death.

Now notice this statement: “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day” (ver. 45). Have you thought of the meaning of that word “behooved”? Why should Christ go to death? *You* did not ask Him; *I* did not ask Him. No; He took the initiative in His own love and grace, and having risen from the dead, He commanded “that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (ver. 46). Why Jerusalem? Because it was the worst spot—it was where they clamoured for His blood, and got it; where the deadliest enmity was expressed against Him. God delights to break down and bless the most hardened opposers of His Son. This testimony to “repentance and remission of sins,” causes

the light of God to break in upon men's souls, and they are made conscious that things are wrong with them. And what is the next thing? They begin to repent; that is, to judge themselves. Repentance is not a stepping-stone to salvation, but you always find that when the truth of God gets hold of a man's conscience it produces repentance. It is the result in the soul of the reception of a divine testimony. It may be a testimony of grace, or of coming judgment, as in the case of Jonah's message to Nineveh. God's testimony may be very varied, but it comes in and acts upon the conscience and heart of man. It brings him to book, and pulls him up. He cannot get away from the fact that sooner or later he must meet God. If he meet Him now it is as a lost sinner, and he gets forgiveness and salvation. If he avoid God now, he will taste in eternity what it is to be a lost sinner, without hope of salvation.

The New Testament speaks much of repentance. John the Baptist said, "Repent." His clarion note rang through the land from end to end, and moved multitudes. John was followed by his Master, who "began to preach, and to say, Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17). Why does He press repentance? Because sin has come in, and you and I must face what we are before God. Repentance and remission go together. No man knows remission till he knows repentance. You may say, Peter did not preach repentance in the house of Cornelius. No, he did not; but Paul preached it at Athens. God's Spirit led both men

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at the moment in their testimony. Repentance is the acknowledgment of my condition before God; and remission is God coming out and meeting that state—clearing, cleansing, and redeeming me and bringing me to His bosom. What a wonderful thing to know God in that way!

God's gospel is connected with a risen Christ, and flows from the glorious fact of the resurrection. The devil is trying hard to-day to make out that there is no such thing as resurrection. It is the old leaven of the Sadducees. But notice this, please. If there be no resurrection, Christ did not rise; and if He did not rise, there is no redemption. Resurrection, redemption, repentance, and remission are all bound up together. You may have your “no resurrection” theory if you like, but by-and-by when you have missed redemption and remission of your sins, you will find that resurrection is a great fact; but you will find it out at an awkward moment—when you have risen from your grave, into which you have gone *in* your sins.

Do not make any mistake—there is a living man in glory, and that man is the One who died on Calvary's tree, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was raised from the dead, and because of that which He wrought and accomplished on the cross, He can commission His servants to go out and proclaim these two cardinal truths—repentance and remission. The one is, I judge myself; and the other, God forgives me all that for which I judge myself.

In Luke xxiv. the Lord said to His disciples, “And ye are witnesses of these things” (ver. 48).

Now notice how His servants carried out their commission. In Acts x. 39 Peter says, "And we *are witnesses* of all things which he did." He saw His life, he followed Him three and a half years as He opened blind eyes, cleansed lepers, bound up broken hearts, and comforted sorrowful sisters, for there was no misery or condition of man He did not meet; and yet men slew Him and hanged Him on a tree. That was man's response to this presentation of absolute divine goodness in a man. "Whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly" (ver. 40), are striking words. There is no mistake about it. Be sure of this—He is risen. Resurrection is the backbone of the gospel, for it is the proof of the value of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. More than that, it is the attestation on God's part of His estimate of that work—a work that took Christ down into death, to secure God's glory, and the redemption of man.

Hence we read that God "showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (ver. 41). Only His disciples saw then, but the day is coming when every eye shall see Him. You have not seen Him yet—you are going to. I can say I see Him by faith now. "We see not yet all things put under him; but we see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9). Faith sees Him. Every believer sees Jesus. Faith takes you to the spot where He is, and you see Him, know Him, and love

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Him, because you have learned that He has loved you. He has not been shown “openly” to the world yet, but that day is coming. The testimony to the reality of His resurrection is twelvefold in the New Testament, beginning with Mary Magdalene and ending with Saul of Tarsus. There was abundant confirmation that He was the same Jesus in resurrection whom they had known when they walked about with Him down here before His death. He had come to die in order that He might put away the sins of sinners; hence when risen from the dead, the forgiveness of sins could be preached in His name.

There is, however, another point to be noted in Peter’s preaching at Cæsarea; Jesus will yet be a Judge. “And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead” (ver. 42). He is going to be Judge of the living and dead, and that day is at hand. The living will be judged before the millennial reign of Christ, the dead at the end of the millennium. Forget not that God has appointed Him. My careless, trifling friend, you that have made light of the gospel, do not forget this—the Judge is ordained. Peter does not here go so far as Paul, who says at Athens that not only is the Judge ordained, but the day is appointed. The very day in which this must take place is fixed. This fact is intensely solemn: you cannot get away from it; and I should like, before that day come when Christ must deal with men in judgment, that you should know Him as the Saviour. Taste His saving grace now, I implore you.

Why should you not taste it? Hear the lovely gospel which Peter gives Cornelius and his household: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name *whosoever* believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (ver. 43). Observe that on that company he did not press repentance. He preached first the solemn fact that there is a moment coming when He is going to judge, but ere He comes to judge He is remitting sins. That is the word which faith seizes, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The name of Jesus is preached now to you. In it only is salvation. As to this the testimony is overwhelming. Peter says I can put every Old Testament prophet into the witness-box, and their united testimony would be that the person who believes in the name of that blessed One shall receive remission of sins. Blessed tidings for anxious souls.

But why did Peter not preach repentance? Because they *were* repentant. They were an interested, anxious company. He had a delightful audience to preach to—they came thirsty and anxious, really desiring the truth. Cornelius was the leader. He had been looking for light and blessing, he had been fasting, he had gone to God in prayer and got a message to send for Peter. He sends immediately, and waits four days for the preacher. He was a downright anxious man, not yet saved, but very keen to get salvation himself, and also get his neighbours saved. How many did he gather in? I do not know; but when Peter came he "found *many* that



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were come together” (ver. 27), and that does not mean half a dozen. Cornelius had swept in all he knew, and when Peter saw a company, all with open ear and heart, and wanting to get saved, he did not need to press repentance upon them—what he said was, “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name *whosoever believeth* in him shall *receive remission of sins*.” And then we read, “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.” They not only received forgiveness of sins, but the Spirit of God likewise, the seal of forgiveness. That is how and where first the gospel came to the Gentiles. They had no link with God, no claim on God, had never heard the gospel; but God’s Spirit had wrought in them—possibly Philip’s preaching may have been used to awaken them—but there they were, seeking Christ, and they were all blessed and saved.

In Acts xvii. Paul preaches to the men of Athens, who were full of learning, and given up to desiring novelties. Man must have something of a novel nature—he is restless. Paul unfolds who Jesus is, and preaches Jesus and the resurrection. There is only One who can reveal God, and that is His blessed Son. Peter had only one class of hearers; Paul had three. At the close of the meeting that day his audience had split into three classes. His testimony is very solemn and searching, as he declares that God “now commandeth all men 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" (ver. 31). Peter could say that the Judge was ordained; Paul adds that the judgment day is appointed. You say, "When will it be?" It might be to-morrow for aught I know; and how would it fare with you if that day of judgment set in to-morrow? Are you ready? The resurrection of Christ is God's way of attesting to man that there is a day of judgment, which is fixed and appointed; and that the One who died to deliver and save man is the very One who will be the Judge in that day.

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked" (ver. 32)—that is one class, the mockers. "And others said, We will hear thee again of this matter"—these were procrastinators. "Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed" (ver. 31)—believers. Mockers, procrastinators, and believers were the results of that preaching. All Peter's audience were believers—would that all my readers were.

You say, "I am not a mocker." Are you sure? It is a bad company to be among. What are mockers? Those that make light of God's message of mercy. You say, "I do not do that." Have you bowed to God's blessed Son as your Saviour? "No; I could not do it in a hurry: I will think about it." Ah, you are joining the company of the procrastinators. It is easy to say, "We will hear thee again of this matter." They never did, for we read in chapter xviii. 1, "After these things Paul departed from

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Athens, and came to Corinth.” Those people counted upon another opportunity of hearing the gospel, which they never got. Procrastinators, beware! Mockers, be warned!

“Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed” (ver. 34). That is very fine. What a thrill of joy went through Paul’s heart when Dionysius said to him, “Paul, I am a believer;” and timid sister Damaris likewise came boldly out, and owned herself as on the Lord’s side. I shall meet them by-and-by, and shall congratulate them on the stand they took that day, in the teeth of the multitude of mockers and procrastinators. May I similarly congratulate you? Will you say to me, “By the grace of God, your Lord shall be my Lord, your Saviour my Saviour—I believe”? It is a blessed thing to be a believer, because a believer receives the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Ghost. -How blessed if you can say from this day forth, simply and truly, “Now I have found a Friend, Jesus is mine.”

This year of grace 1904 is rolling rapidly away. If you began it without Christ, do not so close it. Come to Him just now. He will receive, pardon, and bless you. Could you have a better opportunity of turning to the Lord than just now? Impossible! Seize your opportunity. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Then go and boldly confess His name.

W. T. P. W.

## THE PROCURING CAUSE OF FORGIVENESS.

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**T**HE obedient *life* of Christ is not set forth in Scripture as the procuring cause of our forgiveness. It was His death upon the cross that opened those everlasting floodgates of love which else should have remained pent up for ever. If He had remained to this very hour, going through the cities of Israel "doing good," the veil of the temple would continue unrent, to bar the worshipper's approach to God. It was His death that rent that mysterious curtain "from top to bottom." It is "by his stripes," not by His obedient life, that "we are healed"; and those "stripes" He endured *on the cross*, and nowhere else. His own words, during the progress of His blessed life, are quite sufficient to settle this point: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke xii. 50). To what does this refer but to His death upon the cross, which was the accomplishment of His baptism and the opening up of a righteous vent through which His love might freely flow out to the guilty sons of Adam? Again, He says, "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). He was that precious "corn of wheat."

C. H. M.