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The Gospel Messenger.

THE GREY HORSES.

THAT'S a doctor, an Edinburgh doctor ; drives himself, with a spanking pair of little grey horses, in a light victoria, and goes at a great pace. Take stock of him ; you will be sure to know him by his grey horses. Take stock of him."

The speaker was standing on the platform of the Queen Street Station, Glasgow, and talking to a friend, the only occupant of a first-class compartment of the last train to Edinburgh, into which I had just stepped, one evening in March 189—, after addressing a large gospel meeting. The speaker's friend sat in the window-seat near the platform. I took my seat at the further side of the carriage, but the above words, though intended only for his friend, were uttered in such a loud stage-whisper that I heard every syllable, and immediately began to ponder what I should do under the circumstances, and whether two could not "take stock." More conversation followed between the two, generally in relation to a well-known Edinburgh doctor of divinity whose fame is world-wide, and whose ministry, I gathered, the

occupant of the carriage attended. Just then the starting bell was rung, the guard whistled, the engine responded, and with "A comfortable journey to you," the platform speaker departed, and we started.

I immediately took my seat *vis-à-vis* to my fellow-traveller, who was a man of about five and thirty, an intelligent-looking, shrewd, hard-headed Scotchman, and taking out my watch, looked intently at it.

"We are off by the tick of the clock," said he. "It is a grand thing to be in time."

"I quite agree with you," I rejoined, "but——" and paused.

"But what?" interrogated he.

"May I ask you, if this were the last train for heaven, would you be in it, sir?"

"The last train for heaven," said he, "I never had such a question as that put to me in all my life."

"Very likely," I replied. "Is it a bad question?"

"I will not say that, but I never had such a question as that put to me before."

"Be it so, but as you say it is not a bad question, I will put it again. If this were the last train for heaven, sir, would you be in it?"

He paused a moment, looked very serious, and then rejoined, "I go to church every Sunday."

"So does the devil, every day the door is opened."

"The devil go to church—what does he go there for?" he excitedly asked.

"He goes there to hinder you and the like of you from believing the gospel, which you very likely hear there."

"I never thought of his going to church."

"If you had read your Bible carefully you would have thought of it, for the Lord Jesus, speaking of the sower who went out to sow his seed says, 'Those by the wayside are they that *hear*; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should *believe* and *be saved*' (Luke viii. 12). Satan knows the way of salvation better than most men that preach it, leave alone those who listen to it; and therefore when it is being preached he tries to take away the word, lest the hearer should believe and be saved."

"I never thought of that, but I go to church regularly. I go to hear the great Dr M——, you know him?"

"Oh yes, I know him personally and also by repute as a preacher. Has he been the means of your conversion yet?"

"Well, I could not just say that, but he is a grand preacher."

"I know that, but if you have not been converted to God yet, do you not see his preaching has not been of much good to you? What you need, my friend, is the forgiveness of your sins, the pardon which the Lord alone can minister, the salvation of your soul, the sense of peace with God, and shelter from the wrath to come. Have you got these blessings yet?"

These pointed queries led to a very plain, interesting conversation much too long to relate. He asked many questions, and was evidently fully aroused to

a sense of the importance of his soul's salvation. Our journey to Edinburgh was more than half over when all of a sudden he exclaimed, "I see exactly what you are at."

"Indeed, what am I at?"

"Oh, you want me to be a real, downright Christian, and that I cannot be."

"Yes, that is exactly what I do want; I would like you to be a real back-bone Christian, and I do not see why you cannot be one, for I have never yet met the man that Christ could not save. Why cannot you be a Christian?"

"I am in the liquor traffic; I travel in beer, for Messrs —, and you know a man cannot be in that business and be a Christian too."

"Well," I replied, "I quite admit that the liquor traffic and all that is connected therewith is a very difficult business for a Christian to be in happily, if he wish to serve his masters faithfully and yet keep a good conscience."

"Well then, you see I could not be a Christian," said he.

"Yes, you may be," I replied, "and a Christian this night too, before the train reaches Edinburgh."

"How?" he fervently inquired.

"You come to Christ where you are just now, a sinner in your sins; own them, judge yourself, repent before God, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' If you come to Him He will pardon your sins, and save your soul. You decide

for Him, and He will deal with the liquor traffic all in due time. Just now it is the question of your soul's salvation ; get that settled, I beseech you."

Struck by this rejoinder he fell back into his corner seat, and I, wearied with my day's work, fell back in mine, and closed my eyes. A quarter of an hour rolled by in silence, and when I opened my eyes I saw him reaching across the carriage, preparing to speak to me. The moment my eyes were opened he said, "Do you ever preach?"

"Sometimes."

"Where?"

"Very often in Freemasons' Hall."

"Freemasons' Hall, George Street, Edinburgh?"

"The same."

"I know it well ; I was there last Thursday night at the Licensed Victuallers' Ball."

"That is the spot," I replied. "The difference between you and me, however, with regard to it, is this—you go there to dance, I go there to preach."

"When will you preach there next?"

"I expect to preach next Sunday week."

"Would you have any objection if I were to come?" he earnestly asked.

"Not in the least ; I shall be delighted to see you and your wife, and any of your friends you like to bring. We have generally got a well-filled hall, but will make room for you."

"I will be sure to come," was his rejoinder ; and having exchanged cards, and promised to send him a notice of some special addresses on the "Night Scenes

of Scripture," which I was going to give on Sunday evenings, we parted company as the train pulled up at the Haymarket Station.

On the Sunday week I looked anxiously over my audience to see if my new friend were present, and just as the meeting commenced I saw him come in, accompanied by several friends, who, with him, took their seats at the bottom of the hall. He left immediately the meeting was over this night, as well as the two following Sundays, when I noticed that he was present. But thereafter I did not see him, and thought his case might have been like many others, where a passing spiritual impression gets worn off by contact with the world.

Two and a half years rolled by ere I saw him again. My usual autumn rest in the Swiss mountains was over, and returning home by way of Croydon, I there held some special evangelistic meetings. Its largest public hall was packed to excess on Sunday night, and, during the course of the after-meeting, a Christian gentleman, resident there, came up to me and said, "There is a man sitting at the top of the room who is anxious to speak with you, doctor. He says he is from Edinburgh, and was converted through you."

Finding my way to the front bench I saw a very happy-looking man sitting, who immediately greeted me most warmly, saying, "I am so glad to see you, doctor." A little taken aback, I made no answer for a moment, when he ejaculated, "You do not seem to remember me."

"Well," I replied, "your face seems familiar, and your voice, but I could not put a name on you."

"Oh, I am the man you spoke to in the train—don't you mind?"

"I have spoken to a good many men in the train in my time."

"Ay, ay, but don't you mind me? I am the man you spoke to in the train coming through to Edinburgh frae Glasca." And by way of proving his identity he thrust his hand into his pocket and pulled out the card which I had given him just ere we parted company at the Haymarket Station, and, pinned to it, the handbill of the meetings which I had sent him, according to promise.

"Oh, now I recognise you," I said, "your name is B——. And are you converted?"

"Yes, thank God, I am converted, and my wife too."

"And how did that come about?"

"Oh, through what you said to me in the train—I could not shake it off—and the meetings in the Freemasons' Hall, and the little books I got at the door coming out."

"But I only saw you there three times."

"Oh, but I was there a great many more times than that. Look here (pointing to the handbill), I heard you all through your series on the 'Night Scenes of Scripture,' except the last two."

"And you were brought to know the Lord then?"

"Yes, blessed be His name, He opened my eyes, gave me the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins,

and made me the possessor of eternal life through faith in Him."

"And what happened then?"

"Oh, I found, after I was brought to Christ, that I could not go on with the liquor traffic. I felt if I stopped where I was I should certainly be swamped, and I thought there was nothing for it but to make a clean break, so I gave up my situation and came down to a place about five miles from here, where my wife had some relations, to get clean out of the way of all my old associates."

"And how came you here to-night?"

"Well, yesterday an old gentleman brought to my house a handbill of your meetings here, and when I saw the name I said to myself, 'That is the man that spoke to me in the train,' and I felt I must come in and see you."

"I am very glad to see you, dear brother," I replied, "and to find that you are now on the Lord's side. But what are you doing to earn your bread now?"

"I am working on the estate of the Archbishop of Canterbury."

"And is that situation as good as the one you had in Edinburgh?"

"Oh, no; I had £3. 2s. 6d. a week, besides commission, for selling beer. I have £1 a week now, but, thank God, I have a happy heart and a good conscience, and if I can just get enough to support my wife and bairns honestly, I want no more. I am a downright happy man now. I know the Lord, and I want to serve and please and follow Him." And

the joy that shone in his face was a thorough attestation of the truth of his words.

Assured of the reality of his conversion, I was only too glad to introduce him to a business gentleman in Croydon, who soon found him more congenial work, at pay approximating that which he gave up for Christ's sake. Thus the Lord took care of the young convert, who had, through grace, been faithful to the light he had received.

Frequently have I seen B—— in the south since then, and twice has he visited me in Edinburgh, as he came north annually to see his very aged parents who lived in Roxburghshire, and to whom he carried the news of the blessed Saviour he himself had found, before they passed hence—which both now have.

It has been often said that truth is stranger than fiction. The foregoing tale is a mere recital of facts, and, strange though it may read, it is the truth, and should encourage God's children to sow the seed of His Word with liberal hand, in full assurance that fruit will be in evidence in due time. Fellow Christian, devote yourself to God in the coming year as never before.

Reader, are you a Christian in the true sense of the word? A Christian is one who knows Christ as his own blessed, personal Saviour. Say not, like B——, "I cannot be a Christian." If you are not one, own it, acknowledge it. However dark and many your sins may have been, Jesus' blood can wash them all away. Heed God's word, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

Turn to the Saviour whom B—— found. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31) now in the opening days of 1906, and you will find that He will be to you, first of all, a Saviour, and then, no matter what your earthly occupation, a Deliverer. His Word says, “Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God” (1 Cor. vii. 23, 24). If your occupation is honest, and you can keep a good conscience, “therein abide with God.” If the reverse, clear out of it, and trust the Lord. “Cease to do evil; learn to do well” (Isa. i. 16, 17), and you will find He will sustain you. So found our friend B——; so also have I found; and so also will you find. W. T. P. W.

THE BOATSWAIN'S DISCOVERY.

“**I** FEEL like a baby three days old.” These words were spoken by a man standing six feet, over fifty years of age, and of over two hundred pounds weight—rather notable words from such a man. He was a ship's boatswain, had braved many ocean storms, had been at last rescued from a disabled steamer an hour before she went down, had been brought into Halifax, and thence shipped on a transatlantic steamer, on board which I met him.

There were two shipwrecked crews on board, to

whom, with the "Polynesian's" own crew, opportunity was given to me to preach the gospel. This man listened. The opening verses of John iii. were used—"Except a man be born, again he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

At the close of the address an invitation was given to any of the men to come at any time to the speaker's cabin for conversation about the things of God. This man came that same evening. The question had reached his conscience, "Why had he been saved from that last shipwreck?" and it seemed to have been answered to him, "To hear the gospel that day." "Ye must be born again" seemed to be the Word lodged in his conscience. God's word had its own power and was doing its own work.

There were subsequent conversations. At one of these he said, "I feel like a baby three days old." What could one do but wonder and admire and praise that divine power which had made this stalwart man to bow and own himself but as a new-born babe. It seemed a real work of grace, and an accomplishment of the new birth.

Another of the same crew came to my cabin. He was a man of twenty or so. "We all," he said, "were gathered round the funnel—helpless, and expecting the ship to go down. But I had no fear." "Why?" I asked. "Because two years ago at Liverpool, at a seamen's meeting, I heard the words, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy

laden, and I will give you rest,' and I came to Jesus, and I have had peace since. So I was not afraid, and I spoke a little to the other men." Some of his words may have been seed sown in the heart of the boatswain.

Now is it not above all things important to be going on through this world, whether on shore or at sea, in the condition of soul of that younger man of that crew, as, crouched round the funnel of that steamer on that anxious day, he witnessed for Jesus? The young man was then a soul saved. The boatswain was then a soul still unsaved. But there was another opportunity given to the boatswain, and he believed. The Word of God was quick and powerful.

Now, how is it with you, reader? You may be hearing or reading frequently those solemn and momentous words which the Lord Jesus spake when down here to Nicodemus, and through Nicodemus to you, and which had power with the boatswain. The first word to Nicodemus was general and comprehensive of all men. Who is outside its range? Are you, reader? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." This is definite and conclusive. It cannot be anything else. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh," and to have "the mind of the flesh is death." "And the carnal mind (or the minding of the flesh) is enmity against God: for it is not subject to God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 6-8).

Are you content to be in this condition? Do you deliberately intend to go on in it; for such is your condition—while still in your own nature as man—while still a child of Adam and not a child of God. It is death. Do you not desire life? Answer. Here, then, come in again the words of the Lord to Nicodemus—the second time spoken as more personal and pointed, if one may so say—“Ye *must* be born again.” You, Nicodemus, “must be born anew, born from above.” This is the new birth, the new life. The Lord went on to unfold that truth to Nicodemus. He did so to the boatswain. He will do so to you, reader, if you be docile and submissive.

Read the whole of the Lord's instruction to Nicodemus (John iii. 1-21). Nicodemus received it, so did the boatswain. So may you, reader, if you will. Nicodemus was saved (see John xix. 38-42). I believe the boatswain was saved. The word of Jesus had power in both instances. Who can number like instances? They are being added to every day. Will you receive this word and let it have its own power that, like Nicodemus and the boatswain, you too may be saved and know Jesus as your life? “He that believeth on the Son of God *hath* everlasting life.”

Read John v. 24, “But is passed from death unto life.” Yes, passed from death to life! As real a thing that is as one saying, “One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see”; or one saying, “I was in New York yesterday, I am in Philadelphia to-day.” Reader, realise it.

T. M. T.

"GOD CHOSE TO SEND JESUS."

AT the conclusion of one of the late Brownlow North's addresses in Edinburgh, a young man came into the room where he was receiving persons anxious for private conversation, and said to him, "I have heard you preach three times, sir, and I neither care for you nor your preaching, unless you can tell me, Why did God permit sin?"

"I will do that with pleasure," was the immediate reply: "*Because He chose it.*"

The young man, apparently taken by surprise, stood speechless; and Mr North again replied, "*Because He chose it*; and," added he, "if you continue to question and cavil at God's dealings, and, vainly puffed up by your carnal mind, strive to be wise above what is written, I will tell you something more that God will do; *He will some day put you into hell-fire.* It is vain for you to strive with your Maker—you cannot resist Him; and neither your opinion of His dealings, nor your blasphemous expression of them, will in the least lessen the pain of your everlasting damnation, which I again tell you will most certainly be your portion, if you go on in your present spirit. There were such questioners as you in St Paul's time, and how did the apostle answer them? '*Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*'"

The young man here interrupted Mr North, and

said, "Is there such a text as that in the Bible?" "Yes, there is," was the reply, "in the ninth chapter of the Romans; and I recommend you to go home, read that chapter, and see there how God claims for Himself the right to do *whatever He chooses*, without permitting the thing formed to say to Him that formed it, 'Why hast Thou made me thus?' Remember, that besides permitting sin, there is another thing *God has chosen to do*—*God chose to send Jesus*. Of His own free and sovereign grace, God gave His only begotten Son *to die for sinners in their stead, in their place*; so that, though they are sinners, and have done things worthy of death, *not one* of them shall ever be cast into hell for his sins who will accept Jesus as his only Saviour, and believe in Him, and rest in His word. I have no time to say more to you now; others are waiting to see me. Go home, attend to what I have told you, and may God the Holy Spirit bless it, for Jesus Christ's sake."

This conversation took place on Sunday evening. On the following Friday, Mr North was sitting in a friend's drawing-room, when the servant announced that a young man wanted to speak to him. On being shown upstairs, he said, "Do you remember me?" "No." "Do you not remember the young man who on Sunday night asked you to tell him 'Why did God permit sin?'" "Yes, perfectly." "Well, sir, I am that young man; and you said that God permitted sin *because He chose it*, and you told me to go home and read the ninth chapter of Romans; and also

that *God chose to send Jesus* to die for such sinners as I am. I did, sir, what you told me, and afterwards I fell down before God, and asked Him to forgive my sins, because Jesus died for me, and He did, and now I am happy—oh! so happy, sir; and though the devil still comes sometimes to tempt me with my old thoughts, and to ask me what *reason* I have to think God has forgiven me, I have always managed to get him away by telling him that I do not want to judge things by my own *reason*, but by *God's Word*, and that the only reason why I know I am forgiven, is that *for Christ's sake, God chooses to pardon me.*"

The changed expression of the young man's countenance was quite sufficient to account for Mr North's not knowing him again. It was radiant with joy and peace.

Dear reader, the *first lesson* a poor sinner has to learn, is to trust in the Lord with all his heart, and not to his own understanding; to trust God not only for what he *does* understand, and for what *is* explained, but for what he *does not* understand, and for what *is not* explained. This is faith—and such faith honours God, and saves the soul. This is receiving the kingdom of God as a little child, who always believes that *things must be right if father says them and father does them*; and let us ever remember that it is written (and the Scripture cannot be broken), that unless "ye receive the kingdom of God as a little child, ye shall in no wise enter therein."

ANON.

THE UNSAVED CLERGYMAN.

I WAS travelling some years ago from Rochester to Buffalo. There were about sixty passengers in the same car with me. We were all, I thought, just then travellers in a double sense ; not only were we fellow-travellers on a passenger train, but also, fellow-travellers on the train of time speeding on to an endless eternity. Oh, what a solemn thought is this !

Reader, where art thou going to spend the eternity that lies before thee ? Thou art going there as fast as time can carry thee, and thou knowest not how soon thy journey will terminate, for it is written, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1).

I had with me at that time, as is always my custom, a package of assorted gospel tracts. With a short earnest prayer to the Lord that He would own and bless the tracts, I commenced to distribute them around, giving one to each passenger. When I came to the last two passengers I observed that one of them was dressed in the garb of a clergyman. I presented him with one of my tracts, entitled "Are you ready to meet God ?" Friend, how is it with thee ? Art thou ready to meet God ?

As I presented the tract to the clergyman his eye glanced at the title, and at once very sarcastically and emphatically he exclaimed, "No, I'm not ! Are you ?"

In answer to his question "Are you ?" I replied,

"Through the grace of God, I am ready to meet Him. God has saved me by His grace, and the blood of Jesus, His beloved Son, has satisfied all God's claims against me as a sinner." How is it with thee, my reader? Canst thou give such an answer, or art thou still in thy sins and afraid to meet God?

My saying I was ready to meet God seemed to astonish him greatly, for he said at once, "I consider you are awfully presumptuous to say you are ready to meet God." "Surely," I rejoined, "it is not presumption to believe God's Word, but it must be the height of presumption and folly to call in question, and refuse to bow to what God has declared in the Scriptures."

Clergyman though he was, I felt I must be faithful to God and His truth. So I asked him, "How do you expect to get ready to meet God?" He replied, "By doing all the good I can, and living a holy life." "What authority have you for that way of getting ready for God's holy presence?" "Oh," said he, "I could give you plenty of verses from the Bible which teach us that." I asked him to give me one. This he did not because he could not.

"No," I said, "God's Word declares, 'It is not of works, lest any man should boast' (Eph. ii. 9); also, 'By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight'" (Rom. iii. 20). I continued: "You have sinned and come short of God's glory (Rom. iii. 23), and all your righteousness, holy living, and good works in the sight of God are as filthy rags (Isa. lxiv. 6)."

He now became very angry at me for speaking so personally and pointedly to him, and indignantly retorted, "Why do you trouble people, and who are you to presume to give a tract to me—a clergyman?" I replied, "Clergyman though you are, you need salvation, and if you do not repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and get your sins forgiven, you will be eternally damned" (Mark xvi. 16). With these words I left him, trusting the Lord would bless my conversation to him and to those who were listening.

And now, dear reader, you, likewise, may be in the place of a teacher, may be a Sunday-school teacher, or an active member of some religious body, and be yet unsaved—not ready to meet God. It may be thou art saying to thyself, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Jer. vi. 14). If thou art trusting to anything in thyself—any good thou canst do—then surely thy peace is a false peace. Be warned in time, give up thine own doings, and flee to the Lord Jesus Christ for true peace, "for he has made peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20).

The clergyman's plan of salvation was, "Do the best you can, and try and live a holy life." It was his own plan—the devil's plan—and many thousands to-day are trusting it. Satan has succeeded marvelously in preaching this plan of salvation; it is his plan, and leads to the lake of fire. It is the way of Cain, who offered to God the fruit of his own toil. Scripture pronounces "woe" to all such (Jude 11).

Dear friend, what art thou trusting to for salvation?

Listen to God's plan: He first declares, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 10); "none that doeth good" (ver. 12). To all who acknowledge this, and bow to God's verdict of "guilty," God declares the good news, "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." How precious is this truth, dear unsaved reader; it is for the *ungodly*, and for him who *works not*, but *believes*. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts xvi. 31).

D. C. P.

JOHN OWEN'S CONVERSION.

SOME years ago I went to a town in Victoria named B—— to hold evangelistic services. It was in the cool of the evening. A full orb'd sun had ceased to shine in dazzling splendour, and had sunk in the far west horizon, leaving traces which indicated another hot day on the morrow. Here and there were groups of cottagers, seated under verandahs and in the doorways, whilst others were lounging on the grass, discussing the oppressive heat which all had much felt that day.

The queen of the night was rising slowly above the hill which overlooked the town, her borrowed light illumining its brow, which made the scene strikingly picturesque. At the foot of this hill lived old John Owen, and among those who enjoyed the

cool of the evening and chatted freely were John and his wife. Possessing a clear stentorian voice, he could be heard clearly in the distance.

I was seated under the verandah of the house I was staying at, when suddenly the thought passed across my mind that I ought to go across and speak to John about his soul. Immediately I obeyed the impulse, and was soon by his side.

"Good evening, Mr Owen." "Good evening, Mr H——," he replied, and then added, "Wife, bring out a chair. Take a seat." I did so, and after a few casual remarks about the heat of the day, a suitable opportunity was afforded to speak on a subject of greater importance.

"You are getting up in years, Mr Owen."

"Please call me John. Old John Owen is what every one calls me. Getting up in years? Yes, seventy-six next birthday."

"Is your soul saved?"

"No, but I have been trying all my life to get that matter settled, and it is getting late now, my time is short here."

I replied, "It is finished."

"Yes, man, I believe that, but mustn't I *do* something?"

Again I said, "It is finished," and bade him adieu, praying that God would bless the word spoken.

The next morning at an early hour I heard John hammering away in his shop (for he was a wheelwright by craft). I walked across, with a cheery "Good morning, John!"

"Good morning, sir."

"Did you think over the scripture I left with you last night?"

"That I did, and this morning too, but truly, mustn't I *do* something?" Near the bench stood a wheel finished in a workman-like manner, I took up a draw-knife and commenced to shave one of the spokes, whereupon the hot-headed old Welshman exclaimed, "Man alive, don't do that."

"Why, John?"

"Because it is finished."

"But mustn't I *do* something?"

The old man saw the point and remarked:

"That's a good one, I'm done after that." At this junction I left him to think, and I went to pray.

Later on I visited him again, "Well, John, do you see through it yet?"

"Hardly, but you have silenced me on the doing score. But must not I *feel* it first?"

"So the devil has got you on another line (and, oh, how many thousands the devil has blocked on the line called 'feeling')," I replied. "You must *get* it first and feel it after," and again I left him.

The next day I was returning from visiting some persons who were attending the meetings, when I observed John coming out of an hotel with a large bottle of beer under his arm. I thought, he has got it all right but he doesn't feel it yet. The same afternoon I called on him again, "Well, John, have you got it yet?"

"No, man, I wish I could *feel* it first, I do want it."

Whereupon I told him the story of the man I saw come out of the hotel with a bottle of beer under his arm, pointing out that he had *got* it some time before he *felt* it, and assuring him it was the same in reference to salvation. This arrested John's attention and very much impressed him. He then remarked, "That's true about the beer. I am the man who had it, and I got it before I felt it. Better perhaps if I never felt it, I would have been better off to-day. Well, John Owen, that shuts you up," he continued, and, as I left, I heard him repeat, "He *got* the beer first, and *felt* it afterwards. I'll think over that."

The next evening I gave an address on Hebrews xi. 7, dwelling on some of the typical teachings of the ark. The door being in the side might point to the wound that was made in the side of God's Ark, the Lord Jesus Christ, when a soldier with a spear pierced His side, and quoting, "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John x. 9). John listened attentively, and I saw him raise his spectacles and place them on his bald head. "Only one door," I said, "either go in thereat or perish, no other; and only one window to look through, and it on the top, teaching us that there is only one direction to look if we would be happy." I appealed to all present, "Who will go in at the door and look up through the window to-night?"

John immediately rose up, took his hat, and walked out.

At the close of the meeting a lady said to me, "I think old John went in to-night. What a blessing

if he has, I have been praying for him." I replied, "I think so too."

The next day I went to see him.

"Well, how are you this morning, John?"

"Grand! I went in at the door last night and am looking up through the window." His face corroborated the statement. It was quite clear such was the case. "Praise His name," he continued, "for saving an old sinner like John Owen. Dear me, isn't it simple?"

"Yes, John, but it wasn't simple for Jesus; no, indeed. He felt it, and cried out too."

"Well, well, seventy-six years of age, and never saw it till now. Thank God for sending you here, if only for old John Owen, and I might have had it sixty years ago. And how different my life would have been. But there, it was not put so that I could understand it."

John's life was near its close, he only lived three weeks after.

One day an old gold-digger came into his shop and offered him money to go for some beer. He refused. "If you want beer, go yourself for it, and mind you don't bring it here to drink. I'm done with the lot of it."

"What's the matter?" in a surprised tone, was asked.

"It isn't old John Owen. Now it is new John."

Shortly after he was suddenly taken ill, and confined to his bed. I went to see him, and asked, "What is the matter, John?"

"God is going to take me home. Dear me, how good of Him to pick up an old sinner like me, and save me and take me home out of the road. It's almost too much to bear."

It was cheering to see that dear old man rest in God's Ark. Go when you would he was resting, and whenever asked how it was with him he always replied, "Grand! Gone in at the door, and looking up through the window."

I remember one morning in particular when I went to see him he said, "Glad to see you, Mr H——. There's a bit of a dark cloud on that window this morning."

I replied, "The sun shines on a cloudy day when you don't see it, as it does on a clear bright day when you can see it." He smiled. Just then that sweet verse, the foundation verse, came into my mind, and I read it, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 54). He shouted out: "That will do, it's gone, brighter than ever. Lack-a-daisy! it's getting still brighter," and a heavenly smile sat upon his dear old face.

I said, "You seem to be very happy to-day, John."

"Yes, peace, peace."

"What do you mean by peace?"

"Peace with God."

"Who made that peace?"

"I didn't. Oh, no, John Owen didn't, though he foolishly tried to."

"Who made it?"

"My Jesus, by His blood."

"And what are you doing?"

"Enjoying it."

Only one taught of the Spirit could speak as he did. You could hear him occasionally, as he drew near his end, repeating to himself, "Dear me! silly J. O., what a fool I've been, trying all my life to make what was made eighteen hundred years ago; but there, it's the preachers' fault, the one-half of them don't know it themselves, and how can they preach it?"

One day the doctor, who was John's senior by ten years, came to see him: "Well, Owen, what's the matter with you?"

"Bad, doctor, suffering the fruits of my bad ways." (He was far advanced in wrong-doing, and there were few sins that he had not committed.)

"You seem to be very quiet and calm if you are going to die."

"No wonder, doctor."

"What do you mean?"

"I have gone in at the door, and am looking up through the window." (He seldom took his eye off the roof.)

"What do you mean?"

"Why, I am saved, doctor; is that plain enough for you? Saved! Yes, an old sinner, like you."

"An old sinner like me! Where were you saved?"

"At Mr H——'s meeting; and if you go there you may get saved too, you need to be."

"You're mad, Owen."

"No, indeed, doctor; have been all my life, but am all right now."

A professed servant of Christ, hearing of his conversion, came to see him.

"Well, John, is it true you are saved?" "True enough!" "How." "Went in at the door, and am looking up through the window." After a short stay he rose to go, remarking, "If you are saved it is a good thing."

"If, if, if! there is no 'if' about it, ifs are of the devil. God has knocked them all out of me." This was said in a firm tone.

It was on a Tuesday morning I had my farewell interview with dear old John. "This is my last visit. I shall not see you again until we meet on that morn without a cloud."

"Please don't leave me till I am buried. I shall not be long now."

"Is it still bright?"

"Yes, getting brighter and brighter."

In the eve of the same day John passed away to be for ever with his precious Saviour, and later, at John's grave, stood many old and hardened sinners who listened to a word on the "Two Resurrections." The fruit of that day's sowing will be seen on the Day of the Lord.

Reader, how do you feel in the light of "the resurrection of the wicked"? If still hardened and indifferent, remember, if you do not confess Jesus as Saviour and Lord now, you will have to stand before the great white throne and do so. Let me earnestly

and affectionately implore you to follow dear old John's example. "Go in at the door, and look up through the window." The Father is calling, the Son is inviting, the Spirit is wooing. Come by night or come by day, come as a last resource, like people to the workhouse. I don't care when, so long as you come to Jesus. Come, as R. Hill once said :

"Come naked, come filthy,
Come ragged and poor,
Come wretched, come dirty,
Come just as you are."

Time is short. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

"Time was, is past, thou can'st not it recall ;
Time is, thou hast, employ the portion small ;
Time future is not, and can never be—
Time present is the only time for thee."

A. H.

FRAGMENT.

WHAT am I living for? Can I say, "The life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me?" Nothing less than this is worthy of a Christian. It is a poor miserable thing to be content with being saved, and then to go on with the world, and live for self-pleasing and self-interest—to accept salvation as the fruit of Christ's toil and passion, and then live at a distance from Himself, caring not for the furtherance of His cause—the promotion of His glory.

C. H. M.

PROFESSOR OR POSSESSOR.

IT looked a very nice clock. The case was a valuable one, and the dial and hands all that could be desired; in fact you would not have objected to it in one of your best rooms, from an ornamental point of view.

It was resting on the seat of a railway carriage opposite to me, where a gentleman had carefully laid it by his side. Upon looking more intently I discovered that it had no works inside. I looked at its owner and said, "You have a professor there."

"What do you mean?" he replied.

"Why, that case has all the appearance of being a real clock, but all that would make it valuable if you wanted to catch a train or keep an appointment is lacking. It is just like some people who profess to be Christians, and make a great show, but have no inward work to correspond with their outward profession."

"Oh!" he said, "I see what you mean."

About a fortnight afterwards I was travelling on the same line, and who should be in the carriage but the gentleman returning home with the very same clock. Looking at me, he said, "It is a possessor now." He then told me it had been in London being fitted with new works.

Now, a true Christian and a clock are alike in several things. We will look at some Paul mentions to the Colossians, to see if you can discover by these

marks whether you are a mere professor or a true possessor.

The works inside a clock must move the hands outside. If it is not right inside, it will never be right outside. So with a true Christian, he must, to start with, be a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul tells us that he had heard of their "faith in Christ Jesus" (Col. i. 4)—heard that their confidence reposed in a real, though unseen, Saviour. They had *tasted the "blessedness" of the man who "trusteth in the Lord."*

Now, faith is something unseen by others. It is a secret between the soul and the Lord. You remember in the Gospels, how the woman with the issue of blood "*touched the Lord.*" That was an act of faith known only to Himself and herself. He knew she had touched Him, she knew the virtue that had reached her.

Thus it ever is. A moment arrives in the history of all true believers when it can be said they have "*faith in Christ.*"

Now, wherever this is real, some outward expression will follow, so the next thing we read is of their "*love to all the saints*" (Col. i. 4).

By faith in Christ Jesus they had become children of God (Gal. iii. 26). Now, love to Him that begat always produces love for those begotten. Faith in an unseen Saviour produces love to all He has saved.

I remember before I was converted I would have turned down another street to avoid a man who wished to speak to me about the Saviour. After I

had trusted the Saviour there was no one I was better pleased to see. This is ever a sure mark of divine life. It does not say love to the particular Christians at the place you attend, or love to those who are pleasing and attractive to you, but love to *all* the saints.

You meet a man whom you have never seen before. You discover he loves the Lord. There is a link at once. You are drawn out in divine affection to that man more than to your natural brother who is unconverted.

Then in verse 5 Paul tells us that these Colossians had a "hope" laid up for them in heaven. Now, that does not mean they had a hope of getting to heaven, but that heaven now contained the longing object of their desire, Jesus, who is gone back to the Father, and their souls were filled with a fervent desire to see that blessed Saviour, who had loved them and died for them. Once their hope was connected with earth, their joys with this world; now their treasure was in heaven.

When your treasure is there your heart will be also. Well may the apostle, in writing to the Romans, desire that the "God of hope" might fill them with all joy and peace in believing (xv. 13). It is the secret of happiness, and he desires that they "may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." Now, it is a fact, whether in a clock or a Christian, that if the hidden springs are right they will move the hands correspondingly outside. So the apostle tells us that the fourth thing which

marked the Colossians was "fruit" in "the world" (Col. i. 6).

Only let the heart get simply and wholly occupied with "Christ the hope of glory," and the life of a believer will be marked by fruitfulness. The fruit, the Spirit of God produces, moves in three circles, as you may see by looking at Galatians v. 22.

The first circle is love, joy, peace. That is a divine circle. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit, and as Christ is laid hold of as our "hope," joy and peace fill the believer.

Then toward others we have to show long-suffering, gentleness, goodness. This is the practical outcome toward those who try us by their ways and words.

After this we read, "faith, meekness, temperance," that has to do with ourselves personally.

Christ was the meek and lowly one, and we are to take His yoke and learn of Him, and temperance is to mark us; everything which might carry us away or act like an opiate on our spiritual senses, we must avoid. If the secret springs of hope and faith are inside, this will produce the outward expression of love to all the saints and fruit in the world.

Now which are you, possessor or professor? I do not ask if you teach in the Sunday school, if you are a preacher of the gospel, or if you are liberal to the poor. You may be all this, and yet never really have had "faith in Christ."

A friend was telling me of a lady she knew who was very much like the clock without its inward springs. She was housekeeper to the rector of the

parish, and greatly respected. I suspect if you had asked any of the parishioners they would have told you she was a most exemplary Christian, and she would have agreed with them, for she had formed a very high appreciation of her personal virtues, and thought if anybody had a right to heaven she had. She was kind to the poor, faithful to her master, regular in her attendance at church, and to the best of her ability had been serving God for fifty-two years, yet with all this she had no room in her heart for Christ. She did not object to attaching His work as a makeweight to her own merits, but as the personal object of her faith and as the One who had died for her, and in His death atoned for her sins, He was a total stranger to her. At fifty-two disease laid hold of her, the doctor pronounced her case hopeless, death stared her in the face.

A Christian visited her, and knowing that in a few weeks she would be in eternity, asked her as to her spiritual prospects. She told him she was happily and peacefully anticipating the great change, and recounted the virtues of her life as the ground of her hope, and felt sure God would take her to heaven on that ground. He soon discovered she was a mere professor, just like a handsome clock case without the works, so he solemnly said to her, "If you die as you are, you will be lost for ever in hell."

"You cruel man," she said, "how dare you tell a woman like me such a thing?"

"If you die as you are," he solemnly repeated, "you will be lost for ever in hell."

"What!" she cried, "after being a faithful servant and living the blameless life I have?"

He rose, and as he left her solemnly repeated, "If you die as you are, you will be lost for ever in hell."

As the night rolled on and the clock struck the hours, those awful words rang in her ears and effectually prevented sleep closing her eyes.

Could it be true after all that she had deceived herself and others all her life? "Peace, peace," she said, but her fancied peace had fled. Hell with its realities, the judgment seat, and a holy God who knew all about her, aroused her to agony of soul. The Spirit of God began to work in her conscience. He lighted up the dark chambers of her heart, and she discovered that she was a mere professor, and all her fancied "righteousnesses" were but "filthy rags." Oh, how she longed for the morning light that she might send for the man of God to tell her what would meet her need. What a different task awaited him as he sat by her bedside the next morning. She was thoroughly awake to her state. She felt that the vessel of "good works" in which she hoped to reach the harbour of heaven was foundering in mid ocean, and nothing but rotten timbers were between her soul and a lost eternity.

How gladly she now listened to the story of the atoning work of Christ, and the virtues of His precious blood. Her visitor unfolded God's gospel to her, and told of justice satisfied, of God's holy claims all having been met, of a risen Saviour in glory,

and of "righteousness unto all and upon all them that believe," of a free salvation for "whosoever will."

The once self-satisfied Pharisee listened, not only listened but believed, rested simply, wholly, and only upon Christ and His finished work. Peace, rest, and joy filled her soul, and praise and adoration filled her mouth, during the remainder of her life.

Her thankfulness to God was unceasing, for tearing off her robe of self-righteousness and clothing her in the best robe, even the righteousness of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

Now, my friend, which are you—professor or possessor? Are you a "cursed man" or a "blessed man"? You ask, What do you mean? Why, just this: God says, "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is," "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm" (Jer. xvii. 5-7); and you must be one or the other; say honestly which word describes you, "blessed" or "cursed." Possessor or professor?

H. N.

FRAGMENT.

THE judgment of God *for* us is always the opposite of that of the Holy Ghost *in* us. If it is a question of the enemy accusing, God says, "I do not see a spot or stain." If He is dealing with ourselves, He will pass over nothing. Blessed that it is so. J. N. D.

REFUSING AND CHOOSING.

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them."—HEB. xi. 24-28.

THE Spirit of God in these verses summarises the salient points of Moses' life under three heads—(1) the moment when he turned right round to God; (2) the moment when he absolutely broke with the world; and (3) the memorable occasion when he put between himself and God the sprinkled blood, the blood of atonement, which made his own salvation a downright certainty.

I wonder if you have passed through an experience like that of Moses.

There are two striking things to be noted in verse 24: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, *refused* to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, *choosing* rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." How old was he when, as the Holy Ghost says here, "he was come to years"? We are told elsewhere, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel"

(Acts vii. 22). He had come to the time of life when he had his head screwed on rightly. He had a real sense of what things were. Forty is the number in Scripture of probation, or perfect testing,—and, mark you! when this man turned to God, he was no novice as to the world and its unsatisfactory pleasures. When Moses turned right round to God,—when he turned his back on the world, on the idolatry of Egypt, and upon the brightest prospect that mortal man on earth ever had,—he was a man who knew exactly how to appraise things at their full and true value.

At forty years of age, what was Moses' position? It was a very remarkable one. He was the child of Hebrew parents, and owing to the cruel injunction of the king, that all the male children should be destroyed, he should have perished in infancy by being flung into the river. This injunction his parents had disobeyed "by faith," and the child was put by his mother in a cradle, and laid in the flags by the river's side. Pharaoh's daughter, as she went to bathe in the river, saw this ark or cradle, and had it brought to her. When the ark was opened, "the babe wept," and her womanly heart was touched, and she adopted the child. Moses' own sister then came forward, and asked Pharaoh's daughter if she should fetch a nurse. She commanded her to do so, and Moses' own mother was brought. "Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages," the astonished mother hears, but from that time Pharaoh's daughter claimed the child, "and he became her son"

(Exod. ii. 1-10). She raised him from infancy to childhood, and from childhood to manhood, as being her own son; and what was the result? When Moses came to be forty years of age, he was within direct touch of the throne of Egypt, and with every prospect of ascending it. Pharaoh had no son, and Pharaoh's daughter had no children, and, in the event of her death, there was no doubt that her adopted son would have ascended the throne of Egypt, and would have been the monarch of the ruling nation in the world at that moment.

Moreover, Moses was evidently an exceedingly clever man. He was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and the Egyptians were not fools. It would puzzle our builders to do what they did—to put up the Pyramids, and rear the mighty structures that were common enough in the days of Moses. There was a great deal more wisdom in those days than we are wont to credit the world with; and "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." He was a scientific, accomplished, and intellectual man; but more than that, "he was mighty in words and in deeds." As a speaker, an orator, who could address his fellows,—spite of his own humble estimate of himself (Exod. iv. 10),—he was clearly at the top of the tree. In the forum or the fight, in the amphitheatre or the battlefield, he could meet with any man who came against him. He was mighty "in deeds" as well as "in words." He was an all-round accomplished man of the world, who had few, if any, equals—a man that men could be proud of. That

man had the ball at his foot. He had the world before him. He was not only the king's favourite, and the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, but was within touch of the throne; and as a man, he was evidently what you may call the world's man,—a notable man among men, from whom they expected much.

All of a sudden Moses flings all up; all of a sudden he turns his back upon what had hitherto claimed him, charmed him, and allured him. What was the reason? Well, Scripture says, "*By faith* Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." And what was this wonderful energy that wrought in his soul this change? It was faith. Faith is the principle that links the soul with God. It is that mighty principle that sees beyond the things of time, and looks right into eternity. The fact was this,—in some way or other—for the producing circumstances are not told us—the Spirit of God had wrought in that man's heart, and he looked through time into eternity.

Oh! would to God that you too would take a deep, long look right into eternity! for although you are here to-day, you cannot tell how soon you will be in it. It lies before you, just as Moses knew it lay before him; and he looked right into eternity, and he measured in the balances of the sanctuary what he had for time, and what lay before him in eternity. By grace he was able to do this remarkable act,—he gave up the present, in view of the future. "*By faith* Moses, when he was come to years, *refused* to be called

the son of Pharaoh's daughter, *choosing rather* to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Refusing and choosing! Every man must do the same. Every one of my readers must refuse, and must choose. Either you refuse the world and choose Christ, or you refuse Christ and choose the world. I quite admit that at that moment the present realities of the gospel, in all their sweetness and fulness, had not come out as they have to us now; but Moses saw enough to make him see and say this: "There is something infinitely better than what I have just now; I will go in for it." But what about your position, Moses? What about your place in the court and the palace? "These things are hindrances in my road, and I will cede them," is his reply.

I have no doubt that the devil suggested to him, Why don't you keep the place that Providence has placed you in? Undoubtedly Providence had placed him in that position. But remember Providence is one thing, and faith is another. While no doubt the Providence of God had placed him in a lofty position, he was part and parcel with those who were not God's people. He saw that the thing of the utmost importance was to be of, and to be identified with, those who were God's people. There are some people in this world who belong to God. Do you belong to Him? Then distinctly understand this: If a man does not belong to God, Satan claims that man. People do not like that doctrine; they think it very strange. You are not your own, man! Oh! no. "The god of this

world" claims you, holds you, and binds you, if you do not belong to God. Moses felt it and knew it, and he chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." He said: "Let me be among God's people; I had rather have affliction with God's people, than have the favour and fawning of the world, and all that the children of the world can lay at my feet." He was wise.

But possibly you may say to me, What did he give it up for? I grant you he gave up an earthly court and crown, and the company of earthly courtiers, but Scripture tells us "he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." I wonder if you ever thought of the company that Moses got into afterwards! I do not know whether you ever thought of it, but it is worthy of notice. In the Gospels we read there was a certain occasion when the blessed Lord Jesus Christ was transfigured. Peter, James, and John saw the Lord transfigured: "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke ix. 30, 31). Ah! Moses has his recompense there. He is in the company, not only of the people of God, but of the Son of God! I want you, my friend, to follow his steps. I want you to turn to the Lord Jesus, and do, in principle, what Moses did. It comes to this,—a man has to refuse and to choose.

When I was converted to God myself, what did I do? I refused, and I chose. I was going to be a lawyer, not a doctor, and I had gone up from the

south of Devon to London to go on with my legal studies, and I got one Sunday night into a meeting where a servant of God was preaching. That is forty-five years ago. It was on the 16th December 1860. The dear servant of God who was preaching that evening brought out very simply the importance and the blessedness of being a Christian. Every seat in the hall was filled, and I stood in the aisle the whole of that evening. As the preacher—who has now gone to glory—went on, I said to myself, That man is right; he is right, and I am wrong. But there was more than that, I got the sense that that man knew God, and I did not—that man was saved, and I was not—that he was going to glory, while I was going to hell—that he was going to be the companion of Christ, and I knew I was going to be the companion of the devil perfectly well. You ask, Were you a terribly gross sinner? I was exactly like you, an unconverted man—a man full of the world. I admit that at that time there was not a pleasure of the world that I had not dipped into. I tasted of “the pleasures of sin,” but they never satisfied me, and that night I was a convicted man—an awakened man. I found that I was on the wrong road altogether—that I was all wrong. I was pulled up. God pull you up, my friend. God arrested me. God arrest you!

At the close of the meeting I was introduced to a young man of about my own age, who simply asked me, “Are you a Christian?” “No, sir,” I answered, “I am not a Christian.” “How is that?” “I don’t

know, but I am not one." "Don't you want to be one?" "Yes, I should like to be one." "Well, what have you to do to become one?" "I suppose I have only to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Yes, and do you believe in Him?" "I do; we all believe in England." "Yes, but tell me, what do you believe?" I had been brought up in a Christian family. I had a Christian father and mother, a converted brother, and several Christian sisters, but I was not a Christian myself. I never was more puzzled than when he put that question, "What do you believe?" After a pause, I said, "I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." "And to save you?" "Well, I hope so, among the rest." "Do you believe in Him?" "I do." "And are you saved?" "Oh, no, I don't feel saved; and I can't expect to be saved until I feel I am saved." My young friend said, "Stop, you think you really need saving? You know you are a sinner?" "I know it, and what is more, I'd give the world to be a Christian." "But you have nothing to give, you have only to receive," and then he put the gospel very simply to me. I was on the verge of believing the gospel, and accepting God's way of salvation, when an old acquaintance stepped up, and whispered in my ear, "Remember you have to sing at a concert in Devonshire" (I used to sing at concerts, chiefly comic songs) "in Christmas week, and you have many other similar engagements that week. Now 'no man can serve two masters.' You could not be a Christian and fulfil all your worldly engagements. You had

better put off being a Christian for a fortnight, and then when you come back to London you can believe the gospel and be a Christian." On went this subtle yet damnable temptation, for it was the devil who whispered, "No man can serve two masters ;" and I recollect I said at the time, "That is true, I have served you too long. You are a bad master, and I will serve you no more." And, thank God ! I made up my mind then and there. The scripture which the devil quoted to hinder me really helped me to decide for Christ. I *refused* the world and the devil.

"And you do believe in Jesus?" said the young man who was conversing with me. "I do believe." "And what do you believe?" he asked again. "I believe that Christ died to save me." "And do you think the Lord is willing to save you?" "Yes, I think He is." "And has He saved you?" "Ah, no ! I am not saved yet ; I don't feel saved." I was waiting for experience. All of a sudden he said : "I see where you are ; you are just in the position of the man of whom the apostle James says, 'Thou believest there is one God ; thou doest well : the devils also believe, and tremble'" (Jas. ii. 19). That verse pierced me through. I saw in a moment the ground I was on, and the company I was in ; and I am not ashamed to confess that when I saw my company I fled. Fled ! To whom ? To the Saviour ! I saw where I was. I saw I was practically the companion of those who, while they believe there is one God, tremble under the sense of His judgment,

knowing that they are eternally lost. "The devils also believe, and tremble" pierced my conscience to the uttermost. They and I were on common ground. The young Scotchman who was speaking with me said: "There is this difference between you and them; there is no mercy for them; they are beyond it. There is mercy for you, and God grant that you may taste it." "What must I do to be saved?" burst from my lips. "You have only to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I thought, Can I believe that Jesus died for me? Yes, I do believe, and, thank God! I made up my mind for the Lord on that spot. I chose Jesus—found Him as my Saviour, received pardon and peace on the spot, was filled with joy, and have never for one moment repented my choice. You do the same now, I implore you.

The next thing we read about Moses is, that he "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." I have no doubt Moses got well laughed at, when he made up his mind to come out on God's side and identify himself with God's people. When Moses' mind was fully made up, I have no doubt his old comrades laughed at him, despised, and jeered at him, and said, What a fool that Moses is! Moses was no fool. Folly is in the pathway of the man who enters eternity regardless of the need of the soul. Moses might have been called all sorts of names. But it does not do a man much harm to be called names. Never mind if the men who have been your companions call you a

"blue light," a "salvationist," or a "revivalist." Never you mind, my friend, if you are the Lord's man, though your comrades in the class-room, the counting-house, or the workshop, make sport of you. The Christian man has got the best of it all along the line—right through time and into eternity. He has God for his Father, Christ for his Saviour, the Holy Ghost for his Comforter, the Bible for his guide, and the children of God for his companions. Happy man! blessed man! What is it he loses? He loses his sins; and the loss of being judged for your sins is not one to be mourned.

"Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt" was a fine working principle. I have no doubt Moses, ere he took that step, put into one scale-pan of the balance what he had for time in connection with the idolatry of Egypt, and into the other scale he put the reproach of Christ. He weighed the treasures of the world against "the reproach of Christ," and was then happily found "esteeming the reproach of Christ *greater riches* than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." He looked into the future. I pray you, look into the future. Think what eternity is. Have you ever really pondered what eternity is? It is a terrible word for an unsaved man. You cannot picture it. You cannot measure it.

There was great energy in Moses' faith, for we read, "By faith he *forsook Egypt*, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing him who

is invisible." What cheered him, kept him going? what carried him on? "He endured as seeing him who is invisible." He had his eye on God. He knew God. The Christian knows God. The Christian young man knows God as his Father, and the Son of God as his Saviour. He knows his sins are forgiven. "He endures as seeing him who is invisible." Faith sees right into the future. Faith knows what is coming. I can tell you nothing about time, but as to eternity all is as clear as noonday light. The believer in Jesus has eternal life. The sinner who trusts in Jesus knows his sins are forgiven. "For to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

There is a third point of immense importance stated about Moses in the scripture before us. "Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them." Do you understand that? It was the sprinkling of the blood of the passover lamb on the lintel and two sideposts of the door ere the Israelites could come out of Egypt. Moses had made up his mind at that time to turn his back on the king of Egypt, the prince of the world, and start for heaven and glory. But God had said that, in order to the deliverance of the people, the blood of redemption, the blood of the lamb of substitution, must be seen by Him on the lintels. The Holy Ghost records about Moses here that in order to secure his redemption, and in order to his being sheltered from the

righteous judgment of God, he put between his soul and God the blood of atonement, the blood of the slain lamb. You must imitate Moses if you want salvation. You can have it now if in faith you put between your guilty soul and God the blood of Jesus. Wonderful is the truth that the Son of God—the sinless, blessed Son of man—died for you; and if you believe in Him, and rest your soul on the blessed truth of His death and resurrection, your eternal salvation is assured. “By faith Moses kept the passover and the *sprinkling* of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.”

Now, why, I should like to ask, is *the sprinkling* spoken of here? Because belief in the mere fact that Christ died will not save me. I must appropriate it, and must make it my own, and that is what faith does; it sprinkles the blood. There is many a man to-day who believes that Jesus died, but who has not got His blood applied to his own soul. That is like the man in Egypt who had slain the lamb, and put the blood in the basin, but had not put the blood on the lintel of his door. The *shed blood* is the fact that Jesus died; the blood *sprinkled* indicates that I believe *He died for me*; I have appropriated it for my own need. There is no real application of the truth to the soul till this point is reached. There must be a personal application of the truth. God's salvation is individual. It goes not by families, kirks, or nations. “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life.” And why? Because you can only get in one at a time.

It is individual. You must have it for yourself; you must get it for yourself. Thank God, I have got it! Will you not receive Christ now? You could not do better than follow in Moses' path—First, decide for Christ; second, turn your back on the world; and third, get under the shelter of the blood of Jesus. Faith does all three. Have you faith?

W. T. P. W.

"THIS DAY WILL BE YOUR LAST OPPORTUNITY."

YES, it was a most interesting conversation we had together in a London restaurant, one day about noon. It was in reference to our deepest interests, the salvation and eternal welfare of the soul.

After I had taken my seat at a table, I turned to look at the one by my side, and having an impression both from his manners and dress that he was a Christian, I opened up a conversation, the substance of which is as follows:—

"May I ask you if you know the Lord?"

"Yes, thank the Lord, I do."

"How long have you known Him?"

"Two years and three quarters."

This answer greatly struck me. Its decision and promptitude savoured of assurance and reality. It had such a genuine ring about it, that I followed it up with the question—

"May I ask you to tell me the circumstances that led to your conversion, for to *me* there is nothing so interesting as the conversion of a soul."

"Oh, certainly," he replied. "I keep a boot and shoe shop in the fashionable watering-place of H—— on the south coast of England. I had been living without a thought of God, and for twenty years past had not entered a place of worship, but spent my Sundays chiefly in reading the newspaper. One Sunday evening, as it drew to a close, I began to think that this was not altogether a satisfactory way of spending my time—and soon after this came a most remarkable moment in my history.

"One morning as I was dressing I suddenly heard a voice say, '*This day will be your last opportunity.*' I looked round, but could see no one, but the voice I clearly heard, and the words uttered were unmistakable. So affected was I that I nearly fell to the ground. Breakfast time arrived, but on coming down could eat nothing. Those terrible words, '*This day will be your last opportunity,*' kept ringing in my ears.

"My wife, seeing I looked sad, thought I was ill, and wished to send for a doctor, but this I declined, as I knew no earthly physician could do me any good. My business now became a great burden, attend to it I could not, so leaving it in charge of others, I went out and wandered about in the distress of my soul. All my sins, my wasted Sundays, my neglect of God and His Word, came overwhelmingly before me.

"Dinner-time came, but I could take nothing.

Again I wandered about. Tea-time came and still no relief, in fact my anxiety increased as the hours of my day were fast passing away. Evening set in and at last bed-time came, and the day of '*my last opportunity*' was fast drawing to its close. What could I do? Whither could I turn? I could not pray!

"At last, in the deep distress and agony of my soul, I could no longer keep the state of my mind from my dear wife, but told her all that had happened to me that day—that dread sentence 'This day will be your last opportunity,' and all the deep exercises it had produced, and asked her (she being a Christian) to pray for me.

"Together we knelt down on that memorable night. She pleaded earnestly with the Lord for my forgiveness and salvation. At last my tongue was loosed, and I cried for mercy to the God I had so shamefully neglected and sinned against. And He heard! Blessed be His name! Before the clock struck twelve, ere the day had passed away, light broke into my soul, I rose from my knees a happy and forgiven man."

Such, dear reader, is the account of the salvation of a precious soul that God in His sovereign mercy reached and saved.

May I now put to you, dear reader of this true narrative, the plain but important question, "Are you pursuing the God-neglecting, Christ-rejecting course that this poor man for so many years pursued, whom God in so remarkable a way awakened from his death slumber and brought to Himself?"

Remember, God does not often interpose in so remarkable a manner as this, especially where the gospel is listened to Lord's Day after Lord's Day, which is probably your case, for God is speaking to you by His servants every time the precious message of a Saviour's love reaches your ears. And God is lingering over you, waiting for you to turn to Him, not willing that you should perish, but turn to Him and live. Did Jesus die for sinners; and did He not die for you? Or are you the only sinner for whom He did not die? Blessed be God, that cannot be, for it is written that "he died for all." "He gave himself a ransom for all." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Are you a sinner? Then let faith settle it—"Yes, I am a sinner, therefore He died for me."

E. M.

FRAGMENT.

THANK God, there is no reason whatever why the believer should commit sin. "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not." We should not justify ourselves in a single sinful thought. It is our sweet privilege to walk in the light, as God is in the light, and, most surely, when we are walking in the light, we are not committing sin. Alas, we get out of the light and commit sin; but the normal, the true, the divine idea of a Christian is, walking in the light and not committing sin. A sinful thought is foreign to the true genius of Christianity.

C. H. M.

"WHAT DEATH HE SHOULD DIE."

HE knew beforehand. The cross came to our blessed Saviour "as no surprise; He foresaw the thorny crown and purple robe, the mock trial, the soldiers' ribaldry, the people's scoff, and the priests' blasphemy. He laid His account calmly to the immolation and anguish, the desertion of man and the forsaking of God, the curse, the wrath, and the atoning death. For "the death that he should die" involved all that. His sufferings were physical, moral, and spiritual. His cup was infinitely deep and awfully bitter. He drank the dregs of it. Gracious Redeemer! "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth," were His words in view of that death. He stated how it should occur, little as they may have understood who heard the words, "lifted up from the earth." Weigh these five wonderful words. In John iii. 14, 15, he said, "The Son of man must be lifted up that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life." There it is clearly the fact of His "being made sin for us" as the antitype of the serpent on the pole.

In John viii. 28 He said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then ye shall know that I am he." There He views His death as martyrdom at the hand of man. "When ye have lifted up . . . ye shall know," and that, alas, to their utter confusion. They should die in their sins.

But here in John xii. 32 He says, "If I be lifted up . . . I will draw." It is the voluntary surrender of Himself to the full results of "the death that he should die." It presents, in its most attractive form, His *crucifixion*, and that in richest grace; because "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," and the curse was his who deserved it not. Hence His cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Yes, reader, "why?"

"He did no sin."

"He knew no sin."

"No guile was found in his mouth."

But what of you? of me? of all? Stay, can you not see the reason "why?" Pause, I pray you, until you do.

Substitution lies in the discovery!

*"He took the guilty culprit's place
And suffered in his stead.
For man, O miracle of grace!
For man, the Saviour bled."*

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John xii. 32). Mark, "*will draw*," that is, attract and win, because the cross, when divinely understood, is the most powerful attraction in the universe. There is no compulsion, nor force, nor driving, but there is that which draws in the power of infinite love. It is irresistible to the willing heart.

"*All men*," not a nation or people, class or community, but "all." Sinners they must be, but sin

is, by itself, no hindrance for the reason that His death was on account of sin. The "all" is not the all of the universalist, but the every one of sovereign grace and mercy—like the whosoever of John iii. 16. No one is repelled nor rejected, but the cross throws salvation open to all.

"*Unto me,*" not merely to salvation, but to the Saviour—the lifted-up Redeemer, the Christ, the Son of God, who is now alive in glory.

Blessed result, for what would Christianity be but for such a Christ? One who loves eternally, and is to be loved likewise, and to be known, now and ever, in near and holy intimacy as an Object outside the heart, yet on which all its affections may rest, in blest and intelligent and realised enjoyment for ever.

Attraction for "all" is thus found in the lifted-up Jesus—in "the death which he should die" on the cross. Christ on earth was for Israel; Christ on the tree, by "the death he should die," is God's centre of attraction for all.

"Why 'neath the load of your sins do ye toil?

Christ giveth rest, giveth rest.

Why be in slavery, why Satan's spoil?

You may be blest, may be blest,

Christ now invites you sweet rest to receive;

Heavy's your burden, but He can relieve;

If but this moment in Him you believe,

You shall have rest, shall have rest."

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.

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"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.

E. D. B.

FRAGMENT.

THINK seriously of these three things!—

1. The passing moment
2. The unknown to-morrow.
3. The eternity that awaits.

H.

THE MISER'S HOARD.

MR FOSCUE, a Frenchman living in Paris some years ago, had amassed an enormous amount of wealth. He was a miser, and his great anxiety was to securely hide his treasure so that even his friends should be ignorant of the vast fortune he possessed. For this purpose he dug a large cave in his wine-cellar, so deep that it needed a ladder to reach to the bottom. It was entered by a carefully concealed trap-door fitted with a spring lock, so that when the door was let down it would fasten of itself.

One day Mr Foscue was missing. The whole house was searched from attic to cellar, but no trace of him could be found. He had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared.

Time passed by and no more was heard of him, so his house was put up for sale and very soon found a purchaser.

After the new owner had taken possession, he one day determined to make a thorough examination of his purchase, looking into every nook and cranny. When he reached the cellar he discovered the trap door, forced it open, and descended the ladder. A ghastly spectacle met his gaze. On the floor lay the body of the miser, a candlestick beside him; around were piled the hoards of gold he had so jealously guarded. In a moment the terrible truth was re-

vealed. The miser had been starved to death. He had entered the cave, and by some accident the trap-door had fallen to and fastened him in. He had been buried alive with his treasure, and all his wealth had been unable to rescue him from an agonising death.

One cannot meditate upon this sad case without the feelings being deeply harrowed.

This miser in seeking to secure his wealth had lost his life. But there are many men that risk a still more terrible fate, for, to obtain earthly good, they risk the loss of the precious soul. The language of the life, if not of the lip, proclaims that with them temporal things are pre-eminent.

Yet in a few years the millionaire and the pauper are levelled by the hand of Death. But though the body lies in the tomb the soul still lives. The Christian departs to be with Christ, and has treasure laid up in heaven; but the man that has rejected the Saviour will be a pauper for eternity.

He who knew the secrets of the unseen world said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." "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).

"To-morrow's sun may never rise
Upon thy long-deluded sight ;
This is the time, oh then be wise :
Thou would'st be saved ? why not to-night ?"

ANON.

A MORTAL WOUND.

BOTH mortal and immortal, its effects are everlasting! Forty-four years ago, to the hour, I was struck by an arrow which had been shot by the divine Archer. That arrow struck and stuck. The wound it made remains to this day. Oh, how keen its point, how well directed, how clean driven home! Now what was this wonderful arrow? Harken, it was ten words of Scripture—

“*What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*” That was all, but it was enough. That brief, pointed query, taken from the quiver of eternal truth, and applied by the Spirit of God in living power to my conscience, effected an inward work, made a spiritual wound which must last for ever. After this fashion it struck me :—

1. “*His soul!*” Its value; its existence; its indestructibility; of more importance than the body;

“*Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul!*”

No, it referred only to the body, for the soul, breathed as it was into the nostrils of man by his Creator, was certainly not made of the dust of the ground. The body perishes. The soul is one's proper and responsible self, which has to do with God, and God with it. Man is responsible to God.

2. “*Exchange.*” What equivalent can be found? If the soul be of infinite value, so must its equivalent

be ; but who can find infinite wealth ? The gold of a millionaire, ten thousand rivers of oil, the fruit of your body—these are all too mean. The soul far outweighs the gold of the world, or a thousand of them. “Exchange” is therefore impossible.

3. “*What shall a man give ?*” Well, what ? The labour of your hands, or the strength of your body ; the efforts, vows, resolutions, or good deeds of a lifetime are unavailing. Our righteousnesses are but filthy rags, and our best doings but splendid sins. Can such be given ? Nay, the case is utterly hopeless. “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?” What ?

A mighty arrow this when it has pierced the conscience. There it lodges ; no power can extract it thence, nor pleasure, nor oblivion heal its awful wound ; the mark remains.

But notice, the wound is God’s way of reaching the soul. Better to be wounded in time than damned in eternity—a myriad times over ! And it is He who says, “*I wound, and I heal*” (Deut. xxxii. 39).

The wound may be deep and painful ; it may lead to bitter soul-exercise ; it may show sin to be “exceeding sinful” ; and it may demonstrate the lack of all power and fitness. It must cast the wounded man on the healing power of another. And, thank God, it is He who can and does heal. No matter how deep the wound, how sinful the sin, how powerless the soul, or how desperate the case, there is Balm in Gilead and a Physician there. How grand the question put by Him to the impotent man at

Bethesda, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He carried health in His hand and love in His heart. The competency lay with Him. The poor cripple wished, indeed, to be healed, but saw no plan beyond the troubled waters of the pool. He told his dreary tale of blasted hopes to the tender Inquirer, and how he had "no man" to help him when the moment came. "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," fell upon his ear; and at once health and power reached him from this great Physician—he was "made whole."

Now it is an immense comfort for the wounded soul to know that the only question is the "*Wilt thou?*"

All the battle is in the will; all the power is with the Healer. When the "*I will*" of the sinner meets the blessed "*I will*" of the Saviour, the case is settled. Unity of will signifies peace, pardon, health, and salvation.

The wound is given in order to break the will—the wicked, perverse will; and the will implies the sin which had to be borne and atoned for by Him who "was made sin for us," so that, on the solid ground of atonement, and the settlement of every question of sin, the heart might be won, and its affections set upon the Healer.

"I wound!" Reader, have you been wounded?
 "And I heal!" Have you been healed?

"The sinner who believes is free,
 Can say, 'The Saviour died for me :'
 Can point to the atoning blood,
 And say, 'This made my peace with God.'"

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 the verse, "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?" (Matt. iii. 7).

"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.

“BOW THE KNEE.”

“And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck: and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. . . . And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over all the face of the earth. And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.”—GEN. xli. 41-44, 55-57.

WHAT Pharaoh does here for Joseph is a very striking picture of what will yet be enacted in regard to the Lord Jesus. We read that he “took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, BOW THE KNEE: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.” I think I see the trumpeters going before Joseph, and hear them crying, “Bow the knee.” What, bow the knee to Joseph, the exalted Hebrew slave? Pharaoh had said it, and *bow the people must.*

Reader, God now bids you bow the knee to His Son; bow your heart to Christ. Bow you must; bow you will have to. You may reply, Bow I won't!

Yes, you will—for God has said, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Isa. xlv. 23).

That, you may argue, refers to God in His Godhead glory. Quite true; but, when the Holy Ghost quotes it in the New Testament, I find it applied to the Lord Jesus Christ as the exalted man. Listen, "Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. WHEREFORE 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 (angels), and things in earth (men), and things under the earth (demons); and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 6-11).

What a testimony to His Deity! That which He could claim as God shall be rendered to Him as Man—the once humbled but now triumphant Man. Angels, men, and demons—all must bow to Jesus. Mark it well! No man is exempt. Every one at the name of Jesus shall bow the knee. Angels delight to own Him. Many men to-day rejoice to own Him. I know a multitude who confide in, and delight to own Him. Join their ranks! Is it not a

joy to confess Him? Yes, indeed, it is deep joy to confess that there is no name so sweet as the name of Jesus.

"Bow the knee" was the general order given by Pharaoh. How many a proud Egyptian noble said, "Not I. I bow to Joseph the exalted slave? Never, never!" I think I see the trumpeter as he went forth and made the proclamation, by royal command, and I see many a proud Egyptian rear his head, and say, "Bow to Joseph! Never, never as long as I live!" And you won't bow to Jesus? You don't mean to bow to Christ? You don't mean to believe in Jesus? Stop a bit. The end of the chapter tells us that there were seven years of plenty, and then came seven years of famine. Let us see what took place then. "And when all the land of Egypt was *famished*, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go UNTO JOSEPH; *what he saith to you, do*" (ver. 55). I think that is charming. I think I can see them all ignoring Joseph, and going straight to Pharaoh, just as men now ignore Jesus, yet think they may go to God direct. "Go TO JOSEPH," said Pharaoh, and that is what God is saying to you from glory—"Go TO JESUS. Bow to Jesus." You must bow. He is given a name above every name, and God has declared that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.

Now if you will take the trouble to read the forty-seventh chapter of Genesis, you will there find four points, which I shall only indicate. There we

read that when there was "no bread in all the land," the people "fainted by reason of the famine," and had to go to Joseph to buy corn. Hence, first "Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt" (ver. 14); secondly, he "fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year" (ver. 17); thirdly, he "bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh" (ver. 20); and lastly, he says, "I have bought *you* this day" (ver. 23). Thus you see *the money* fell into Joseph's coffers, *the cattle* became his, *the lands* fell into his hand, and lastly *the people* themselves were acquired by Joseph for Pharaoh. There is nothing brings a man down like hunger. Neither a man's pride nor his parentage can fill him in the day of hunger and need. The prodigal was fain to fill his belly with the husks the swine did eat, but could not do it. Nothing brings a man down like soul-hunger, and it is a great thing when the soul-hunger becomes commanding, when a man feels that he is a sinner, and has need of Christ, and must have Christ. Pharaoh sent the needy of his day to Joseph. They had to admit his importance, and from him they got what met their need, while Joseph acquired everything for his master.

Now I pray you not to forget the solemn yet blessed fact that the Lord Jesus is Lord of all. I admit He is forgotten, and that His claims are not recognised, but He will soon come again in glory, and His rights will be ceded by man, and established by God. What an awful day it will be when Christ takes the world in hand. It is better to own Him in

the day of His absence than meet Him in the day of His wrath. You may know Him by faith now.

Perhaps you have said, I will never confess His name, I will not be converted, I won't yield my heart to Him. Even that sin He will forgive, and I hope you will repent, and be converted this very day. You could not do better. Be like a young man I knew.

I was preaching in a good-sized town in Scotland many years ago. In the house where I was staying this young man lived with his parents, who were decided Christians. This youth was most resolute in the determination that he would not be converted. For long he would not come to the meetings, and would not yield his heart to Jesus. He heard of the conversion of his brother and sisters, but he was still opposed. One night, to my surprise and joy, I saw my young friend for the first time enter the hall, and take a seat just inside the door, as if he desired that nobody should see him, and know he was there. When we got home to his father's house he made not a single remark to me, and I made none either, only he stayed for evening prayers with the family, which before he had avoided.

I had to leave at six A.M. next day to come into my work in Edinburgh. His sisters used to rise and give me breakfast, but that morning, to our amazement, in walked Willie. His sisters looked surprised to see him, and more so, when, as I bade "Good-bye" to the girls, Willie said, "If you will allow me, doctor, I will carry your bag to the station." I was

delighted, and thanked him. As I got into the train, and was saying "Good-bye," I added, "I suppose the carrying of that bag means this, Willie, that from this day forth you are to be on the Lord's side?" "That is exactly what I mean," he replied. "I wanted to confess that I was converted to God in that meeting last night." He did not live very long after that, and it was a good thing that he was turned to the Lord then.

I would like to meet you, my friend, to-morrow morning, and hear you make the same confession, "I am at last converted to God. I have made up my mind to become a Christian." There was never a wiser resolution. Nothing can be more blessed, more bright, or precious than to become a Christian. Why not turn to Jesus now? Believe in Him now.

But, you may ask, in order to become a Christian, what have I to do?

You have just to come to Him as you are—a poor sinner in your sins. And what then? You will find Him full of grace. You cannot clear yourself, so you had better just confess your sins to the Lord frankly. Conscience had better be heeded ere it be too late. When man thinks about eternal things his conscience always works.

We are sinners, and we must feel our sins, and own them too. It is a grand day when a man owns his sins before God. God had found out our iniquities. He has found out your iniquity, and He has found out my iniquity, but I will tell you something more. He has pardoned mine and forgiven me. It is a grand

thing to be able to say with the Psalmist, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. *I acknowledge 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" (Ps. xxxii. 1-5). The moment you draw near in the acknowledgment of your sins the Lord Himself meets you. The first word He said to an anxious soul was, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke vii. 48-50). Grace and love, forgiveness and blessing, are the portion of the soul that turns to Him.

As soon as the ploughshare of conviction has done its work in the conscience, God delights to relieve and discharge the sin-burdened soul. It is a great thing when a man has a deep sense of his sin, and owns it. When he thus comes into the presence of God, He forgives and blots out the sins on the ground of Christ's finished work for the sinner. Turn to Him for pardon, forgiveness, and blessing. Do not be ashamed to own the Lord Jesus, nor to confess Him. "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). God’s salvation is very simple. Just turn to the Saviour who died for you, with the acknowledgment of your sin and guilt, bow your heart to Him, and you will immediately receive blessing from Him. He says, “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John vi. 47). God give you grace to-day to receive Christ as your own blessed Saviour, and then to confess Him boldly.

W. T. P. W.

FRAGMENT.

THERE were no circumstances in which Christ was ever found where power, love, goodness, and truth were not readily in exercise. There was no weariness, if a poor desolate sinner came. No matter what company He was in, He was always accessible to their hearts; but there was no sympathy for Him. No love and goodness met Him in going through this world; His heart was utterly a stranger in it; yet all sympathy for others. If He had to answer for Himself before the chief priests who were hunting Him to death, the moment the cock crew His eye was upon Peter—never wearied. No circumstances He was in could ever touch the spring of grace and goodness that was in Him.

J. N. D.

THE GENERAL'S MEDAL.

A FRENCH minister was once talking to an English general, who was wearing, amongst other orders, a medal of simple design, upon which the one word "Waterloo" was inscribed.

Pointing in surprise to the medal, the Frenchman said: "Surely, general, that is but a very poor order your Government has given you. It is barely worth five francs."

"True," replied the general, "it may not have cost my country more than five francs, but it cost yours a Napoleon."

We would use the Englishman's witty reply simply to enforce the fact that in deciding the value of a thing, the whole cost must be considered.

Now there are some who think that salvation, because it is to be had by man without money or other payment, must therefore be of trifling value.

Let such make no mistake. The value of salvation depends, not on what it costs man, but on what it cost God.

Written across salvation in large letters is the one word "Calvary." It speaks to us of God sparing His Son from His side to die that shameful death. It tells us that the Lord Jesus bore the judgment due to sin and purchased salvation with His blood.

It was an infinite price that was paid for salvation, and surely the value of the gift is also infinite.

Reader, without this salvation thou art LOST. Now, if never before, accept it from God's hand. There is danger in delay, for we read—"How shall we escape if we *neglect* so great salvation?"

M. L. B.

"IT IS SO SIMPLE!"

SOME years ago, at the seaside, in conversation with a young barrister, the gospel of God's salvation was pressed upon him for present acceptance. He had heard it preached often, and talked of too. He was the subject of a mother's prayers. He seemed thoughtful and serious. There was conscience-work in progress, and there was burden of soul too, although he knew of the words of welcome, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He knew that he ought to believe, but he halted, and was without peace.

Three months later (I had not seen him in the interval), on going into his office, he exclaimed, "I've got it. It is so simple. But the very simplicity of it I stumbled over, and there halted. I felt I had something to do, but what I knew not—wanting to know and willing to do—I halted. But now I see it all, and see it all done for me. It is so simple! Just to receive it."

Now this illustrates the case of many hearers of a preached gospel, and doubtless also many readers of

the *Gospel Messenger*. But for those who still think there is some great thing to do, there is another illustration and example at hand. It is that of a more notable person of a former day. He was a great captain—Naaman, the Syrian—of lordly estate and dignity, but he was a leper. Many circumstances were in his favour, but there was one great characteristic circumstance against him, not of his surroundings, but of his personality, of that which was essentially himself. He was a leper, beyond remedy in himself. But he heard by means of a very simple little missionary, the little captive Israelitish maid, of the prophet of Jehovah, who had power to heal even the leper. What then? Human resources and power must be invoked. King must appeal to king, so the King of Syria sends a letter to the King of Israel to have Naaman healed. God is not in thought at all. But the King of Israel knows better, so he rent his clothes and said, "Am I God?"

Now it is well to have knowledge, but there is responsibility with it, and here we see the difference between the two kings, and also between the young barrister and the great captain. In the distress of Israel's king the prophet of God appears. What dignity there is in conscious acting for God, and in speaking for Him. Paul and other preachers of the Word well knew this. If really acting or speaking for God, there need be no haste nor discomposure. So Elisha, the man of God, sends to the king saying, "Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with

his horses and his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go, and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (2 Kings v. 10). He was thus told God's way, but he wanted his own way.

Now read 2 Kings v. 11-14. Mark how the moment God's way is taken, there is salvation. From this and other scriptures, therefore, we preach a free, full, present, and perfect salvation to all who take God's way of it. It is always simple and gracious to the sinner, and glorious as regards Himself. How simple it is, but the simplicity of it is seen when God's way, not man's way, is taken, and only then.

Now let me have a personal word with you, my reader. Are you "seeking salvation"—"seeking the Lord" as it is sometimes called. It is a great thing for such a one to get the first lesson, that the Lord is seeking you much more than you are seeking the Lord. Naaman's case was a grand lesson of grace. Acting unaided and alone, grace bestows and need receives. God offers, and the sinner accepts. That is all, and it is that which makes it so very simple. Self is set aside as having no activity or part in the transaction. He that humbles himself in thorough self-judgment, as of sinful nature, and as without strength to do, is the one who becomes exalted. What but unjudged self is it that goes about "to establish a righteousness of its own, not submitting unto the righteousness of God"?

The publican of Luke xviii. judged himself and submitted, when, with eye on the propitiatory and smiting his breast, he said, "God be merciful to me, the sinner," and he was therefore justified. "For to him that worketh not" (the Pharisee proclaimed himself to have worked and was not justified), "but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Surely then the feet that have been busy going about, and the hands that have laboured working in vain for salvation, may well stand still and see, and simply as God's gift accept God's salvation. Thus Naaman yielded.

Reader, do you still hold to your notion that you yourself have some "great thing" to do? How dishonouring to the grace of God that has brought His salvation to you for your acceptance. The salvation is ready at hand to be accepted, and does not need prayer nor entreaty to God for its bestowment, not any works of toil nor of merit (read Rom. x. 8-11). But on the contrary, the halting, unbelieving, unwilling sinner is besought to accept it (read 2 Cor. v. 20, 21; Matt. xi. 28-30). More than that, you are actually commanded to accept now and at once God's salvation (see Acts xvi. 31; 2 Cor. vi. 2). So that it is at your peril, for it is in disobedience that you refuse, or neglect, or even longer delay. Salvation is God's proffered gift to you NOW, and you are called upon to accept the gift and rejoice in its possession. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life—the one now due, but the other now offered.

It is neither working nor praying even, but believing and accepting. Then whenever God's salvation is once really accepted, it is known to be possessed, and is rejoiced in. And it is believed and accepted by just the same process of mind and heart that you believe any other message or accept any other offer. It will not do, nor excuse you to say, "I cannot believe," for you are a believing creature—too credulous sometimes, even to the believing of lies (believing the old serpent's lie rather than God's truth—Gen. iii.), believing man's testimony and man's messages every day; but God's testimony about His Christ and God's messages to you, you have not yet believed. Do you ever think of the patience and forbearance of God with you. It is a marvellous exchange which is proposed to you—life for death. But that is God's grace, and God's grace cannot be otherwise than simple. The word which from God to the sinner characterises this dispensation of grace—while grace is reigning—is "Come," "Come now." Trace that word in the Scriptures. The word "Depart" is not yet brought into use. "Come." "It is so simple."

T. M. T.

MERELY asking for forgiveness, and the confession of sins, are two different things. Confession involves real exercise, and brings with it blessing. The mere asking for forgiveness is often only skin-deep. Confession must be individual. It is the individual who has failed, and he confesses his sin to his Father.

W. T. P. W.

A GOSPEL CALL.

(TUNE—"Sandon," or "Lux Benigna.")

HARK, sinner, hark, 'tis Jesus speaks to thee
 Of grace divine ;
 Of God's great grace and power from sin to
 free
 Sad hearts like thine.
 Resistless grace : — all Satan's power o'er-
 thrown
 By Him who died, now Victor on the throne.
 Come unto Jesus, come, just as thou art,
 So sick with sin ;
 The deep unspoken language of thy heart
 Is known to Him.
 Oh, tell Him all—though all He knows so well,
 He'll give thee rest, a rest no tongue can tell.
 Look, sinner, look, see Jesus who once died
 On Calv'ry's tree,
 To God's right hand upraised and glorified,
 A Saviour He.
 Oh, trust in Him, confess His blessèd name,
 Peace, joy, salvation—all—thy present gain.
 Blest portion thine, if Jesus' voice thou'lt hear,
 And to Him come.
 Look up to Him, confess Him without fear,
 Till time be done.
 Jesus will welcome thee, oh matchless love !
 To God's bright home of endless joy above.

ANON.

THE CONVERTED DONKEY MAN.

HOW often in our shortsightedness do the ways of the Lord appear to us mysterious, but could we see behind the clouds we should not only see that every cloud has a silver lining, but that the ways of the Lord are perfect, and all His dispensations fraught with loving-kindness and mercy, and that into the warp and woof of our lives are interwoven His grace and tender mercy. This is abundantly exemplified in the Lord's dealings with the subject of this short narrative.

It was early in the month of September 1865, during a visit to a town on the sea coast of England, that I met with a poor man named Knott, who, though much afflicted, yet greatly rejoiced in the God of his salvation.

Before his conversion, this man was one of the lowest characters in the town, and guilty of the most impure and profane language.

How he got his living in the winter it is difficult to conjecture, but during the summer he obtained a livelihood by letting out donkeys on the sands.

But the Lord who is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exod. xxxiv. 6) had mercy upon him, and during the latter years of his life brought him to a knowledge of Himself in a somewhat remarkable way.

When I called to see him, I found him in a little

back room on the first floor of a very poor dwelling, sitting on a chair, with very little else in the room than a bedstead, and a large old Bible, which was propped up in front of him in another chair. His hands and feet were greatly crippled, and it was with difficulty that he managed to turn over the pages of the dear old book.

¶ It was painful to see his palsied limbs, which were constantly shaking, causing the perspiration to roll down his poor old face.

Taking a seat beside him, and expressing my sympathy with him in his great affliction, and seeking to comfort him with some suitable portions of Scripture, imagine my surprise when he broke forth in the following language: "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal," his face being lit up with a joy that filled his whole soul, rejoicing in Him who had called him "out of darkness into his marvellous light."

Let me pause, dear reader, and ask you if this is not a triumph of the grace of God that could change this poor degraded blasphemer, whose lips had been so long accustomed to oaths and curses, into a humble believer, whose delight was to utter the praises of God in the midst of his trials, which he endured so patiently, not a murmur escaping his lips. Never before or since have I witnessed such a miracle

of grace. Deep was the lesson I learnt that day of God's exceeding great power and grace. Seated in front of that small bedroom window, with nothing to look upon but the chimney-stacks of adjacent houses and a tiny peep of the sky, Knott rejoiced in God.

I cannot attempt to give you the many passages of Scripture he repeated, and from which he evidently drew much comfort, shut up in his little prison-room without the slightest hope of recovery. Truly a prisoner of the Lord, as he loved to style himself, he was sustained by the "blessed hope" that at any moment the Lord Himself might descend into the air, and that he might be caught up "to meet the Lord in the air and so ever be with the Lord."

In conversation one day I said to him, "Well, how old are you? To which he at once replied, "Sixty in Adam and five in Christ." At this answer I was greatly struck. How clearly it demonstrated that in his mind there was no uncertainty as to the time and reality of his conversion, or the consciousness of his acceptance in Christ.

Now I feel sure, dear reader, you will be interested to know how his conversion took place, which let me give you, as nearly as I can, in the language in which he gave it to me.

"About five years ago," he said, "while sitting in this chair I dropped off to sleep, when suddenly I was awakened by the shining of a very bright light upon me, which seemed to penetrate into my soul. Whether it was a light from heaven or no I could not tell, but being awakened I was much troubled, a

deep feeling coming over me that I was in the presence of God."

At once all his sinful life rose up before him. Convicted in his conscience and greatly distressed in spirit, he could only say, like Job, "Behold, I am vile," or with Isaiah, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Now, my dear reader, may I ask you if you have ever passed through an experience like this? Have *you* at any time realised that you were in the presence of God, which made you feel how vile and sinful you were? Happy indeed if you have, and, like poor Knott, have also turned to the Lord Jesus Christ in true repentance and subjection of heart.

A dear friend of mine, who visited him about the same time or shortly after, informed me that he went to see him with the hope of helping him in the things of the Lord, but it turned out quite the opposite, for he came away feeling how very greatly he had himself been helped, and left his bedside that day full of that truth which filled the soul of the dear sufferer with such ecstasy, viz., the coming of the Lord.

During my friend's visit, Knott's wife entered the room, and commenced speaking of her husband as "a funny old man, who had got hold of something about the coming of some Great One, who loves him and died for him, and who has told him that He is coming for him." And she added that the last thing at night, when the candle is put out, he insists on the blind being drawn up to the top. "Yes," chimed in

her husband, "I want to have the first peep of Him, that precious One who is my Saviour and Friend."

My friend left that room deeply impressed with the fact that the one he had visited was not only *waiting*, but *watching* for the Lord's return. Notwithstanding his infirmities, when apparently on the verge of eternity, he looked not for death, but the coming of *One* whom he esteemed as the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

During the five years following his conversion, confined in that little gloomy back room, without any one to instruct him, yet taught by the greatest of all teachers, "the Spirit of truth," it was astonishing what progress he had made in the knowledge of God and the precious principles of His truth. His knowledge of the Scriptures was very great, not in the letter only, but in the spirit.

Especially dear to his heart was the Lord's coming, which ever sustained him through the wearisome days of his suffering, and filled him with a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Glad indeed was he to see all who came to him, speaking to them of "the kingdom of God, and those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ."

Thus he spent the few remaining days of his pilgrimage here, until the Lord released him from that poor, suffering body, and took him to be with Himself, "where there is no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 4).

Thoughtful reader, may I be permitted to ask you,

after reading this short account of the Lord's dealings with poor Knott, are you looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. If not, why not? Let me tell you that the door of mercy by which you may enter into the blessings of forgiveness, pardon, and peace, through the precious blood of Christ, is open still. Yea, wide open; but remember, "when once the master of the house is risen up and 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 you not whence ye are" (Luke xiii. 25), then will be uttered those dreadful words, "Take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxii. 13).

E. M.

FRAGMENT.

THE Lord, in order to get at the bottom of our hearts, may have to remove a great heap of rubbish, such as self-confidence, pride, and vanity; but He knows what His own grace has done for us, and He will find His love at the bottom of our hearts. He had to remove a great deal from Peter—a mass of fleshy confidence and forward zeal. He may have to take away from us much of that in which we have gloried; but, after all, He will bring out, "Thou knowest that I love thee"—personal affection for Himself.

J. N. D.

"SAY YOUR PRAYERS IN FAIR
WEATHER."

AN old Christian used to say to me, "Is anything too wonderful for Him to do whose name is 'Wonderful'?" Cowper, bent on suicide, was prevented from doing so in such a remarkable way that he wrote—

"God moves in a mysterious way
His *wonders* to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Every saved soul is a miracle of grace. Some, however, are arrested in such remarkable ways that they are compelled to say, "Wonderful, that God ever had mercy on me!" Such a one was X——, a tall, robust man, who climbed on board an American trading vessel, and offered himself as a seaman. The vessel was just about to sail, and the captain very short of hands, so he gladly engaged him. They had not been long at sea before he regretted having done so. The captain himself was a most ungodly man, and was prepared to go to great lengths in sin, but this man seemed a demon incarnate. He had a most intractable disposition, a quarrelsome temper, was a drunkard, and a most awful blasphemer. He refused to give any account of his past history, and had evidently come aboard to get a passage to America. The captain soon found he was no sailor, and ignorant

as a child of nautical matters. He became the bane and plague of the vessel.

After a time a violent storm arose. The vessel was in imminent danger. The captain summoned all hands on deck. All appeared except the wretched blasphemer. The captain went below to seek him. David speaks of the "stormy wind fulfilling God's word." That storm had raised another in the conscience of the swearer. The captain found him on his knees repeating the Lord's prayer with wonderful rapidity over and over again. This appeared to be the only prayer he knew, and by repeated reiterations he hoped to allay the fears he felt at the prospect of eternity. The captain was so annoyed that he shook him by the shoulder, and said, "Say your prayers in fair weather." "God grant I may ever see fair weather to say them," he replied in a low voice. Those words never left him. "Say your prayers in fair weather" followed him everywhere. The storm abated, but not the storm in his conscience. The vessel reached its destination in safety, but there was no rest for him. He came ashore, but still no peace. At last he found it was not by praying but believing; not in his cries for mercy, but that mercy had provided a Saviour, a real living Saviour who died for his sins, and was raised again for his justification. He was saved. A great longing to tell this great salvation filled his heart. The stormy wind that had driven him to the harbour of salvation for safety had filled his soul with concern for other tempest-tossed mariners sailing on the sea of death to

eternal judgment. He gave himself wholly to the Lord. He became an earnest and devoted evangelist, and was greatly blessed.

We will leave him preaching to a crowded audience, and return to the captain. Four or five years had elapsed since he told the seaman to pray in fair weather. All this time he had been going deeper and deeper down the dark paths of sin. God had given him many warnings. A falling spar did him grievous bodily harm. Twice he had been shipwrecked, but neither in fair weather nor foul had he cried to God. He had just finished a long and dangerous voyage, and having landed in New York, had determined to have his fling. He bent his steps toward a tavern where he frequently had indulged his sinful propensities. On his way he met an old friend, the boon companion of many a sinful hour. The captain was delighted to see him, and declared he must accompany him, there and then, to his tavern. With great calmness his friend replied, “I will do so on condition that you come into this place with me for a single hour, and thank God for His mercies to you on the deep.” The captain was ashamed to refuse. They entered together. The place was crowded; with great difficulty they forced their way to about five yards distance from the preacher.

There was something about the man which riveted the attention of the captain, but he could not remember where or when he had seen him. At length the preacher's eyes fell upon the two friends. He suddenly paused, gazed upon the captain, as if to

make sure that it was not an optical delusion, and then shouted out in stentorian tones, "Say your prayers in fair weather."

The congregation were amazed. The preacher stopped overcome with emotion. After some time he recovered himself, and told his audience of the way God had first spoken to him by the storm, and the words the captain had used. He then asked them all to join in prayer with him that God would save the man who uttered those words, telling them that he was now present. God had, however, out-run their petitions. The power of the Spirit had effectually wrought, the captain was saved there and then. He left that meeting a new creature in Christ Jesus. Instead of going with his friend to the tavern, he repaired to the house of the preacher. There he stayed six weeks. When he left, it was to pursue his avocation, and carry on his profession, not now a godless profligate, but a holy and happy servant of Christ. The one from whom I got this account knew him, and says that as years advanced, he also advanced in the knowledge of the Saviour, and became more and more devoted to His interests.

Were they not both wonders of grace? Reader, are you? It may be God has not spoken in just the same way to you, but no doubt God has often spoken to you. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Turn to that blessed Saviour. Trust Him now, and you shall join in the song which celebrates the "wonders" of redeeming love.

H. N.

THE COMMODORE'S DEATH.

COMMODORE — was dying. The poisoned arrow shot by the hand of a mere boy at the commodore whilst regaining his vessel after vindicating the rights of his country on a savage shore, had done its work, and slowly but certainly, the end drew nigh.

So he well knew ; and he knew, too, that he might yet gaze once more on his country's shores, and on the face of her he loved, had he steered straight for port. But in those last solemn hours, should he think of himself or of others ?

The vessel carried mails—mails which those who had been months without news were eagerly awaiting, and the gallant sailor thought of them. The order was given, and the mail bags were left at one out-of-the-way port after another, as the good ship skirted the land on whose shore her commander might never more set foot.

Of others wounded on this same occasion one after another had succumbed ; lock-jaw in each case supervening forty-eight hours before death ; yet, strange to say, in his case this was lacking, and up to the last, Commodore — retained the power of speech.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten sight as the dying man lay on deck surrounded by all the crew, which his last order had gathered round him. They knelt closely beside him, or sat in a circle round the dying

man. Others stood beyond, whilst others again climbed the rigging and manned the yards—anywhere could they but catch a glimpse of his loved face, or hear his dying message.

“The doctor tells me I must die. Is it not so, doctor?” he asked.

“Yes,” returned the ship’s doctor.

“Is it ‘absent from the body, present with the Lord’?” whispered one who knelt close beside him.

“Yes,” came the response, and then for fully half an hour those dying lips gave one long, fervent appeal to the men he had so often guided—one last address about—what think you, my reader? Their duty to their sovereign? No; his example had taught them that. Their country’s glories, and how they had helped to swell them? Nay, not so. One theme alone filled his heart: one theme alone moved his lips.

The love of God! He spoke of that love: that love which has shown itself in sending its choicest treasure to meet the need of its worst enemy: that love which is toward the sinner, the enemy, the rebel: that love which has found a way of reconciling that enemy, reconciling him, too, in full accord with the strictest righteousness and holiness: that love which planned and carried out that great transaction of which Calvary’s cross is the centre, for “he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

The love of God manifested there, when His beloved Son was made a propitiation for us, was “shed abroad” in the heart of the dying Commodore,

and flowed out from his lips. Who could resist such an appeal?

Then, turning to the one mentioned above, he said, "Don't be afraid to tell of that love whenever you have opportunity. I know you are not ashamed of it; but, whatever happens, don't *ever* be."

Good advice, Christian friend, for you and me. Loving hands carried him below, and in twenty-four hours Commodore — was with Him who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Friend, couldst *thou* meet death thus? Dost thou know the love of God, or art thou still in enmity against Him? After death the judgment, if thou despise the provision of that love and reject that God-given and God-appointed Saviour; but those who believe that love have the authority of the Word of God for saying, "Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." T.

SOME believers in Jesus are joyless, because they are so little looking to Christ. They are occupied with themselves, their circumstances, their bodies perhaps, something that is not Christ. They have too much of Christ to be able to enjoy the world, and too much of the world to enjoy Christ.

W. T. P. W.

"ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?"

THIS question was asked of a young lady by a friend interested in her soul's state, who feared that the fleeting attractions of the present world entirely occupied her attention.

"Certainly, I am a Christian," she replied, "but not one of your sort exactly."

"But," said her friend, "the point is not, Are you a Christian according to any man's pattern, which may be a very faulty one, but after Christ's pattern, the only real one? Have you ever felt a sense of sin, of unfitness to meet God? Have you ever seen the fulness of the salvation He has provided by the cross of His Son? Have you gone to Jesus for pardon, and, knowing your sins forgiven, are you pointing others to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world?"

"No," she said, "I told you I did not go by your pattern. I think if I do my duty to myself and my neighbour, nothing else can be expected of me. I go to church, say my prayers, and sometimes read my Bible. I do very well, and have no fear for my future."

The solemnity of our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again," and the great truth that "without shedding of blood is no remission," were pointed out to this lady. Whether she accepted a free salvation through Christ, or continued trying to save herself, the day will declare.

It is too much to be feared there are many, like her, quite content with themselves, leading exemplary lives, yet under condemnation. Why? Because they—as has been truly said of such—want to be Christians without Christ. They have begun at the wrong end, working *for* life in place of *from* life.

The evil is that self bulks largely. They know not the plague of their own hearts, the evil of sin, nor that they are under the curse, and so have neglected and do not feel the need of God's appointed Saviour.

Reader, how is it with you? Are you safe under the blood, or still under the curse, seeking to save yourself?

Answer to yourself this question now, and make sure it is well with your soul. Do not delay till to-morrow, which may never come. "Now is the accepted time, now the day of salvation."

W. S.

CHANGED INTO HIS IMAGE.

THE glory of the Lord as seen in Moses' face alarmed the people; they could not bear that glory. But we see it now with "open" unveiled "face" in Christ (2 Cor. iii. 18), and yet are not in the least afraid; we find liberty, comfort, and joy in looking at it; we gaze on it, and instead of fearing, rejoice. How comes this immense difference? It is "the ministration of the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 8) and "of righteousness" (ver. 9). It is Christ alive in the

glory that I see : not Christ down here (sweet as that was), but Christ at the right hand of God. Yet though that glory is in the heavens, I can steadfastly behold it. All that glory (and He is in the midst of the glory and majesty of the throne of God itself) does not affright me, because this wonderful truth comes in, that that glory of God is in the face of a Man who has put away my sins, and who is there in proof of it (Heb. i. 3). I should have been afraid to hear His voice, and have said with the children of Israel, "Let not God speak with me" (Exod. xx. 19); or, like Adam with a guilty conscience, have sought to hide myself away (Gen. iii. 8). But I do not say so now. No ; let me hear His voice.

I cannot see Christ in glory now without knowing that I am saved. How comes He there? He is a man who has been down here mixing with publicans and sinners—the friend of such, choosing such as His companions ; He is a man who has borne my sins in His own body on the tree (I speak the language of faith). He is there as having been down here amidst the circumstances and under the imputation of sin ; and yet it is in His face I see the glory of God. I see Him there consequent upon the putting away of my sin ; because He has accomplished my redemption. I could not see Christ in the glory if there were one spot of sin not put away. The more I see of the glory, the more I see the perfectness of the work that Christ has wrought, and of the righteousness wherein I am accepted. Every ray of that glory is seen in the face of One who has

confessed my sins as His, and died for them on the cross ; of One who has glorified God on the earth, and finished the work that the Father had given Him to do. The glory that I see is the glory of redemption. Having glorified God about the sin—"I have glorified thee on the earth : I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John vii. 4)—God has glorified Him with Himself there.

When I see Him in that glory, instead of seeing my sins, I see that they are gone. I have seen my sins laid on the Mediator : I have seen my sins confessed on the head of the scapegoat, and they have been borne away (Lev. xvi.). So much has God been glorified about my sins (that is, in respect of what Christ has done on account of my sins), that this is the title of Christ to be there at the right hand of God. I am not afraid to look at Christ there. Where are my sins now ? Where are they to be found, in heaven or on earth ? I see Christ in the glory. Once they were found upon the head of that blessed One ; but they are gone, never more to be found. Were it a dead Christ, so to speak, that I saw, I might fear that my sins would be found again ; but with Christ alive in the glory the search is in vain. He who bore them all has been received up to the throne of God, and no sin can be there. As a practical consequence of this, I am changed into His likeness. "We all, with open face, beholding as in the glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

It is the Holy Ghost taking of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the soul, that is the power of present practical conformity to Christ. I delight in Christ, I feast upon Christ, I love Christ. It is the very model and forming of my soul according to Christ by the Holy Ghost, this His revelation of Christ. I not only get to love the glory, it is Christ Himself that I love; Christ that I admire, Christ that I care for, Christ whose flesh I eat, and whose blood I drink; what wonder if I am like Christ. The Christian thus becomes the epistle of Christ; he speaks for Christ, owns Christ, acts for Christ. He does not want the pleasures of the world, he has pleasure at God's right hand for evermore.

The soul at perfect liberty with God looks peacefully and happily at the glory of God as seen in the face of Jesus Christ; and because it sees that glory, and knows its expression, it walks before God in holy confidence. Instead of being happy and at liberty with Satan in Satan's world, the Christian dreads Satan because he knows himself. At ease in the presence of God, he there drinks into the spirit of that which befits the presence of God, and becomes the "epistle of Christ" to the world, showing out to all that he has been there. Well, what a difference. May we more and more make our boast in Him, in whose face all this glory is displayed—the Lamb who has died for us, and cleansed away our sins by His own most precious blood.

J. N. D.

"YOU CAN LET GO."

IT had been a hard struggle for life, but at last doctors and nurses were congratulating themselves that Private Fisher was on the high-road to convalescence. He had been brought to the military hospital with a severe wound in the thigh, and recovery was slow, but to-day he had walked round the ward for the first time.

Night was falling and silence reigned in the hospital. Suddenly a cry of pain echoed through the ward. The nurse, hurrying to Private Fisher's bed, whence the cry had come, found a jet of blood spurting from the wound. By the nurse's direction one present placed his finger firmly upon the tiny orifice while they waited till the surgeon should arrive.

A short examination convinced the latter that the case was hopeless, for the sharp edge of the splintered bone had pierced an artery.

The soldier was unconscious that anything serious had occurred, and they broke the news to him as gently as possible. He received it calmly and courageously, and, after begging that his mother might be told of his death, asked, "How long can I live?"

"Only as long as I keep my finger upon this artery," was the reply.

There was a pause. At last the soldier broke the silence, "*You can let go.*"

The man would not let go. But after a while he suddenly fainted and the muscles of his hand relaxed. So the soldier's end came.

Now sin, like that splintered bone, has pierced man's soul and the life is ebbing away. It was by sin death came into the world, and "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Reader, one thing alone keeps the tide of life running in the channels of thy existence. It is the sustaining finger of God that rests upon thee, for in Him we live and move and have our being. For twenty, thirty, fifty, perhaps seventy years, He has kept His finger there; but it may be that He is about to say, "*I will let go.*" Before there is time to glance at the clock on the wall thy soul may be summoned into eternity. Oh, reader, art thou prepared?

Because of the uncertainty of life, and because of the certainty of the hell that awaits the impenitent, we would urge thee, if unconverted, to make instant decision for Christ. Only those are safe that are sheltered by the blood of Christ, and thou mayest at once have this shelter if thou wilt turn to the Lord Jesus.

Do not delay, another opportunity may never be given thee. We entreat thee to come *now*.

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

"For TO-MORROW we shall die" (Isa. xxii. 13).

LIGHT OR DARKNESS.

“**S**HALL I draw up the blind a little?” asked the nurse, and the invalid had answered, “Ah, yes, let in the light, I am going into the light,” and she lay back and slept. When, a little later, they turned to the sick bed again, they found it was even as she had said, she would waken no more to earth’s clouds and dimness—she had gone into the everlasting light.

“Very touching and beautiful,” you say, my reader. “When my time comes I should like to die like that.” But are you converted? because if not you will never die like that. It is true that you may pass away very peacefully, unconscious from weakness, or soothed by opiates; you may sleep quietly into eternity, but you will not go into the light. Do you ask, “Why not?” Because you are not a child of the light; you have never come to the light. Had you done so, your deeds would have been reproved, the burden of your sins would have pressed upon you, you would have seen your lost and ruined state, and would have fled to Jesus, who alone can save. It has not, however, been thus with you; amiable and educated, benevolent and religious, you have gone on contentedly in the darkness, loving it more than the light, and as the stone in your hand falls to the ground when you let it go, so surely must your spirit, freed from its earthly tabernacle, descend into the darkness,

But, because God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great compassion, you are not there yet ; and it may be, this little paper has been brought before you that you may be awakened and concerned while there is still hope. You can never have seriously pondered the unspeakable griefs of a Christless resurrection.

Picture to yourself this—to have died unconverted, and then to waken, as it seems to you, from a short, uneasy sleep (for I do not think time is counted in the grave) to find that ages have rolled away, and that the Judge sits on the great white throne, to find again the frail tenement you left so long ago, ruined by self-indulgence, wasted by disease, or worn by old age, and which you had thought scattered to the four winds of heaven, or turned to ashes by fire, or left in the bosom of the boundless ocean, and to be clothed therein once more, its infirmities unchanged by time, and then to hear the terrible words you once read so carelessly—"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still" (Rev. xxii. 11).

Oh, reader, I shudder as I write such words, horror takes hold on me. I would not choose thus to alarm you, but "knowing the terror of the Lord," I would persuade you. This surely were terror enough, and yet it is only the first step into a lost eternity ; what of the others—the blackness of darkness, the weeping and wailing, the regrets, the remorse, the unwelcome company of the devil and his angels ?

You will not imperil your soul any longer? Earnestly you will ask, "How may I be saved? No labour would be too great, no penance too painful, if only I may save my soul from so terrible a doom."

And now, when you see your need of Him, how sweet to point you to the precious Saviour, who has done all. His was the labour, His the pain, that salvation might be yours. You know well the story of the cross, only until now you have never heeded it, how the Lord Jesus went down into the darkness that He might bring you into the light, and how He has waited so patiently, so graciously until you should turn to Him in simple faith, believing that He will receive even you, and He will. Has not He said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out"? (John vi. 37). Oh, come, then, as you are; delay not one moment, and having come to Him, follow Him, and it shall be made good to you that "he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John viii. 12).

L. R.

LONG before man is to be judged for his sins, God unfolds two things: first, that forgiveness is offered to every soul that believes in His Son; and secondly, that He sends the Holy Ghost to dwell in the believer. Is not that wide enough, broad enough, to take you and me in? Is not forgiveness of sins the very thing you need and desire? That is the very thing God proclaims to you.

W. T. P. W.

WHAT COMES AFTER DEATH?

A CHRISTIAN, hoping to awaken serious thought in the mind of a young infidel, said to him, "What comes after death?" The young man sneeringly answered, "A funeral." And his reply is often sadly true in a different sense than was intended.

When an unconverted man dies, before the body is interred a funeral, unseen by human eyes, has taken place: the unsaved soul has been buried in the depths of a lost eternity.

Incarcerated in the prison-house of Hades the impenitent await the tribunal of the Great White Throne, when the wicked dead shall, in resurrection bodies, be judged according to their deeds.

But for Christians death is robbed of its terror. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. The departed saints await in the presence of Christ the resurrection morning, when, in bodies of glory, they shall shine in the image of God's Son.

Reader, have you, as lost and guilty, fled to the Saviour? Are you trusting in the blood of Christ? Then listen to the words of the Son of God—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into judgment*; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

JESUS DEPENDENT AND VICTORIOUS.

(Read Luke iii. 21-23, iv. 1-13.)

IN Luke's Gospel you will find the Lord Jesus before God in prayer seven times, and here is the first instance. You have here the sinless Man in perfect dependence on God, and to Him the Father says, "Thou art my beloved Son ; in thee I am well pleased" ; and I shall show you from Scripture, one witness after another testifying to the sinless perfection of this blessed Man. He Himself said, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John viii. 46).

The officers of the Pharisees when sent to take Him came back, overwhelmed by the grace and power of His words, and declared, "Never man *spake* like this man" (John vii. 46). Pilate, when Christ was brought into his judgment hall, said three times over, "I find no fault in him" (John xviii. 38, xix. 4, 6). The dying thief said, "This man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke xxiii. 41). Paul wrote of Him that He "knew no sin," but was "made sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21). Another apostle says of Him, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet. ii. 22). And a final witness adds, "In him is no sin" (1 John iii. 5). This is a unique Man. This Man stands alone in the glory of His person,—unique in the fact that He was absolutely sinless. But mark ! he was a real man, a true man,

a genuine man, a man as much as I am a man—sin alone excepted.

When God introduced the first man he was "out of the earth, made of dust"; but "the second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 47). What a wonderful thing that into a world of sin and death there should come a Man who was the Lord from heaven! He brought God to man in His life, and He brings man to God in righteousness by His death. We must not be carried away with the idea that the incarnation of this Blessed One has drawn man to God, or that because Christ became a man, man has somehow been lifted up to God. No such doctrine is in Scripture. His own words were, "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).

But, first of all, He is tried, tested, tempted, and proved, and, thank God! He comes out the victor—the conqueror of the one who conquered the first man; and when His victory over Satan was complete, and when He might have retraced His steps to heaven with perfect freedom, what did He do? He turned and went to the cross and died for us and our sins. Hence God can say to you and me, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!" And who is this Jesus? The Eternal Son of God. Jesus became man in this world in order to deliver man from the power of the enemy.

In Luke iii. we see that the Holy Ghost falls upon Him as the expression of His Father's delight in

Him. God delights in this Man on the ground of His own perfection—His own sinless perfection. In this chapter, too, observe in passing, that the genealogy of Jesus is directly traced up to God. I wish to bear strenuous testimony against the idea that man is merely developed protoplasm, or, if you like, an improved descendant of an ape. Man has sprung from God, as the book of Genesis tells us, and when Jesus appears among men His genealogy, as a true, veritable, real man, is traced by way of Heli up to God. Had man sprung from the lower animals, here would have been the place to record such a fact, and we should have had, "Seth, which was of Adam, which was of the lower animals." Instead thereof we read, "which was of God" (Luke iii. 23-38).

Jesus was the Son of God in two ways. He was the only begotten and Eternal Son—ever with the Father. But we also read, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee" (Heb. i. 5); He was therefore Son of God as man born in time.

Then we read that "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil" (Luke iv. 1, 2). Observe that His temptation was in the wilderness. Adam, on the other hand, was in Paradise—Eden if you please—the garden of delight. He had everything to his hand. Everything that could possibly minister to his happiness and joy was given him by God, yet he fell into Satan's hand, and became the dupe and vassal of Satan from that day forth. Christ was led

into the wilderness, and there was tempted forty days. He was not in Paradise, but Scripture tells us "in the wilderness, forty days, tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts" (Mark i. 13). Not only was He with the brute creation, but observe there was nothing to meet or minister to Him. Scripture tells us He fasted for forty days. It was a time of perfect privation.

He was tempted of the devil for forty days, but the great temptation was at the end of the forty days, and it was threefold, in "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." It was the same threefold temptation in the garden of Eden. When Eve "saw that the tree was good for food,"—that is the lust of the flesh,—“and that it was pleasant to the eyes,”—the lust of the eyes,—“and a tree to be desired to make one wise,”—that is the pride of life,—“she took of the fruit thereof.” Satan passed before the Lord Jesus the same character of temptation. The first, "If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread," was a *personal* temptation—Help yourself, use your own power. The second is a *worldly* temptation; Satan offers him all the kingdoms of the world, if He will give up His allegiance to God. The last temptation is of a *spiritual* nature. He would be an object of interest to every one—this is the pride of life.

In the first place Satan says, "Take care of yourself, think of yourself, make these stones into bread. Do better for yourself than God has done for you." That was a personal temptation. In the second

place he shows Him the whole of the kingdoms of the world in a moment, and says, "I will give you a good place in the world." How many a man has sold his soul for a good place in the world! Alas! how many! Lastly, Satan would have Him put God to the test by casting Himself from the pinnacle of the temple.

A clever man once said to me, "I don't believe in this story of a personal devil, the devil is inside a man." What is the devil then? You reply, The devil is the proclivity in a man's own heart to evil. You believe that? Stop! If that be true you cannot be saved. Why? The answer is simple. If you think that the devil is the proclivity in man's heart to evil, you have at once to admit that there were proclivities to evil in the heart of Jesus, for He was a man, and was "tempted of the devil," and so you have lost the Saviour. The man with proclivities to evil in his heart cannot be your Saviour nor mine. No, no, my friends, God's Word is plain and distinct. There were no proclivities to evil in Jesus, yet He was tempted of the devil. Thank God, He was a sinless Man, and we have in this passage Satan coming up and testing Him with this temptation of a threefold character.

What is His defence? He only quotes Scripture. He is a truly dependent Man, and clings to God, and God only, and how does He meet the devil? With the sword of the Spirit in His hand—the Word of God—and not merely the Word of God, but *quoted as the Word of God*. Jesus rebuts and defeats the devil, only by quoting Scripture as being the Word of God.

"It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God," defeats the first assault. The second temptation is met in the same way. The devil takes Him up and shows Him the kingdoms of the world. Christ knows that they belong to Him, but He will not take the world in its sinful state. He will have the kingdoms of the world, but that will be on the ground of redemption, and He will have them from God's hand, and not from the devil's hand. His answer is simple again, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The last temptation suggested that Christ should throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple to test God, and make Himself an attraction. If you got to the top of the Scott Monument, and were perfectly certain that you could throw yourself down without injuring yourself, I venture to think that you would attempt it, just to show that you could do it, and you would be an object of interest to all. That is the pride of life.

It is well to note that Satan can quote Scripture to trap the unwary. He quotes, or rather misquotes, Scripture in this last temptation, citing from the 91st Psalm—"He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." But have you observed that the devil omits four little words? God had said, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee *in all thy ways*." The devil dropped those words out. Since

that day often has he misquoted Scripture to tempted souls, and has turned them into paths of sin and danger. But Jesus knew the Scriptures, clung to Him who had written them, and by dependence gained a moral victory over Satan; who then "departed from him for a season."

Notice the book—Deuteronomy—from which Jesus quoted in each instance. Moses, we are told now-a-days, is to be regarded as a very old-fashioned, obsolete, and unreliable author. In fact, it is very boldly affirmed that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. If, therefore, you will be counted wise, and up to date, you will have to entirely disregard the Pentateuch, and cut these five books right out of your Bibles. That is what our learned religious infidels, and higher-criticism professors, are telling us now-a-days. It is a very remarkable thing, however, that in this threefold assault Jesus answers Satan from the Pentateuch, and the Pentateuch only, which, later in His life, He frequently attributes to Moses. We had better hold with Jesus than with His foes in this matter. These wiseacres, that are cutting up Scripture now-a-days, forget that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. God's Word is what the devil hates. He cannot abide Scripture; and the secret of the strength of the young men—in the sense in which John speaks of them, as being Christians, of course—lies in their possession of the Word of God. If you, my Christian reader, would go on growing in the knowledge and the service of the Lord, and if you are going to get the victory over the devil, you

will only do so by the use of Scripture ; for it, and it alone, is the sword of the Spirit.

But look again at this scene in Luke iv. It is beautiful ! Satan retires beaten. The first man, Adam, was driven out from Eden. Satan was the conqueror, the victor, and man was defeated ; but here I find that a Man, leaning in dependence upon God, has defeated Satan at every point. I read, " And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season." Satan retired beaten, and he is always beaten when we quote Scripture as the Word of God. Friend, study it ; may it be precious to your soul ; make it the man of your counsel, the man of your right hand. First of all, the Word lets you know that you are saved by faith in Jesus, and then it guides and helps you through the pathway in this scene. We must meet temptation, but I do not think the devil tempts sinners—they he governs, and impels to evil. He only tempts God's children. His own cohorts he leads on blindfold to eternal ruin. He does not need to tempt them ; they are in his power. He places temptation before the man who is out of his power. The man who is in his power he leaves alone. If Christ has not delivered you, you are still the vassal of the devil, and are under his influence, for he " deceiveth the whole world " (Rev. xii. 9).

Mark now how the Lord proceeds. Having defeated the enemy, He goes out into the world to deliver man, and His pathway is one of goodness and mercy. Miracles of mercy on every hand proclaim

Him to be the Son of God, and the Christ of God. When you come to the ninth chapter of Luke's Gospel you find Him going up to the top of the mountain, where He is transfigured before three of His disciples ; while the Father again confesses Him, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." He might have passed up into glory from the mount of transfiguration, but instead of that He turns in grace and goes down to die, that others, redeemed by His death, may be associated with Him in the glory of which He is deemed worthy as Man. As He goes down He casts out devils once more ; and one of His servants—John—comes and tells Him, "We saw one casting out devils in thy name," His name was mighty, "and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not : for he that is not against us is for us" (Luke ix. 49, 50).

Well, you say, I think I am for Him. Stop. At that moment He claimed all that were not against Him, as being for Him. If you pass on to chapter xi. the whole thing is reversed. There His opposers were beginning to say, "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils" (ver. 15). His reply is remarkable—"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace : but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is *not with me is against me* : and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (vers. 21-23). You see the point. If you are not thoroughly *for* Him, you are

against Him. That is how Christ regards you. But who is the strong man? I have no doubt it is the devil: the strong man is Satan. He is too strong for you, and too strong for me—for every man. And how is he armed? I will tell you. He is armed with what will overcome you, and with what will keep your conscience quiet.

Dear unsaved reader, there is a strong man holding you, but there is yet a stronger—Jesus. The world is Satan's palace, and sinners are his goods; but there is a Saviour—a blessed Saviour. And how does He become a Saviour? By coming down and dying for men. The query, "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" has its answer in Christ and His work. "Thus saith the Lord, Even the captive of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered" (Isa. xlix. 24, 25). Christ as conqueror of the mighty is the deliverer of the captive sinner.

W. T. P. W.

WE know of few things more dangerous than intellectual familiarity with the letter of Scripture where the spirit of it does not govern the conscience, form the character, and shape the way. We want to tremble at the Word of God, to bow down in reverential submission to its holy authority in all things. A single line of Scripture ought to be sufficient for our souls on any point, even though in carrying it out, we should have to move athwart the opinions of the highest and best of men. C. H. M.

THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME.

(Acts iv. 12.)

CHARLIE P—— was a fine intelligent young fellow, a little over twenty years of age. His parents were earnest Christians, and greatly longed to see their much-loved son manifestly on the Lord's side. Until now, however, Charlie's heart had been engrossed by the world—its pleasures, its sports, its follies—and the many prayers of the pious couple for their boy's conversion were apparently unheeded of God. That they were not unremembered of Him was blessedly true, and although forty years have now rolled by since the answer came, the way of its coming is quite fresh before my mind.

While paying a short visit to London late in 1866, Charlie's mother accosted me one Lord's Day morning, as a number of the Lord's people were departing from a meeting in a large hall in the north of London, after showing the Lord's death in the breaking of bread. In that very hall, six years before, at the end of a gospel meeting, I had been brought to know the Lord Jesus as my own personal Saviour, through conversation with a young man, now gone to be with his Lord and Master. Charlie's mother had witnessed, as she stood in the door-way that led from the hall to the ante-room, that, the most wondrous event in my life.

This Lord's Day morning it had been announced

that I was to preach the gospel in that hall in the evening, and coming up to me, she said, in very earnest tones, "Oh, Doctor, will you pray for my Charlie?"

"What is wrong with Charlie?" said I.

"Oh, nothing in particular," she replied; "he is a very dear boy, but he has not been converted yet, and we are so anxious about his salvation. I remember so well how *you* were converted six years ago, in this hall, and I am hoping and praying that God will make you the means of my boy's conversion. Will you pray for him?"

"Certainly, my dear friend," I replied, "we will pray together, and count on God."

The hall was crowded that evening to hear the somewhat young convert preach the gospel on the very spot of his own conversion. Among the auditors I noticed Charlie, sitting by the side of an elderly Christian man whom I knew well, and who took very deep interest in the lad. My theme that night was the power of the name of Jesus, as unfolded in Acts iii. and iv. There Peter, speaking to the cripple in the Beautiful gate of the temple, says, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." The effect was instantaneous, for of the cripple we read: "And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking, and praising God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple, and

they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him " (Acts iii. 8-10).

The secret and the source of this wonderful cure of the lame man, Peter very distinctly affirms, as—speaking of the exalted Jesus—he says, "And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all" (ver. 16). Nor indeed was that all the testimony as to this remarkable cure, for God would have all to know the saving power of Jesus' name, and led His servant to say: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. *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. 10-12).

The name that healed the cripple is the name that God proclaims to heal men in their sins—men paralysed by sin, men devil-held through sin, men bound fast in their sins. None other name but Jesus, the sweetest, choicest name that ever fell on mortal ear, for it means Jehovah the Saviour—contains healing power for such as these. And God would have men know that salvation is in no other name but that of Jesus, the once dead but now risen and glorified Saviour. As complete as was the healing of the

body of the cripple through the power of that name then, so equally perfect is the healing and salvation of the soul that now believes in Him who bears that blessed name—Jesus. The cripple was told in that day to “rise up.” To my audience I again and again said, “Look up, look at Him where He now is, a living Man in glory, and salvation becomes yours immediately; for He it is who said, ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth’” (Isa. xlv. 22).

That Lord's Day evening the Spirit of God was working very mightily in the meeting: many were convicted of their sins, and not a few were genuinely converted to God that night. Among those who came under deep conviction of sin was Charlie, and in the course of the meeting his tears flowed fast and thick, as he became conscious of his guilty, lost state, and yet that he was an object of the interest and of the love of God. He bowed his head; whether to escape observation or to pray was not known at the moment, but the friend who sat by him at that point whispered, “Look up, Charlie.” At the same moment, in a loud voice I also said, “Look up.” To Charlie this double testimony at one moment was a voice from God and from heaven which he could not resist, and there is no doubt from that time he began to look to the Lord for salvation, though he did not then find peace.

The meeting closed, and I asked any who were anxious to be saved to come round into the side-room, and see me. Among the seekers for salvation

who desired a personal interview with me, I was deeply thankful to see Charlie. He was, however, so overcome with emotion that I took him apart into a yet smaller ante-room, where he acknowledged his guilty condition and his deep desire to be saved there and then. There was no need to press repentance or urge decision ; he was deeply repentant, and longed to be decided. Finding this to be the state of his soul, I said, "Let us pray together." We got on our knees, and I prayed to the Lord to let light shine into his darkened heart, and give peace to his troubled soul. Then arising I left him on his knees, and said, "Charlie, get it all settled with God, man, before you get off your knees," and I went out into the after-meeting, leaving him alone with God.

Perhaps half-an-hour elapsed, and then I returned. Charlie was standing to receive me, his face beaming with joy, although tears still rolled down his cheeks, but they were tears of joy in the knowledge of God's love ; and as he gripped my hand like a vice, he said, "I have got Him, I can trust Him now ; He is mine, I am saved." Saying a few more words to him, I brought him out to the very door-way where his mother had stood and seen me converted, and where she now stood, weeping and praying as only a tender-hearted mother can do in a moment of such extreme solicitude as was hers for her son. "Here he is," said I ; "take care of him." They fell into each other's arms, and wept tears of joy and gratitude, she—because her prayers were answered ; he—because his soul was eternally saved. It was a fine

sight. Would to God one saw it more often now-a-days at the close of gospel meetings.

Mothers, go on praying for your boys, and always bring them to the gospel preaching where you know somebody will speak a plain, simple word about Jesus.

Charlie's conversion was very bright and clear; he at once confessed Christ to all his old comrades, took a decided stand, wherever he was known, as being on the Lord's side, was not ashamed to own Christ on every occasion, and very soon identified himself with the Lord's people in worship and service in a very practical way. But as his soul grew in the knowledge of God, and his spiritual stature increased, I grieve to say the outward man decayed. Consumption laid its fell hand upon the dear young convert, and within two short years of the night I have spoken of, Charlie passed away to be with Jesus for ever. His death was triumphant, his testimony beautifully bright and simple. He got round his bedside every young person he knew, whether related to him or not, told them how Jesus had saved him, and urged them to come to the Saviour and devote their lives to Him. The grief which naturally filled his parents' hearts in losing him from earth was most blessedly and sweetly assuaged by the absolute knowledge that he had passed into everlasting glory, through faith in the name of Jesus. To God be the praise.

Reader, have *you* faith in that name? Have you found Him who bears it? Do you know Him as your own personal Saviour? Were those who love

you most to stand round your grave within a week of the moment you read this, do you think they would have the deep solid conviction that you had passed to be for ever, with the Lord? These are serious questions, answer them honestly, I beseech you. Time is short; eternity long. Death is at hand; the Lord is coming. Procrastinate not, for delays are dangerous, and procrastination is but the recruiting officer of hell. If you have never turned to the Lord before, turn at this very moment. Trust Him. Look up; He looks down in tender love on you. Remember, "Neither is there salvation in any other" but that name of Jesus. W. T. P. W.

THE TWO PUZZLED DOCTORS.

ABOUT thirty-seven years ago a doctor and his assistant were in attendance on an old retired tradesman. It was a case that sorely puzzled them both. They had had, for young men, a fair amount of experience, but neither of them had seen, either in hospital or private practice, a case similar to this—not that the diagnosis was particularly difficult, or, in point of fact, the prognosis either, for it was quite plain to them he could not live very long.

It was not, however, the disease, but the man himself who puzzled them so very much.

He seemed to be past their comprehension, yet there was no question about his intellect being weak. On the contrary, he appeared to be a man of some intelligence.

Again, there was nothing to complain of in the way their daily visits were received, for their patient uniformly met them with a gentle, benignant smile ; yet they could not feel at home with him, for they could not make him out.

As we have said, his case was a very serious one, and as the doctor always thought it right to tell his patients, when they were in real danger, the truth as to their state, but in as guarded a manner as possible, the time had now come when he felt he must break the "sad" news of the approaching end to this patient. So, to avoid a shock, he commenced as carefully as possible to bring the "painful" subject before him, and by degrees came to the usually distressing point, saying, as near as remembered, "My dear friend, I fear your time here will not be very long."

His countenance changed immediately. The doctor was, however, quite prepared for that, as he had seen it under similar circumstances many times before.

Was the poor old gentleman going to burst into a flood of tears? No.

Was he going to cry bitterly that he might be spared here a little longer? No.

Was he about to deplore having to leave his loved ones here? No.

Can it be possible? Yes, indeed; there can be no mistake about it; instead of anguish, a bright, radiant smile lights up his face as he calmly inquires, "And do you think, doctor, the event will take place to-day?"

It was now the poor doctor's turn for intense astonishment, and his professional decorum was tried to the utmost to enable him, without showing his great surprise, to reply, "Well, no; I trust not to-day, but I fear it will be very soon."

Again that bright, confident smile illuminated the face of this strange man as he said, "Ah, well, it is a good thing to be prepared!"

In the after-part of that day and subsequently, the doctors, not being able to understand their strange patient, pronounced him to be a "regular caution," and made many jokes at his expense.

But queer as he appeared in their eyes, he was unquestionably in possession of some secret they were in entire ignorance of. Indeed, though not cowards, they would have been terribly distressed had *they* been in their patient's position. What, then, was the wonderful secret which could give this man such perfect calmness when face to face with death?

As the writer, by the grace of God, has himself been in the knowledge and enjoyment of this secret for many years, permit him to try to answer this all-important question, with the sincere hope and fervent prayer that the highly-prized blessing may be yours before you lay aside this little paper.

In the first place, our old friend had, by the Holy

Spirit's teaching, become convinced that he was not right with God, and being honest enough to own his sinful and undone condition before Him, he soon became aware of the great fact that God was not against him, but for him.

Yes, "GOD IS LOVE. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 8-10).

He is a holy and a righteous God; He hates sin, but He loves the sinner. His righteousness forbids His overlooking one sin, yet in love He willeth not the death of a sinner.

"The perfect righteousness of God
Is witnessed in the Saviour's blood;
'Tis in the cross of Christ we trace
His righteousness, yet wondrous grace.

God could not pass the sinner by—
His sin demands that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see
How God can save, yet righteous be.

The sin alights on Jesus' head;
'Tis in His blood sin's debt is paid.
Stern justice can demand no more,
And mercy can dispense her store.

The sinner who believes is free—
Can say, 'The Saviour died for me';
Can point to the atoning blood
And say, 'This made my peace with God.'

So in all simplicity he accepted God's word about the precious Person and work of His beloved Son, and had "peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20). "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. v. 1, 2).

Mark well, dear reader, that it was not "peace with *himself*," but "peace with *God*," which gave our old friend such joy at the prospect of death.

Death, did we say?

Nay, it was no "death" to him, but simply falling asleep in Jesus. He said, "It is a good thing to be prepared," and prepared he was, through the precious blood of Jesus Christ alone.

About two years after the above event "the king of terrors" came and suddenly snatched one of these very doctors from time into eternity. God has been pleased to drop the curtain, and close from our view what his real end was; and we desire, in all affection to his memory, to leave that curtain as it fell.

At the same time, what hallelujahs—what eternal songs of praise shall be His! for, as "a brand plucked out of the fire" (Zech. iii. 2), the "King of Peace" and Lord of Glory snatched the other doctor from the very brink of hell, using the sudden death of his cherished friend to thoroughly arouse him to a sense of his guilty, lost, hell-deserving condition, and eventually gave him, through that same precious blood, not only "*peace with God*," but to know the

"peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Phil. iv. 7).

This plucked "brand" is the writer of this paper, who for over thirty years has himself been enjoying that wonderful secret, the effects of which so greatly astonished him and his friend in their old patient of thirty-seven years ago.

His most earnest desire and prayer now is that each unsaved reader may, without another moment's delay, be honest with God and his own never-dying soul, and take his true place as a guilty, lost sinner before Him, and claim Jesus—the One who died for sinners—as his individual Saviour. Each will then, with an adoring heart, be able to say, "Who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*" (Gal. ii. 20). He will thus be brought into the wonderful secret which gives calmness, comfort, and confidence when face to face with what is usually called death. C. P. W. N.

God's Book is a book of facts, there are no uncertainties in it. It is a fact that you are a sinner, God has said it (Rom. iii. 23), and it is true, whether you believe or disbelieve it. "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6) is a fact, and on the ground of His atoning death, God proclaims the "forgiveness of sins" to every sinner on earth (Acts xiii. 38), whether they receive or reject that forgiveness. And all that believe "are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39) and at "peace with God" (Rom. v. 1).

ANON.

HEART-DECEPTION.

I HAVE heard the heart of the wicked described as "a sin-creating machine," and I cannot but think that the simile is very apt. It is a sin-factory; a cesspool of iniquity; a fountain of deceit and treachery so deep and profound that it may well be asked, "Who can know it?" It is indeed "deceitful above all things and desperately (that is incurably) wicked." And yet out of the heart are the issues of life. When it is wrong all must be wrong.

I was greatly struck this morning in reading Psalm x. by seeing therein the workings of the heart of the wicked. Kindly bear with me while we together examine these evil workings as shown in that psalm.

We read in ver. 4 that "the wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God. God is not in all his thoughts," or, as in another version, "All his thoughts are, There is no God."

Let us start with that. He thinks there is no God; but it may be safely affirmed that the wish is father to the thought. He wishes that no such Being as God existed, and therefore he tries to persuade himself that He does not. The fact is the sinner has an inherent dread of God—like Adam after the fall. A guilty conscience makes him a coward. He feels somehow that sin and retributive justice are correlative; and, seeing that he has

sinned (all have done so), he has a fearful intuition of judgment to come. He can regard God in no other light than that of a Judge. He has no idea of grace, or mercy, or divine compassion ; no glimmering of the work of the cross, or the atoning blood of the Son of God. All he feels is that he deserves punishment for sins committed. This punishment he attributes to God ; and, as the thought is intolerable, he banishes it (if he can) from his mind and says, "There is no God !"

But to erase God from your mind is not to erase Him from His own creation ; nor can it absolve the sinner from his responsibility. The ostrich may bury her head in the sand, and dream that she is safe, but her pursuer is not thus to be balked. You cannot hide from God.

Well then, what about the heart of the wicked ? What are its devices ? First, ver. 11, "He saith in his heart, I shall not be moved, for I shall never be in adversity." "Never" is a long time ! However, suppose that you escape adversity this year, and can say to your soul, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," and the year slips peacefully away, and the next, and the next, and you live to sixty or seventy, ah ! then at last you begin to hear the roll of Jordan, and to feel the harbingers of death ! Adversity knocks at your door, gently but persistently, and you begin to be moved after all—to tremble, to find that your ease is broken up, and your long period of prosperity has come to an end. Your boast that you should not be moved was vain, and

you are in adversity now. Alas, your wicked heart deceived you as to all this.

But, second, in ver. 11, "He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it."

Never? never see it? Be not so sure. Tell me of one thing, good, bad, or indifferent, in His wide universe which God does not see. "All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do," and you may depend upon it that the sins you wish to cover up are seen by God.

"He hideth his face." No doubt you think so, but how can you prove it? "God hath forgotten," that is a mere *ipse dixit*, a groundless and utterly false idea. God forgets nothing. He may, in wondrous mercy, forgive the poor penitent, may justify him, and remember his sins no more; but to say that God forgets is wholly wrong. You would like God to forget, just as you yourself like to forget; but again the wish is the source of the thought. The heart is at work again in deceiving.

Lastly (ver. 13), "He saith in his heart, God will not require it." Are you sure? We read the opposite, viz., "God requireth that which is past" (Eccles. iii. 15). Again the heart is sorely in error.

But what will God require? Ah! the day of adversity has come, and the guilty soul is deeply moved at last; God has not forgotten, nor did He hide His face; He saw it all, and now God requires it at your hand. Escape is impossible. Mark (ver.

14), "Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand."

God had seen and beheld it all along, and now His hand must requite the evil—the life-long evil of your heart and ways. How true it is that "he who trusteth his own heart is a fool." You have not a worse counsellor on earth than your own heart. It is deceitful above all things—mark that! above all things! and desperately wicked! Saul of Tarsus trusted his, and discovered his abject folly in time. Then he saw that in him, that is in his flesh, there dwelt no good thing. He fled to Christ for righteousness and received it by faith in Him; and thereafter lived a life of dependence on and obedience to God, —a holy life, a happy life, a useful life—one of suffering for Christ's sake, but one which was pleasing to God, and therefore truly fruitful.

Dear reader, place yourself before the eye of God. That is the first step in the right direction. Fear not to do so. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He made the poor penitent prodigal never so welcome; and, mark, if your sins do not bring you to God they will force you into hell. Turn, I pray you, to God, and turn now. J. W. S.

LONG before man is to be judged for his sins, God unfolds two things—first, that forgiveness is offered to every soul that believes in His Son, and secondly, that He sends the Holy Ghost to dwell in the believer. Is not that wide enough, broad enough, to take you and me in? W. T. P. W.

"GOD TOOK HIM."

„SUDDEN DEATH IN A FISHING BOAT.

"Yesterday afternoon, on the arrival at C—— of the half-lin boats, in which the short line fishing in the Firth is prosecuted, one of them, owned and skippered by Mr Robert D——, was lying at the pier. Mr D—— was in the act of shoving it off, when he suddenly fell back into the boat and expired."

SUCH was the brief announcement contained in the daily newspaper on Wednesday, 3rd January 1906. By the vast majority it would, doubtless, be read in a matter-of-fact fashion, but to the writer, as to many more, the intimation came with startling suddenness.

On Monday, 1st January, there were meetings in E—— at which the dear children of God, to the number of about seven hundred, gathered together for prayer and the ministry of the Word. They came from various parts of the country and as during an interval they exchanged greetings, it was felt that scarcely less precious than the heavenly food, so liberally bestowed by our gracious God, was the fellowship so heartily enjoyed. Some remarked, "If it is so good here, what will it be when we reach the glory-land?"

Amongst this large company it was not difficult to identify the subject of the paragraph which heads this paper. To see him passing up and down the hall, to watch his sunny face, and to receive his cordial hand-shake, was indeed refreshing. We had the privilege of a short conversation with him, and expressed the hope that we should see him soon in

his own loved village. Little did we think that our next meeting should be "at Jesus' feet." That was on Monday. As our readers have already learned, on Tuesday he got his home-call. He looked forward with great pleasure to another gathering on the Saturday following; but ere then he had gone to that great and glorious meeting which shall never, never end. He was truly "absent from the body, but present with the Lord."

Long he had known and loved his precious Saviour, faithfully and consistently he had borne testimony to Him in walk and conversation, and dearly he loved all those who love the Lord. We feel the most fitting epitaph that could be written is, "He walked with God, and he was not; for

GOD TOOK HIM."

We write thus, not to make much of dear Robert D—— (none would object more strongly to this than he), but we feel assured that in this event God has something to say to every reader of the *Gospel Messenger*. In the first place, dear fellow Christians, we may learn a lesson from this. As a beloved brother remarked, the word for us is to be

"REDEEMING THE TIME."

Are we buying up our opportunities? Are we living day by day with the sense that at any moment we may be called home? and are we *morally* ready for that call?

This should exercise us—not the extent of our intelligence about divine truth, but the extent by

which the truth has formed us, and the extent also that it can be said of us, "*He walked with God.*" Such was the pathway of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. To "follow in His steps" is our great privilege while down here, but it will cease when we are actually with Him.

Then, further, how this should stir us up to increased earnestness in the service of Christ. If an opportunity presents itself of cheering a weary saint, or of telling dying sinners of a living Saviour, how we should seize it, feeling that our sojourn here is momentary, and that such an opportunity may never occur again. The other day I heard this remark, "You have but one life to live—live it for Christ."

But what of the unsaved? Dear friend, let us address you lovingly yet faithfully. Robert D——'s case is by no means a solitary one. Men and women in all parts of the world die suddenly. YOU MAY GO NEXT. We can imagine some person remarking, "You religious folk always make the most of these things." Stay! do not fling down this paper yet: consider, dear unsaved reader!

DIE YOU MUST, if out of Christ.

WHEN WILL YOU DIE? Perhaps *to-day*.

HOW WILL YOU DIE? In your sins? Note, the Son of God has said, "If ye believe not that I am he, *ye shall die in your sins*" (John viii. 24). What then? You will pass on to judgment, for the Holy Scriptures declare that "it is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment" (Heb.

ix. 27). And what then? The lake of fire; for the Scriptures further declare that "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). Reader! these are incontestable facts, they concern your eternal welfare; we beseech you, face them now. We need not remind you that

DEATH IS DECIDEDLY UNCONVENTIONAL.

He overrides all form and ceremony. He studies not his victim's convenience, he considers not his wishes. In a moment he sweeps down upon him without warning, he seizes him with relentless grip, and conducts him across "that bourne whence no traveller returns." Have *you* thought of this? If not, we pray you consider the matter NOW. Ere we close, permit us to tell you yet again the glad tidings of God who loves *you*; of Jesus who died for *you*; and of the Holy Spirit who waits to lead *you* into the present possession and enjoyment of salvation.

Observe then, you can be

SAVED ON THE SPOT

from your sins, and they are many; from the power of sin, and it is great; from death, and, at present, it is certain; from judgment, and, as you are, it is inevitable; and from the lake of fire which is the everlasting destiny of every unsaved person. You know how all this can be effected. The blessed Lord Jesus Christ has, on the cross at Calvary, shed His precious blood, which once and for ever blots out every stain of sin; He has, in His death, removed

from before the eye of God the man who committed the sins; He has annulled death; He has exhausted the judgment; He has closed the gates of hell against, and opened wide the door of heaven for every one who simply trusts in Him. What is the secret of it all? God loves *you*. In His own beloved Son He found one whose heart beat in unison with His own heart. At Calvary we see divine love manifested in all its fulness. At the right hand of God we see the One who expressed that love, and we learn that God has been glorified, and that now He is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). But we urge this upon your attention, not alone in view of the uncertainty of life, nor yet simply because of that from which you will be delivered, but in order that you may live right down here in this world in the love of God.

For dear Robert D—— heaven commenced long years ago, and he but passed to the place with the atmosphere of which he was very familiar, and to be with the One he already knew and loved so well.

We want you to know God and to "joy in God." We want you to know that you are saved, and that God has saved you in order that, in association with His own beloved Son, He might bring you into relationship with Himself, and by His Holy Spirit—whom He gives to all who believe—lead you into the present enjoyment of the vast wealth of blessing laid up for all who love Him.

|| Dear reader, young or old, rich or poor, whoever and wherever you be, take a lesson, we pray you—as

we desire to do—from the unexpected summons received by our departed brother.

“GET RIGHT WITH GOD!”

Come, here and now, as a needy lost sinner, to Jesus, the sinner's Saviour. Trust in His peerless name, rest on His finished work, fix your eye upon Him in yonder glory, and LIVE in the conscious sense of His love and in His glorious service. Then soon, together, changed into His likeness, we shall live for ever with Him where He is.

“Oh, that will be glory for me,
Glory for me, glory for me,
When by His grace, I shall look on His face,
That will be glory, be glory for me.”

W. B. D.

THE CLERGYMAN'S DISCOVERY.

A CLERGYMAN sat in his quiet study in a Yorkshire village. He was an earnest man, throwing the whole of his energy into the work he had undertaken, so that for years he preached two or three times every day in one or other of the scattered hamlets which composed his parish.

His conduct too was irreproachable; and, as he preached the law, and urged his people to keep it, inculcating morality with much diligence, it is not surprising that a change became evident among them, and outward and gross sins far less frequent.

If he was not well pleased with himself, others were well pleased with him; he was spoken of in the religious literature of the day as "the most perfect example of a parish priest which the nation had produced."

And now this exemplary man sits studying his Greek Testament. He is deep in the third chapter of the Ephesians, and has come to verse 8, when a long word arrests him—"The *unsearchable* (unexplorable) riches of Christ."

"The apostle uses remarkable expressions," he thought; "he speaks of heights, depths, lengths, breadths, and unsearchables, where I seem to find everything plain, easy, and rational. Surely though I use the words 'gospel,' 'faith,' and 'grace' with him, my ideas of them must be different from his."

So he determined to find out what the apostle Paul's "ideas" really were, and with this in view studied anew all his epistles; and oh, the discovery he made! The Holy Spirit who indited them used these marvellous scriptures to show the model clergyman that he himself was nothing else than a guilty, lost, and undone sinner.

He had assented to the truths of the gospel before; he had believed them in his head, but he had never bowed to them with his heart, never accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Saviour, and believing on Him found life through His name. It was only as so much dry history that he had hitherto believed in His birth and death, His blood-shedding and resurrection; now he saw that they were vital

facts on which his own eternal salvation depended ; and as a lost and helpless sinner he laid hold on the hope set before him ; he fled for refuge to a God-given Saviour ; and he exclaimed with the apostle Paul, "The Son of God, who loved *me* and gave himself for *me*."

Ah, then he understood the apostle's glowing expressions. Oh, what lengths and breadths and depths and heights he now saw in the glories of Him who had gone down to death, even the death of the cross, for his sake ! Oh, how unsearchable, how past finding out, the wisdom and the grace that had formed such a plan, and formed it in order to save *him* !

And what a change came over his preaching, too ! He felt himself that there was no hope for a sinner except in the blood of Jesus ; and no possibility of doing anything acceptable to God, except as first made "accepted in the Beloved." He told his hearers they were lost, and needed a Saviour ; that a Saviour had been provided for them by God Himself, and that they were welcome to come to Him just as they were.

It was not reformation he now preached, but Christ—Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ glorified—and God honoured his testimony. Instead of outward morality, there was an inward change, even "from darkness to light," from "death unto life," in very many of his hearers ; and from these little Yorkshire hamlets was many a jewel taken to shine in the Saviour's crown for ever.

The voice that proclaimed to them their need and God's great provision for it is silent now ; he is resting from his labours until the resurrection morning ; but the truth he learned and then taught is sounding in your ears to-day : are you giving a merely rational assent to it, or is the Christ of God the one living object of your heart ? have you believed on the Son, and believing, obtained life through His name ?

T.

WORSHIP.

(Read Genesis xxii.)

WORSHIP always supposes the will broken. In the preceding chapters we have seen Abraham in Egypt, and we have remarked, that so long as he was there he built no altar ; but he came out of it, and then, having abandoned Egypt, he could build an altar to the Lord.

David sees the child sick who is dear to him ; then he fasts and prays, but he wrestles with God : his will was not submissive. When the child was dead, David changed his apparel, ate, drank, and could come to worship before the Lord, because the struggle that existed in his heart had ceased, and his will was broken.

Job, after those heavy afflictions, which are set before us in the first chapter—the loss of his substance and of his family—rends his mantle, it is true (chap. i. 20) ; he did not sin in that, the word tells us.

His grief was lawful, he was permitted to grieve for the loss of his children; but he arises and worships before God. He can worship Him, because his will is broken, and he can say, "Jehovah gave and Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah."

But in the chapter we have just read, we find something far above what we have in Job and David. They acquiesced in God's will, but their submission was passive; it required of them no act. Not so in Genesis xxii. Not only must Abraham accept God's will, but, moreover, he must act against himself; he must, so to speak, sacrifice himself, for the sacrifice of his son was nothing short of that. God says to him, "Offer up to me *thy* son, thine only son." The name of an individual contains in it for us all that concerns him and all our relations with him. "*Thy son*"—this word kindled in Abraham the tenderest of feelings, and he had to sacrifice that son. Nay, more, this name recalled to him the promises of God, and it was in this son they were to be fulfilled; for God had positively told him, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."

But he whose will is subjected to God is satisfied of these two things. God will provide for it, and, I am with God. Every look to the flesh in the way of expectation for the fulfilment of the promises must be turned away, and God alone remain as the source of the life, the blessings, and the promise; as the One who never comes to the end of His resources, even in the very failure of all the means He Himself

might have pointed out for the accomplishment of His promises.

God thus proves the heart, that all confidence in the flesh may be destroyed ; but, at the same time, knowing that the heart needs to be sustained under the trial, he sustains it by a new revelation, which enables it to triumph. Thus, we see in Hebrews xi. 19 that Abraham, on the occasion of the sacrifice required of him, had a revelation concerning the resurrection, then so little known. It is thus that God, in His infinite mercy, causes us to gain in Himself what we lose in the flesh.

Far from those that accompanied him (that is, alone with Isaac and with God), Abraham received this revelation, and could offer the ram on the altar in the stead of his son, according as he had said, "God will provide himself a burnt-offering." It is thus that, in the secret of communion with God, we learn much of Him.

In Jesus, the true worshipper of the Father, the will was always broken. The cup was full of bitterness, as we know ; but, in His desire to fulfil the will of God, He forgets, so to speak, this bitterness, and cries out, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

"And stayed by joy divine,
As hireling fills his day,
Through scene of strife and desert life
We tread peace our way."

NO MORE! NO MORE!

AIR—"I'll Hang my Harp on a Willow Tree."

I'LL give you a piece of good news to-day,
 My sins are remembered no more!
 For Jesus has taken them all away,
 My sins are remembered no more!

**No more! No more! No more! No more!
 My sins are remembered no more!
 For Jesus has taken them all away,
 My sins are remembered no more!*

As far as the east is away from the west,
 My sins are remembered no more!
 And now my soul is at perfect rest,
 My sins are remembered no more! *

My transgressions were many; my soul was black,
 My sins are remembered no more!
 For God has cast them behind His back,
 My sins are remembered no more! *

You may search the depths of the deep, deep sea,
 My sins are remembered no more!
 At the judgment throne or eternity,
 My sins are remembered no more! *

Let MEN remember and foes accuse,
 My sins are remembered no more!
 If God forgets, THEY may say what they choose,
 My sins are remembered no more! *

They're forgiven, forgotten, and cleansed and gone,
 My sins are remembered no more!
 They're atoned for and covered by God's dear Son,
 My sins are remembered no more! *

"I'M NOT AFRAID OF DEATH."

HE had been a well-built young man, but disease had done its work, and in the emaciated form which lay before me there was but little evidence of former strength.

Our first interview was unexpected. We had never met before, and yet he seemed to have an idea of the purpose of my visit, for on asking him how he was, he answered that it was only a matter of time; and then added,

"I'M NOT AFRAID OF DEATH."

I was not a little surprised at this affirmation since I had been told something of his previous history. I learned more afterwards, from himself and from his friends.

"God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not" (Job xxxiii. 19). God had spoken distinctly to him on two previous occasions, necessitating two prolonged visits to the infirmary, but still he was unawakened to eternal things; and now God's hand was laid on him again. Let me narrate the circumstances.

While serving in the South African War he was severely wounded during one of the engagements. So serious was his condition that he was picked up as dead. Fortunately he manifested some slight evidences of vitality while being carried away among the dead, and was consequently transferred to the

company of the wounded. After some time he had recovered sufficiently to return home, and though not restored to normal health, yet he had apparently many years before him. A wrong step, however, brought him once again to death's door. Thinking that a change might do him good, he went to camp with the volunteers. He caught cold, consumption set in, the bullet shot he had formerly received in the head opened the way to paralysis, and with the year 1905 drawing to a close I found him a terrible sufferer, and, as I have said,

ASLEEP TO THE REALITIES OF ETERNITY.

Without referring to his past life of sin, and the danger of eternal damnation—he was apparently unawakened as to either—I began at once to speak of the death and sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. We spoke of Him in His life of toil and weariness, but all the sufferings of His life were as nought in comparison with the anticipation and the reality of the cross.

Looking on to Calvary from Gethsemane He is in an agony which He had never experienced before. He is about to drink the cup of judgment. He who knew no sin is about to be made sin for us, and as the sweat, as it were blood, drops from His holy brow, He says, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me." He confesses to the intense anguish that fills His bosom at the thought of being made sin. A few steps more and the kiss of the traitor opens the last page of His history this side of

death—a page that reaches its climax when the echoes of the darkness of Calvary resound to the cry of the forsaken One. Why did He cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Was He really forsaken? Yes, indeed, He was. He was forsaken that we might know God's estimate of sin. Moreover, the One who thus suffered was Heaven's spotless One; the One who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; the One who went about doing good.

My friend listened to the story of the sufferings of the Saviour as he had never done before, for it had now a peculiar application to himself. He could no longer be careless and thoughtless about his own approaching end, and by his countenance I knew well that the message had done its work. After a few words of prayer I left him with

AN AWAKENED CONSCIENCE.

He was anxious that I should visit him again, so after a few days we met for the second time. We soon settled down for a long talk, which was of a rather different character from the former. Then we had spoken of sin, death, and judgment, now we spoke of grace, life, and blessing. The old, old story of a Saviour coming in grace to save the lost was new to him—new because he had never before referred it to himself. Fully conscious of his need, he drank in the glad tidings of Jesus and His love. We spoke of a Saviour who was rich but for our sakes became poor; who bore our sins in His own body on the

tree; who is now the justifier of the ungodly, and who is still willing and waiting to save.

Over two hours had passed, and I had to leave him again. I felt sure, as I prayed with him, that to his awakened conscience was now added

A THIRSTING HEART.

Having promised to call soon again, at the earliest opportunity I was by his bedside. In the meantime he had been reading his Bible and the tracts I had left him. After a little conversation I felt that the moment had come for him to make his decision. He was growing weaker day by day, and could not last much longer, so, leaning towards him, I said: "Now I am going to ask you a direct question. I have told you a great deal about the Saviour, also about sin and death. I want you now to just think of the black life you have lived, of the death which is very, very near, of God's horror of sin, and in the light of what Jesus has done for you on the cross, tell me if you are ready?"

A direct question demands a direct answer. He knew it. Besides this was no time for trifling. Death's forerunners were there. His soul was in the balance. The issues were eternal.

Eagerly I waited for the reply, and I was not kept long in suspense, for after some minutes' deep reflection, he turned to me, looked me straight in the face, and answered,

"IF IT IS TRUSTING JESUS, THEN I AM READY."

Gladly I showed him from Scripture that all that

was necessary was to *trust* the Saviour. His choice was made. Turning away from his own ways and thoughts, from his misspent life and sinful heart, he came to the Saviour, trusted Him, and was saved. As we turned our faces heavenward in prayer, we both tasted the joy which fills heaven when a sinner is brought to repentance.

Several weeks passed before the Lord called him home to Himself. He had thus the privilege of giving evidence of the reality of his conversion, and this he did abundantly. On one occasion one of his old companions, who had called to see him, remarked after conversing with him, that he could now speak of nothing but the blood of Jesus. Yes, the precious blood of Jesus! What a theme for the few weeks that remained! What a theme for the countless ages of eternity! Death had now no terror for him, nor yet the judgment beyond, for the Saviour had borne the latter, and the sting of the former was gone. Before the new year had come he passed peacefully out of the sphere of sin and death, out of the land of tears and sorrow, into the region where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (Rev. xxi. 4).

Dear reader, are you at rest about eternity? Are you trusting to the blood of the Lamb? Or is your peace the product of neglect, as is so often the case in these days of hurry and bustle, when men in general profess to have no time to think of these things? Let me warn you. If you have no time now, then in hell you will have plenty of time to

judge yourself for your folly. Be wise to-day. Hear His voice. Harden not your heart. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Then, when passing into eternity, you will be able to say—

“Call it not death !

No, death has lost its gloom ;
The blessed Lord has risen from the tomb
And burst the gates of death, and all its fear
Is gone for ever—banished to the air.

Call it not death !

No, Jesus has been there,
And thus my heart is freed from every care ;
Nay, more than this, I realise the love
That prompted Him to leave His home above

To conquer death,

And break for me its power ;
As also in that dark and lonesome hour
Make known the love of God, the Father's heart
Which to my soul the Spirit doth impart.

Call it not death !

No, there the Lord has won
His mighty triumph, when He stood alone
To face the foe in all His dread array,
And silence every claim on man that lay.

Call it not death !

For death could not hold Him,
Who searched its inmost depths of pain and sin.
From out its dark domains the Lord arose,
The glorious victor over all His foes.

Call it not death !

No, now 'tis but the door,
Which leads to Him from whom I'll part no more.
So death is gain. Far better there to be,
With Him whose love is everything to me.”

HEART DELIVERANCE.

A GUILTY conscience is a dreadful thing; and, unless purged by the blood of Christ, it will drive a man to despair.

The conscience and the heart are closely allied. What affects the one affects the other; and in Scripture they are sometimes identified. "If our heart condemn us," we read in 1 John iii. 20, "God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things." God searches the heart; and conscience, always on God's side, though possibly dulled or seared, acts upon the heart, and, when guilty, renders it miserable.

Now, a conscience of this kind, acting on the affections, may lead a man to the commission of any conceivable crime. Driven by despair he may commit suicide, or goaded by passion he may become a murderer like Cain of old. Affection is over-mastered by an evil conscience, and relief is sought by means which are desperate, from a burden so heavy as to make its bearer well-nigh mad. But is relief thus to be found? Never! the load of guilt cannot be removed by that which only adds to it.

How, then, can the case be met, and the heavy load removed? Is there a way whereby the guilty conscience can be purged, so that a sinful man can look God in the face without fear, and in the knowledge of the settlement of the whole cause of trouble?

Yes, thank God, there is. It is a way of His own gracious providing, and must therefore satisfy fully all that He demands, and place, at the same time, the conscience of the recipient on divine and righteous ground. That ground lies in the blood of His Son.

That ever-precious blood meets all the claims of the throne on high, and "cleanses us from all sin." Glorious provision! Now, please to notice this statement of Scripture—"Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (Heb. x. 22). Observe the close connection between heart and conscience, the latter reacting on the former and, when evil, necessarily causing misery; but see also that the heart is sprinkled from such a conscience, and is therefore delivered from its terrible load.

But whose heart? That of him who by nature and practice had acquired an evil conscience as the result, first of Adam's sin, and then of his personal guilt, but who has also availed himself of God's blessed provision, one who is, in short, a true believer in our Lord Jesus Christ. His conscience is purged before God; and such is the marvellous efficacy of that provision—that sacrifice—he has no longer the conscience of sins! Hence we read—"Because that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins!" (Heb. x. 2).

Ponder these inspired words, they are intended to carry absolute relief to the sin-troubled heart. One purgation by the blood of Christ purifies the conscience for evermore!

The happy worshipper can look in the face the God whom he had offended by his sins ; he is purged ; his sins and iniquities are remembered no more ; by One offering he is perfected for ever ; he is sprinkled as to his heart from an evil conscience ; it is purged from dead works so that he can now serve the living God !

How infinite the difference ! Yet sin dwells in him ! To deny that positive fact is but to deceive oneself. There is the consciousness, and the experience, too, of indwelling sin ; but, withal, the conscience is purged because the guilt is pardoned. There is favour instead of fear.

When the prodigal was sitting peacefully at his father's table his conscience had assuredly perfect right to rejoice even though he himself had the consciousness of having wandered so far. Still, at the very least, his conscience was at rest and his heart delivered from its heavy load.

This is the first part of God's great deliverance. The heart which was deceived by sin is now delivered by redemption, in order that, in freedom from the upbraidings of an evil conscience, it may yield itself frankly to serve and worship the living God. By so doing the conscience, once purged, is maintained pure ; for there is the needed "exercise to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and man."

That is surely a "good conscience" than which there is no greater source of moral power or spiritual vigour. Having that you are bold as a lion ; without it, even though purged, you will flee when

no man pursueth. Thus a "good conscience"—one sustained in faithfulness—and a delivered and joyful heart go together. There can be no true liberty of heart if the conscience has ground of accusation; and, conversely, a good conscience and a happy heart secure constant victory.

J. W. S.

THE PLAGUE AT EYAM.

MOST of us have read with a shudder some account of the Great Plague of 1665. Nowhere perhaps was greater desolation wrought by the malignant fury of this pestilence than in the remote village of Eyam in Derbyshire.

The infection was carried there in a box of old clothes sent from London in September of 1665. The tailor who received them sickened and died of the plague; other members of the household died, and then the pestilence began to spread.

The villagers, in the greatest alarm, prepared to leave their homes. Had they done so the surrounding country would have been doomed to a similar visitation, but chiefly through the influence and wisdom of the rector, the people were persuaded to remain. A circle marked out by stones was drawn round the village, and no one, from within or without, was permitted to cross the boundary line. The Duke

of Devonshire supplied medicine, food, and other necessities, which were left at certain places on the boundary and were fetched by the villagers.

Within this cordon of death the insatiable plague cried continually, "Give, give." The church was closed, and the rector chose a rock in the valley from which to preach to his ever-diminishing flock. The burial service was no longer read over the dead, but the survivors hastily interred the victims in garden or field. Whole households perished. The plague was sometimes cruel even where it spared. For instance, one woman, having with her own hands laid her husband and six children in their graves, was left in utter loneliness to mourn her desolation.

Thus the plague raged until 295 of the 350 inhabitants of the village had perished. In October 1666 the last death occurred, and with the last victim "they buried the plague."

This page from the book of history forcibly illustrates the remorseless and death-dealing character of sin. Yet the havoc wrought by the plague in Eyam, terrible though it was, pales into insignificance before the ravages of sin.

For sin is a disease attacking the soul. It has manifested itself in every corner of the earth, and it is impossible to find the man, the woman, or the child that can claim freedom from its pollution. Human remedies cannot heal the plague-spot of sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Now we have drawn this dark yet true picture of man's condition that every eye may be turned to the

Divine Physician, the Lord Jesus Christ. The One who died upon the cross can alone save the sinner from death. "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).

Reader, hast thou obtained healing from the Lord for *thy* sin-stricken soul? No? We would entreat thee then to face the facts now brought before thee. Turn to the Saviour; He is saying to thee, "Wilt *thou* be made whole?" Wilt thou not accept with thankful heart this priceless blessing that He offers thee?

"Saved through the blood of Jesus,
Saved from all guilt and shame,
Saved is the soul that trusts Him,
Trusts in His precious name."

M. L. B.

FRAGMENT.

You and I have not come to the Father's *house* yet, but we have got the Father's *heart*. And which is it best for us to have—the Father's house or the Father's heart? Surely the Father's *heart*. It will eventuate in our getting into the Father's house, and then we shall surely know the Father's heart better; but it will be the same subject, the same song, then as now.

J. N. D.

"THE WAY OF CAIN."

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."—GEN. iv. 3-5.

BLESSED is the man that is in the way of Abel. "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain," says Scripture (Jude 11). And what was Cain's way? It was the way of nature, mere natural religion apart from faith in the revelation God had given.

Cain was by occupation a tiller of the ground. Abel was a shepherd. Cain was a husbandman, and his heart was much engrossed with the ground that he was busy tilling. "In process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord" (Gen. iv. 3). He began to think he must draw near to God. It was a good thought. What man would dare to say that it was not a good thing to draw near to God?

Cain was right in his thought, wrong in the way of carrying out his attempt to draw near to God. Recollect you too will have to meet God. You must meet God. Every one, sooner or later, must meet Him, if not in time then in eternity. Every reader of these lines must meet God. Whatever your age, whatever your class, whatever your rank in society, or level in this world, you must have to say to God, you must meet God, and have to do with God. The

point is, What road will you take to Him in order to be accepted?

Now observe, Cain draws near to God with an offering of the fruit of the ground—the product of his own labour; and, on the other hand, we find that “Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect” (vers. 4, 5). There could be nothing more distinct and contrasted than this action of God with regard to these offerings, and the offerers who brought them. The one He accepts, the other He rejects. Cain is the rejected man, while Abel is the accepted man. Wherein lay the difference? They were both sons of the same parents. They were both the offspring of the same father and mother. They were both sinners. Their parents had sinned, and they too were sinners. God has declared in His Word that “all have sinned,” and we too have sinned. Cain and Abel felt they were at a distance from God, but they would draw near to God—in plain language, they would be worshippers.

Most probably you, too, have taken the ground of being a worshipper. Is it in Cain’s way or Abel’s? That is a serious, a most important question. I do not know any question more important. Observe that Cain draws near, but upon what ground? He brings to God the outcome of his own diligence—the fruit of the earth. And you may say, Was he not doing right? No. Was he wrong in giving to God

the fruit of the diligence of his life? Clearly. Do you know what Cain really did? If you understand that,—and I think we have all gone in the “way of Cain” to begin with,—you will see he entirely overlooked the fact of the fall. It is the fashion now-a-days to overlook the fall. He overlooked the fact that he was outside God’s presence, as a sinner, and because of sin. It pleased him to forget the fact that sin had come in between God and man, and that man was a sinner, away from God. It is sin that shuts man out from the presence of God, and Cain was outside God’s presence. How then is he to draw near to God? He must draw near in the way that suits God, and that is in keeping with the character of God.

Abel, knowing that he is guilty, and unable to draw near to God as he is, sets the death of another between himself and God. He recognises God’s judgment of sin, and has faith in a sacrifice by which expiation of sin is effected. Cain has not the conscience of sin, for he brings as his offering those fruits which are a witness of earth’s curse. His heart is blinded, and his conscience hardened. He takes for granted that all is well between him and God and that he will be received. Why should he not be? The just sense of sin and ruin is completely wanting, as also any knowledge of the right way to draw near to God.

You may turn to me and say, But how could Cain know the way that suited God? I reply, How did Abel learn it? That he learned it is certain. Two

men, sitting side by side, may read this paper. One has learned the way to God, and the other has not. Wherein lies the difference? Are not both sinners? Yes! Were not Cain and Abel equally sinners in the sight of God? They were. The Spirit of God reveals the secret of the difference in each case. The existence or absence of faith. "By *faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh" (Heb. xi. 4). I wonder if you ever heard a dead man speak? You say, A dead man speak? That would be the last man I would expect to listen to. A dead man speaks to you to-day, and he plainly says, You will never get to God if you don't go in the way I went. What does Abel say? He tells you the truth in the simplest language possible: I put between my sinful soul and God the dead body of a sinless victim offered in sacrifice, and He accepted me.

Abel teaches us the way to God most clearly, as he puts between his guilty soul and God the body of the victim offered in sacrifice. He had the knowledge that death was upon him, and that he was a sinner out of God's presence. Death was ahead of him, as well as judgment. You may say, But how did he learn it? I take it that he had heard how God had dealt in righteous judgment with his parents in the moment of the fall. His parents had doubtless told him the sad tale of sin, and its judgment, which Genesis iii. records. You too most

likely have learned the truth from your parents. Whether it has yet brought forth fruit in your life is another question. God knows that, and you know too. Clearly the parents of these two young men had told them of how they had been driven out of the garden of Eden, and of the way in which God had clothed them with the skins of beasts. Abel had believed and deeply profited by this lesson, while Cain ignored it.

Abel, so to speak, is heard saying—I am a sinner, I am under sentence of death, and I know the wages of sin is death; and the only way I can draw near to God is by putting between Him and me the dead body of a sinless victim; that sacrifice I will offer, and upon that ground I will draw near to Him. BY FAITH he offered unto God "a more excellent sacrifice." And he found he was accepted. You have the very kernel of Christianity foreshadowed in Abel's action. You have the truth of the cross, and of the death of the Lord Jesus for poor sinners like you and me. Abel's action most simply points to the cross, and to the death of the Saviour in the room and stead of the guilty sinner. That is the lesson I learn from his action.

Now Cain's road, on the other hand, only ends in rejection, death, and judgment. It never leads to God. Abel's path leads certainly to the knowledge of acceptance with God, "BY FAITH Abel offered unto God a MORE EXCELLENT sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was RIGHTEOUS, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he, being dead,

yet speaketh." He is one of the wonderful cloud of witnesses to the value of faith, found in Hebrews xi, and if I put him in the witness-box, and inquire, Abel, what have you to say? he replies, I am accepted. By whom? By God. How were you accepted—on the ground of your works? I have none; I bring forth nothing but sin. I am accepted on the ground, that by faith I put between my guilty soul and God the dead body of a spotless victim. I offered the firstling of the flock, and the fat,—the excellence thereof,—and God accounted me righteous. He accepted me in the value and excellence of my offering. That is a good testimony from a dead man.

Cain is dead also, but he does not speak. Ah! no, Cain has no helpful, cheery voice from the dead. God gives you His commentary about him. The Holy Ghost says "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain." And yet Cain's way is the popular way, mark that! It is the way ninety-nine men out of every hundred go to-day. Go down the street and ask the first man you meet if he is *sure* that he is on his road to heaven. With complacent self-satisfaction his answer will be: "Nobody can know that with certainty, but I am doing my best. I am religious, and take the sacrament, and give of my substance for God's work. What more can I do?" Take the second man, he will say: "I don't like that sort of question put to me. Of course I am not what I should be, but I am not so bad as many. God is merciful, and I am doing the best I can." A third man will reject you and your query with scorn, and

if you put the gospel before him, will put it aside. It is a solemn day we live in.

Cain's way has great attractions for multitudes, for, mark you, he was religious ! I don't think he was a sceptic—an infidel. I do not think he was a hypocrite. He was the man who inaugurated mere human religion, and became the leader of countless thousands of men, who start and continue their course in life by ignoring the fact of the gravity of sin, and of the reality of the breach that sin has brought in between God in His holiness, and man in his guilt. Cain ignored the truth of the fall. I can draw near to God—he practically said—on the ground of that which I can myself do, on the ground of that which I have produced,—and he digs and delves, labours and tills, toils and sweats ; he reaps his corn, and presses his wine, and with a well-dressed sheaf, and a flagon of well-pressed wine, he draws near to God. And then what is the result ? God neither accepts his sacrifice nor him. Why ? He was bringing the fruit of the ground, already cursed. The curse of God had fallen upon the earth previous to this, and that Cain quite ignored. The ground came in for the curse by Adam's sin. Creation has shared in the fall of Adam. He was creation's lord—but he fell, and as a result vanity has come into the scene, and now the earth shares in the fortunes of her fallen lord.

All this Cain forgot, as well as that he was a lost man, a ruined sinner, and at a distance from God. And, my friend, it is a very easy thing to forget that ; it is very easy for you and me to ignore it. Man

needs to wake up to the fact that he is a sinner. You say, Who do you mean? I mean you, myself, and every man. God has left no man out. Man as man has sinned, and between your soul and God there is at this moment—if you have not yet been born of God, and brought to Him through the blood of Jesus—a distance, a terrible distance, and it is a good thing when a man feels it. Cain ignored the distance. In calm indifference of soul he chose to draw near to God. And people to-day walk in “the way of Cain,” and think that by their own doings, their prayers, their religious exercises, and by a meritorious life, they may draw near to God.

Such cases abound. I once saw a lady, who said, “I wish I could die.” “I hope you will not,” I replied, “for I don’t think you are ready.” “But I think I am ready,” she rejoined, “for I say my prayers regularly. Will not my prayers avail?” “No, your prayers will not avail. Man does not get to God and receive forgiveness of sins by his prayers. Scripture says, that ‘without shedding of blood is no remission’ (Heb. ix. 22). And again it says, ‘To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness’” (Rom. iv. 5).

The man who verily thinks that by his prayers his sins can be washed away, is truly in “the way of Cain.” He thought that the activity of his life, and the fruits gathered from it, could fit him—a sinner—to stand before God! What folly! If you are in “the way of Cain,” may God arrest you. That road ends in eternal ruin, depend upon it. **“WOE UNTO THEM!**

for they have gone in the way of Cain,” cries the Holy Ghost. You had better get into the way of Abel. What did Abel do? He presented the firstling of his flock. He learned by faith that there must be between him and God the spotless victim, that tells of death undergone. That victim he offered, and God accepted him.

Now, how can you and I get salvation? Only by faith in God’s blessed Son. The lamb offered by Abel was a striking type of the Lamb of God. “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world,” said the Baptist (John i. 29). As I look back at the cross, I see the wonderful truth that between two malefactors there died the sinless, spotless Man—the Lamb of God—for hell-deserving sinners. What then shall I do? Shall I endeavour to put myself right with God by my own endeavours, or shall I put between my soul and the holiness of God the wonderful truth that Jesus died, and died for me? I will follow Abel. I was in “the way of Cain” for a good many years, until I found that the way of Abel was the better,—that it was the way of salvation,—for it is God’s way, being of faith.

What is faith? Faith is the principle that links the soul with God. Cain is the leader and first exponent of what I may term natural religion, which is nothing but flesh turned pious outwardly, and leaves the soul where it found it, afar off from God. Faith, on the other hand, brings the soul to God, for “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. x. 17).

"I AM PRAYING FOR FAITH."

SO said a poor sick woman to the one who was seeking to lead her to Christ. She was deeply in earnest, and very sensible of her sinfulness; but had not found peace with God. The fact was that she was not yet on the right way to obtain it. Her visitor was much concerned about her, so he very simply pointed out her mistake, and told her that instead of praying for faith, she ought without delay to obey the command of the gospel, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He told her that he feared she was trusting in her own prayers and efforts instead of coming straight to Jesus and accepting Him as her personal and all-sufficient Saviour.

At length, after many days of struggling with her unbelieving heart and stubborn will, she looked to that blessed Redeemer, who on the cross with dying breath cried, "It is finished," and she realised the truth that He had then offered Himself as the one completed sacrifice for the whole world and therefore for her. When she saw this to be indeed the truth, in her own simple way she kept repeating the chorus of the well-known hymn—

"I do believe, I will believe
That Jesus died for me,
That on the cross He shed His blood
From sin to set me free."

So she became ready with the devout Simeon to sing,

"Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Hers was just the mistake into which thousands of even well-educated persons fall—praying for salvation instead of simply taking it by faith. When we have believed, the Holy Spirit will seal our faith, teach us, and take of the things of Christ and show them unto us. But when at first the Holy Spirit in His Word points us to Christ as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, we should not hesitate for a moment to turn to Him in faith, as the Almighty and all-loving deliverer from the guilt and power of sin. With such direct looking to Jesus and hearty acceptance of mercy is linked true peace of mind and salvation. In the language of another hymn we would say to such persons—

"Come, thou weary, Jesus calls thee
To His wounded side,
Come to Me, saith He, and ever
Safe abide.

Dost thou feel thy life is weary?
Is thy soul distressed?
Take this offer, wait no longer,
Be at rest."

Very different from this poor woman's was the experience of a bricklayer who had fallen from a high scaffold, and had been taken up in a sadly injured and dying state, though quite conscious. A Christian minister went to him, and with deep sympathy and earnestness said, "My friend, I am

afraid that your end is near, so take my advice and make your peace with God at once." He had never seen him before and did not know how it was with his soul. He was therefore much surprised and pleased by his bright reply, "Oh, sir," the dying man faltered out, "thank God, I have no need to do that, for my peace was made nineteen centuries ago, when my Saviour died on the cross in my place, and was suffering for my justification, and in that peace I am not afraid to die." He had evidently looked and was looking unto Jesus, and had found life in a look at the crucified One.

Very clear are our Lord's words in John v. 34 (R.V.), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." Here we see that all that is required is that we should hear His word and believe the Father, who hath sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world, and that when we do so in truth with all our hearts, we have everlasting life. There is nothing said about our hoping, or seeking, or praying for life, but that whosoever complies with these conditions has life, and that life is everlasting. "Faith cometh by hearing," not by praying.

Our first concern, therefore, should be, not about the nature or degree of our faith, but about the object on which our faith is directed, the Lord Jesus Christ. If I wish to behold the sun in his mid-day splendour, I do not examine my eyes to find out

whether they are sound and clear, I direct my gaze to it and look on it so far as I can. So, if we feel our need of Christ, we are not to ask for grace to believe on Him, but to simply believe Him at once. An Irish boy being asked what was saving grace, made this true and admirable answer, "It is grasping Christ with the heart."

At the same time, we should not be backward to pray for a larger measure of faith, as well as of every other Christian grace. Faith is after all a gift of God (see Eph. ii. 8). The apostles therefore did well when they had been exhorted by their Divine Master to carry to the uttermost length the difficult duty of forgiving those that had offended them, to say, "Lord, increase our faith." "The increase of faith," wrote Matthew Henry, the great commentator, "we should earnestly desire, and we should offer up that desire to God in prayer." So when, with the father of the demoniac boy, we are conscious of the weakness of our confidence in God's promises, and are told of the wonderful power of faith, it is not only natural but right to urge the same petition as he did, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark ix. 24); that is a cry of the struggling heart, which is sure of a full and gracious answer. Still we are nowhere in the Bible told or commanded to pray for faith. We are everywhere by precepts, examples, promises, encouraged to exercise it. Like the man with the withered hand, we are to stretch out our souls in the attitude of believing trust and expectation of the blessings, spiritual or

temporal, that we need. Then according to our faith, so will it be to us.

“Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.”

W. B.

“THE TWO WAYS.”

“**U**NTO this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord ; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death” (Jer. xxi. 8).

These words were spoken to the Jews when the King of Babylon was drawing near to besiege Jerusalem. Those who fell to the Chaldeans should find the way of life, whilst those who remained in the city should be in the way of death.

These wonderfully expressive words may be addressed to all in every age, and are especially applicable to these gospel days. Our Lord said to His disciples in giving them their parting commission, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark xvi. 15, 16). The apostle John writes thus, “He that hath the Son hath life ; and he that hath not the Son hath not life” (1 John v.). And in the testimony of John the Baptist to the

divinity of Jesus as the Messiah, we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). Jesus also, in like manner, in His sermon on the mount, speaks of two ways—one leading to life the other leading to death. "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it" (Matt. vii. 13, 14). And Jesus again also declares in words which convey no uncertain meaning, that He is "the *way*, the truth, and the life."

Of one way the Lord says that "many go in thereat," and the reason of this is because it is "broad." There are no difficulties to overcome. It is carnal, sensual, well pleasing to the basest desires of our nature. It is an easy way, strewn with flowers, but soon it is bristling with thorns and nettles, and finally ends in the pit of everlasting destruction and death. Of the other way our Lord says that "few there be that find it." The reason of this is because it is "narrow," and full of difficulties. A way against which all our evil nature rebels. A way in which there is involved self-sacrifice, self-denial, and cross-bearing, but it ends with everlasting life, in the heaven of eternal bliss.

Reader, upon which of these ways are you? Which way are you travelling? The way to *life*, or the way to *death*? Oh, stop and think. Solomon tells us

that "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12, xvi. 25). These same words are twice recorded in the Book of Proverbs, as if God wished it to be made quite plain to us. Your way may seem to you to be the right way, but in the end it will lead you to eternal misery. Do you not yet know the way of life? It is only through Him who has Himself said, "*I am the way.*" It is only through the "new and living way" which God hath consecrated for us in His Son Jesus Christ. Simple faith in Jesus is the only gateway to life. "Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death." Reader, which wilt thou choose?

T. M.

FAITH is the same mighty principle, whether it act on the plains of Palestine, on the top of Carmel, by the rivers of Babylon, or amid the ruins of the professing Church. No fetters can bind it, no difficulties deter it, no pressure damp it, no changes affect it; it ever rises to its proper object, and that object is God Himself, and His eternal revelation. Dispensations may change, ages may run their course, the wheels of time may roll on, and crush beneath their ponderous weight the fondest hopes of the poor human heart; but there stands faith, that immortal, divine, eternal reality, drinking at the fountain of living water and finding all its springs in Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life."

C. H. M.

"MY NAME IN THE BIBLE."

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."—HEB. ix. 24-28.

IF I saw my name in the Bible I should be sure then." The speaker was a young woman, who was conversing with me at the close of a very interesting gospel meeting, many years ago, in a town a few miles north of Edinburgh. She lived at "the Manse" in this town, and there had heard so much about the Lord, that a great longing to be saved, and have the assurance of God's salvation possessed her mind. Receiving a notice of an address I was to give in the Town Hall, on "Christ's Three Appearings," she came, hoping to taste God's blessing.

1. HIS PAST APPEARING.

The scripture I had in hand that night is quoted at the head of this paper. There we read of the Lord that "now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The definite object of the Son of God in entering this scene, and becoming incarnate, was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That gives

the most comprehensive view of Christ's work. What the first man had brought in—sin—He came to put away by the sacrifice of Himself. His atoning death, in all its ineffable preciousness and unspeakable value to God, has taken place. By it, and it alone, can sin be removed from God's eye. Christ's work for that is finished. He has not yet cleared the world of sin, but the ground on which He will do it is laid. Having Himself sustained the judgment due to sin, He will sweep away the last vestige of it from the scene when, at the Great White Throne, He judges those who have not availed themselves of the atoning value of His death.

He not only meets God's just claims and the necessity of His nature, but He likewise meets man's need and the demands of his conscience, "for as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment (*i.e.*, the natural lot of man), so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." The question of sin in its totality He took up when "made sin" before God in His death, and thus God has been glorified about sin. But further, He has borne the sins of many. The two consequences of sin, *viz.*, death and judgment, He in voluntary grace and as a substitute sustained when offered to bear the sins of many. He bore the sins, and then sustained their necessary consequences—death and judgment. As a result those who believe in Him, who look to Him, who rest in Him, are cleared from their sins, and likewise from their inevitable consequences, and can await His final appearing with joy and gladness.

This then was the object and the effect of His first appearing.

2. HIS PRESENT APPEARING.

The "many" whose 'sins He bore are entitled to know that their sins are gone, and gone for ever. He bore those sins on the cross; He bears them no more, for we read in verse 24 that He has entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He represents believers in the presence of God. He once represented sinners vicariously on the cross; He now represents believers before God, in life, peace, and acceptance. He died to *make* us clean; He lives to *keep* us clean. He once appeared to clear away what we had done, and what we were. He now appears before God for us in all His own personal perfection, and what He is in life, beauty, and acceptance, He is representatively for those who are His, *i.e.*, all believers.

3. HIS FUTURE APPEARING.

The third appearing spoken of in the passage we find in verse 28, "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." That clearly refers to the second advent in its widest aspect. When He comes back the second time He will not touch the question of sin with those who believe in Him. He settled that question definitively for them when He came the first time. Now, Himself sinless, and without the sins of others which He bore on the cross, He lives before

God, and we are made "accepted in the Beloved." When He comes back next time He comes not to touch the question of sin, but to show what salvation is in its fullest and most blessed way.

All this came out very clearly that night, but my young friend was more miserable at the close of the meeting than she was at the beginning, because she failed to see that she herself had any personal interest in Christ. Her difficulty was this—was she among the "many" for whom Jesus died? If only she were sure of that, she would be happy. To be assured that she had a personal interest in Christ, and that He had a personal interest in her, was what her soul longed for. We looked at a good many scriptures, but all in vain. At length I said to her, "Now, what is your difficulty?"

"Oh, what I want to be certain of is that Jesus died for me."

"Well," I said, "if you saw your name in the Bible would that content you?"

"Yes indeed, if I saw my name in the Bible I should be sure then."

"And what is your name, my dear girl," said I.

"Janet Brown," she replied.

"Just so, and if you saw in your Bible these words, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of Janet Brown,' you would be content?"

Her eye brightened up as she said, "Oh yes, that would be all I would want."

"Well," I said, "if I saw my name in the Bible I should lose my peace immediately."

"Why?" she earnestly asked.

"Because there might be another man with my name, and I should not be sure whether it was I for whom Christ died, or the other man. Now, supposing your name, Janet Brown, was in the Bible, it could give you no assurance."

"Why not?" said she, almost excitedly.

"Because I know at least half a dozen girls called Janet Brown. If the Bible said, 'Jesus died for Janet Brown,' the question would be, Which of the seven did He die for? None of you could tell which."

"I see that now," she said, quite perturbed.

"No," I replied, "you cannot get peace that way. Do you know how it is that I am quite sure Jesus died for me?"

"How?" she eagerly asked.

"Not because I have seen my name in the Bible, but because I have seen my character. I read there that 'God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet *sinners*, Christ died for us' (Rom. v. 8). It does not say in the Scriptures that Jesus died for Janet Brown, but it does say that He died for sinners. Are you a sinner, Janet?"

"A sinner? Oh, a dreadful one," said she, now weeping profusely.

"Well, for whom did Jesus die?"

"It says He died for sinners," was her answer.

"True, then if He died for sinners, and you are a sinner, for whom did He die?"

"He died for me—oh, I see it now. Thank God,

I see it now ; He died for sinners ; I know I am a sinner ; I am sure Jesus died for me, and for my sins ;" and she entered into peace and rest.

That is more than thirty years ago, and I have watched her ever since, and she has been what every Christian should be—simple, earnest, and devoted, and trying to communicate to others in a quiet way what God taught her that night in the Town Hall.

Reader, cease all introspection, look to Jesus in simple faith, rest on Him alone and on what God's Word says as regards His work *for sinners*, and you too will have peace and rest. Will you not trust Him now ?

W. T. P. W.

"YOUR BOOKS MAKE ME THINK."

"Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end !"—DEUT. xxxii. 29.

"**T**HIS kind of literature is not exactly after my taste ; I like something funny or exciting."

"But you cannot live on excitement ; you must have serious thoughts sometimes."

"That is just it ; your books make me think, and I should be *miserable* if I thought. I enjoy life, and am happy ; that is all I want."

This conversation took place between a blind masseuse and one who offered her the loan of some books in Braille type. The books were, "No

Man Can Serve Two Masters," and "A Preacher of the Old School." She had readily received books of a like character on a previous occasion, but this time she quickly ran her fingers over the embossed title-pages, and returned them with the above remarks.

Could anything be much sadder—more deplorable—than a human being *afraid to think*? What an utter stranger such a one must be to true life and enjoyment, to peace and rest! When the day's work is over, artificial entertainment and a feverish whirl of excitement may amuse and keep life going for a while. When a pause comes, some means must be devised to "kill time"—to prevent the possibility of a quiet hour in which to think.

Of course you take thought for the things of this life. That is not strange; every one does, but, as Ruskin has said, "That we neither care to find out what life may lead to, nor to guard against its being for ever taken away from us—*here is a mystery indeed*. . . . You fancy that you care to know this; so little do you care that, probably, at this moment, you are displeased with me for talking of the matter! You came to hear about the art of this world, not about the life of the next."

Many there are who do not care to think, for ten consecutive minutes, of *the end of life*, and of the *unseen and eternal* things of the next world—to which all are travelling. "Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would *consider* their latter end!" You pride yourself,

perhaps, on your wisdom and understanding, but, says Scripture, "the fear of the Lord is the *beginning of wisdom* ; and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding" (Prov. ix. 10). "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish" (Ps. xlix. 20).

Your very desire not to think proves there is something lacking. The many pleasures there are in this world are uncertain, only transient at best. They never did, and never will, thoroughly and lastingly satisfy any human heart ; and, after all, there is no happiness on earth to be compared with the knowledge of Christ.

St Augustine well knew what he was speaking about, when he said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and the heart never resteth till it findeth rest in Thee." A thousand times happier would you be if you possessed this rest, and were able, without fear, to calmly consider the end of life.

"What life may lead to" depends upon whether you accept or reject the atonement work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dare to consider these matters. Do not say, "No one knows." There are many things we cannot know, some things we need not know, but "you that believe on the name of the Son of God . . . *may know* that ye have eternal life" (1 John v. 13).

"Accepted I am in the once-offered Lamb ;
It was God who Himself had devised the plan."

HEART-DELIGHT.

“**H**E feedeth on ashes” (and there are many kinds of ashes, but all of them are unsuitable for food); “a deceived heart hath turned him aside” (and there are many bypaths, both religious and irreligious, into which the feet may be turned by a deceived heart); “that he cannot deliver his soul” (Isa. xlv. 20). Ashes, a deceived heart, and an undelivered soul describe, in the graphic words of the prophet, the condition of the man who does not know the truth. Dissatisfaction, deception, and drudgery are his real estate before God, whether he may have apprehended it or not.

The world in any of its myriad forms of attraction never yet satisfied the heart of man, nor can it do so. It can but supply ashes. These may be religious ashes, or scientific, or political, or social ashes, but they are ashes still. Pleasurable they may be for the moment, even as Scripture wisely speaks of “the pleasures of sin,” adding, with equal wisdom, “for a season”—pleasures which, after all, leave but a scar, as I call upon every worldling to witness. They are veritable ashes.

The “woman of Samaria” (John iv.) had eaten to the full of such ashes. Her life had been one of pleasure, but not of satisfaction. Her conscience was ill at ease, and her heart as burdened as it was empty. She had come, as we all remember, to

draw water from the only well she knew, a well deep indeed, but one at which the cattle on the hills likewise quenched their thirst. She was but little removed from these—morally on a lower plane than they. Hither she came for water.

But, before her, sitting aweary on the well, was One whom she knew not, He who, in Psalm civ., is spoken of as “very great,” and who watereth the hills from His chambers, and who satisfieth the earth with the fruit of His works; but here in John iv. seen in humility, and solitude, and weariness, soliciting for His thirst a draught of the water which He had Himself created.

Why was this?

Ah! He cared but little for the slaking of His thirst, or for the satisfying of His hunger. He had indeed “meat to eat,” for He had come to do the work of Him who sent Him. This was His meat.

Sent of the Father, He had come in lowly grace to accomplish the work of redemption, and to give, as its wondrous result, that which can not only deliver but delight the heart of man.

Hence He told this woman of the living water, a thing of which she had never heard before, adding—“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life.”

“Never thirst”—satisfaction, and that for ever, by virtue of a well or fountain within that should spring up to life everlasting!

Marvellous boon for "whosoever drinketh"! Samaritan, Jew, or Gentile, wheresoever in the wide world of sin can be found a soul in spiritual need and wretchedness, that soul may come to Jesus and receive at His generous hand that which fills the heart with absolute satisfaction. This living water is the Spirit of God in life-giving and life-sustaining power, and, precious beyond description though it be, it is free to all as the gift of the Son of God. The enjoyment of it is more than deliverance, it is really heart-delight. And that is the reason why Christianity is essentially joyful. The heart is filled; it has found in the Lord Jesus Christ an object of perfect satisfaction, and it has, in the indwelling Spirit, a spring of unfailing power.

The Christian may, alas, fail in realisation and enjoyment, but the glorious object of his heart, and the blessed and holy spring within him, abide and last for ever. Look, for an example, at Stephen in Acts vii.; see how, as full of the Holy Ghost, his eye was directed to Jesus in the glory of God, and how he passed away in true martyr triumph and Spirit-given victory to the presence of his Lord on high. Or, again, look at Paul, a prisoner in Rome, anticipating martyrdom at any time, but sustained in perfect superiority to all fear, and writing to the saints at Philippi that they should "rejoice in the Lord alway." This delight is not confined to apostles and martyrs, it is ours! "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and these

are nine graces and beautitudes which declare, beyond question, the true moral value of Christianity. They indicate a condition of true heart-delight.

It is the exhibition of these graces that goes far to prove the truth of Christianity—of Christ being in glory, and the Spirit of God in operation on earth; and the Christian who really loves his Lord will certainly seek, with growing desire, to be in the power of all this. The life of Jesus seen in His people is by far the best witness to the truth. Without that life our service is poor; having it in power, the clever infidelity of the day, the love of the world, and the empty pleasures of sin are practically annulled. There is a life which satisfies, one in which the heart finds true and constant delight; and this necessarily beggars all beside it.

What a wonderful opportunity is thus granted the Christian to delight in the Lord, to serve, to worship, to adore Him; to declare by lip and life the infinite treasure he has found, to announce in every way its worthiness, its charm, its blessedness! Thus shall fellow-Christians be stimulated, sinners attracted to Jesus, and God greatly glorified; and the heart, once deceived, then by grace delivered, now becomes the delighted vessel of joy to God and blessing to man.

“ Our hearts are full of Christ, and long
Their glorious matter to declare !
Of Him we make our loftier song,—
We cannot from His praise forbear :
Our ready tongues make haste to sing
The glories of the heavenly King.”

J. W. S.

EXIST FOR EVER YOU MUST: BUT WHERE?

WHAT a very important and momentous question, my reader! Eternal issues hang upon it. Every other question sinks into utter insignificance in comparison to it. Have you ever sat quietly down for five minutes alone and given it your earnest consideration? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Mark, it is your soul the Lord speaks about. You may be far more interested in what ministers to the comfort of your body, and heedlessly overlooking your soul's eternal well-being.

How many there are in an avaricious age like the present who, forgetting their soul's interest, and in their eager pursuit to grasp the world, are like the stewardess on board the "Central America." It is said that when the gallant ship caught fire, and was sinking, she ran to the cabin passengers and collected all the gold she could. She then tied it to her apron round her waist. A boat was ready to start. In her eagerness to be saved she sprang from the deck, missed her aim, and shot head first into the briny sea. Like a cannon ball the weight of her ill-gotten gain dragged her down as effectually as a millstone would have done.

Little matter if your body were devoured by wild

beasts, eaten by sharks, or burned to ashes in the flames if you had not a deathless soul ! Your soul shall live for ever, and your existence shall run parallel with God's existence.

Did it ever strike you that the same word which is used to describe the eternal existence of God is used to describe the eternal duration of the punishment of the damned ?

In Revelation x. the Prophet of Patmos tells us of an angel he saw in vision, who "sware by him (God) which liveth for ever and ever" (ages of ages). In the same book, chapter xiv., the same writer tells us when speaking of the final doom of the wicked, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (ages of ages).

Think, oh ! think of the ages of ages. Think of your immortal existence. Think that your existence for ever must be either in bliss or anguish. No power in heaven, earth, or hell will stop the great wheels of eternity as they roll their courses throughout the ages. If you die impenitent and meet God in your sins, all the anguish of your tormented soul will not make judgment relax its awful grasp, or move God's heart to have mercy upon you, or put a stop to your wearied existence. Think of desiring to die and death fleeing from you. As sure as God's unimpeachable record is true, the truth of all I have brought before you you will surely prove if you do not in time "flee from the wrath to come."

Paul admittedly had one of the mightiest intellects that ever man possessed ; one of the biggest and

tenderest souls that ever throbbed within a human bosom; one of the strongest wills that ever governed a mortal man. He certainly was no fool, nor yet was he a knave.

The profundity of his wisdom in dealing with and unravelling the most difficult problems of human destiny is admitted even by his enemies.

To prove the truth of what he believed and taught he suffered all kinds of insults, contumely, scourges, and prison bonds, and even death itself. From his sudden and marvellous conversion until the moment he was led from Cæsar's judgment bar to the scaffold for the truth he preached, his life of self-sacrifice was all of a piece.

Nothing but the deepest earnestness and the greatest sincerity characterised him. Surely such a man is worthy to be listened to. He says, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Another has graphically and forcibly said: "I need not stand here to argue it. There is something within you that is ever telling you, 'I am immortal: stars shall die but I am immortal.' You feel your existence on earth is only a part of your being. The slab on the tomb is only the milestone on which we read of infinite distance yet to be travelled.

"The world itself will grow old and die. The stars will burn down in their sockets and expire. The sun, like a spark struck from an anvil, will flash and go out. The winds will utter their last whisper, and ocean heave its last groan, but you and I shall live for ever."

Reader, allow me to put the question lovingly yet solemnly to you, Where shall you exist for ever?

“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). P. W.

THE STORY OF MY CONVERSION.

THANK God for conviction and then salvation. When about thirteen years of age I felt one night in a prayer meeting that I ought to rise for prayers, but conviction did not rest very heavily upon me then. Some years afterward, again I felt I ought to rise for prayers, but felt as if chained to my seat. I did not want to acknowledge I was a sinner and needed salvation.

Although living what would be called a moral life, at times I deeply felt my lost condition, and that if the brittle thread of life should snap there was nothing before me but eternity with the devil and his angels, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark ix. 44). “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. xviii. 3).

Morality is not enough. I needed Christ and His atoning blood to blot my sins out, for “without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. ix. 22).

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). Sometimes I was almost afraid to sleep, fearing I might awake in that place whence hope is for ever shut out. Then I would think, "Am I not foolish to go on in this way, knowing I am not saved, and may die any time, when I might be saved and know it if I would?"

I would try hard, sometimes, to be good and fit myself for heaven by prayer, some Bible-reading, some church-going, and by trying to give up things I thought were wrong, but all the time I knew I was not saved. Then I would become discouraged and give up praying, Bible-reading, &c., and look at the inconsistencies in the lives of professing Christians. I was not ready to surrender fully to Christ, and I could not save myself: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 20). I had heard we must believe to be saved. I believed the Bible and that Jesus came to earth and died, but I believed it as I believe Columbus discovered America—as a matter of history. I wondered why I was not saved, and how I could get saved and know it.

One night I had a dream that I believe God gave to encourage me to come to Him. I thought I was walking in a broad path through a dense wood, and I had to pass through a gate by which lay a huge, ugly-looking monster, but he appeared to be sleeping, and seemed to notice me but little. I did not fear him much, but after I had passed on he got up and

very slowly followed me. After I had gone some distance I turned to retrace my steps, when the monster became furious and wanted to take my life. As I turned it became very dark—so dark I could not see anything, and I thought I was lost, but away in the distance in front of me I saw a light, and I knew it was Jesus holding the light that I might see my way to Him and escape from the devil, and I awoke crying, “Lord, save me.”

When I became willing to follow the light I had—give up sin and humble myself and surrender to Jesus—God gave me more light, for “if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John vii. 17).

One night, a short time before I was converted, I felt I was being prayed for, and I wanted salvation so much that I knelt and asked God to open the way for me to be saved and break the chains that bound me, and help me to come out on the Lord's side. He seemed very near to me then, and as if looking in compassion upon me.

A short time after that I attended a Grove meeting out of curiosity. I was asked if I was a Christian. I said, “No.” They said, “Do you not want religion?” Again I said, “No.” I was unwilling to humble myself. I had forgotten my prayer to God that night. Then the Holy Spirit said to me, “Did you not tell Me you wanted to be a Christian, and now you say you do not want religion? Didn't you ask Me to break the chains and give you a chance

to be saved? Now I am giving you a chance, and if you continue in this way you are as sure of going to hell as if you were already there." Conviction became so deep that I was willing to do anything if the Lord would only save me. I stood for prayer, and went to the altar resolved to give up sin and obey the Lord with His help. As it was such a cross to go to the altar I thought He would send me some great blessing and save me right away, but it did not come as I expected. After asking God to be merciful to me a sinner, the words, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37), were spoken in my ear by one of the workers, and I took God at His word, for I had come to Him, and it must be He received me, as He did not cast me out. When I realised that Jesus was wounded for *my* transgressions, and bruised for *my* iniquities, and by His stripes *I* was healed—that He died for *my* sins and rose again for *my* justification—that I was redeemed by His blood—oh the peace and joy and love and gratitude to God that came into my heart, I cannot tell you. My burden was gone, and I was happy. God had forgiven my sins for Jesus' sake. "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Then when I confessed Him publicly He whispered to me, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. x. 32), and it became a joy and precious privilege to confess Christ, whereas formerly I wished I could be a Christian and not say anything about it.

Will the readers, who are saved, please pray that God will always enable me to live a consistent Christian life, and win souls for Him, and that He will use this simple narrative to His own honour and glory and the salvation of precious souls?

I am glad God is no respecter of persons, and what He has done for me He is willing and able to do for you, dear unsaved one, if you repent and believe on Jesus Christ. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

You will not have an experience just like mine, but God will give you an experience which is best for you, and will save you, and give you joy and peace and rest in Him. Do not turn Him away this time, but surrender now, and let Him save you. You mean to be saved some time, why not now? Do you want to go on a little longer without Jesus? A little longer without joy and peace? A little longer risk your immortal soul? Are you sure you will live a little longer? Jesus longs to bless and save you, He wants to fill you with joy and peace in believing. See if you can think of anything that Jesus did not give up for you. Won't you thank Him and devote your life to His service? Take Him at His word as if you could see Him stand before you speaking to you alone. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if *any* man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

L. E. H.

"THE DEVIL HAS TIGHT HOLD OF ME."

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doeth good."—Ps. liii.

ALAS! in this day of undisguised infidelity and ever restless seeking for pleasures, how many there are who would shrink from being classed under the category of infidels who really are so, for they say in their heart, No God for me. Little as they are aware of it, they are under the thralldom of an unseen enemy who throws around them his siren spell, alluring them by the vanities and pleasures of this present age until they become his captives; yet deluding them with the thought that they are free agents, whereas they are blindly led by his subtle temptations, through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, to the very brink of the pit, into which one day, in the righteous judgment of God, they will be cast.

Let me bring before you, dear reader, the case of a poor young woman who came under the notice of a dear friend of mine, from whom I gleaned the following particulars:—

Her case was an exceedingly sad one, and what rendered it even more solemn was that her step-mother with whom she resided was an earnest Christian, under whose care and guardianship she

had many precious opportunities of hearing the gospel of the grace of God. On one occasion particularly when accompanying her mother she heard the gospel preached with great power: so blessed was the result that many that night were brought to the feet of Jesus, confessing their sins, and gladly received Him as their Saviour and Lord. But alas! it was not so with her, for she had allowed Satan to blind her mind, and by the sins and follies of this present world to steal away her heart, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto her. And so far did he succeed that he led her into infidel speculations till at last she said in her heart, "No God for me."

In course of time she became afflicted with a disease which to all appearance was incurable. Surely this was God's hand upon her, and should have led her to think seriously of her soul's salvation, seeing she might soon pass that bourne from which no traveller returns.

The example of her Christian step-mother and the words of admonition that oft-times fell from her lips, speaking to her of the reality of eternity and of the righteousness and love of God, had but little weight with this poor deluded soul.

Sorrowful to narrate, the enemy of souls, having got her tight in his grip, led her a step farther, and persuaded her that if she put an end to her life, all would be over with her for ever. Terrible delusion!

Is it possible that one who had heard the truth, listened to many a powerful gospel address, and had

been the subject of many an affectionate appeal, could be so deceived by Satan? How little are we aware of the deceitfulness of the human heart, upon which the watchful enemy exerts such influence. God has declared that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately (incurably) wicked (Jer. xvii. 9).

Fain would I draw a veil over the closing scene of this poor young woman's life were it not that a hope is cherished in my breast that God may use this little narrative as a warning to some who have trifled with God's message, and are still treading their self-willed way.

How the steps of the wicked in their downward trend become quicker and quicker as the dread gradients of their sinful course grow steeper and steeper, till the last fatal stage is reached and the last irretrievable step is taken.

Entering the room where her step-mother was sitting, she exclaimed with an agonising look of despair, "Mother, I am a bad, wicked girl. I have poisoned myself."

Amazed and incredulous the poor mother, gazing at her with alarm, said, "Oh, surely you have not!"

Hastening into the next room, with a fearful scream, the poor young woman flung herself in agony on the bed. Her mother tried to raise her up, whispering affectionately into her ear, "If you have really poisoned yourself, it is not too late to come to Jesus and trust in Him, He will save you even *now*. His precious blood is enough to wash away *all* your sins."

With a fearful expression of despair depicted on

her countenance, she again exclaimed, "I am a bad, wicked girl. I *have* poisoned myself, and the devil has tight hold of me, and is dragging me straight down to hell." And with one loud scream she passed away.

Dear reader, ponder this solemn closing scene of the life of one who allowed herself to be led astray by the temptations of Satan. Remember she had great privileges. Many a time had she heard the gospel faithfully preached. She had also the testimony both from the lips and life of an earnest Christian step-mother, but alas! all proved to be of no avail. God gave her space to repent, but she repented not.

How solemn are those words of Jesus in John v. 40, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life."

Let us now turn to another scene. A loving but sorrowful mother bent over her dying boy. He was but eight years of age, so young and yet his little pilgrimage was drawing to a close. In her solicitude she asked him if he felt better, to which he replied, "I shall not be better till I get to Jesus." "What do you mean?" said the heart-broken mother. "Why, mother dear," he said, "I have taken one step out of self, one step into Christ, and the next will be into glory."

Fearing that his dear mother was a stranger to Christ, and knew not the forgiveness of her sins, he prayed earnestly to God to save her precious soul. Shortly after this prayer he fell asleep—absent from the body, present with the Lord.

Perhaps you will ask me, Was this prayer answered? Most assuredly it was, though not until some twenty years had passed away.

Dear reader, have *you* sought Jesus in your deep, deep need, and have you not found Him, or rather have you not been found of Him, like some poor straying sheep on the mountains of despair, wandering farther and farther away? And has He not brought you home on His shoulders rejoicing, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." Happy indeed, if such is your case; but if not, let me beseech you to delay no longer, but come to Him. Think not that He will refuse you. Listen to His words, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

E. M.

"WE SHALL SEE HIM TOGETHER."

M— C— was dying. The sands of her hour-glass had nearly run out. Death had no terrors for her. For many a long year she had known and trusted her Saviour. If ever a Christian adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour, she did. She thoroughly believed in that verse, "As we have therefore opportunity *let us do good unto all men.*" The needy and sorrowful found in her a helper and comforter. The orphans and

fatherless claimed her special sympathy. China and India's perishing millions drew out her fervent prayers. It was ever her joy to point the labouring and heavy-laden to Jesus.

“Joy to confess His blessed name,
The virtues of His blood,
And to the wearied heart proclaim,
Behold the Lamb of God.”

She was not rich in worldly goods, but her house, and all that she had, was held at her Lord's disposal. Many of His servants have experienced her practical love, for she was given to hospitality, and delighted to entertain them.

Eighty-three years were the days of her pilgrimage. Very early in life she was enregistered among the redeemed. Her name was written in heaven, in this she could rejoice. The finished work of Christ was her resting-place.

Perhaps you say, I can quite understand any one who has lived a holy, consistent, Christian life like that not being afraid to die. Let me tell you this was not the ground of her confidence, she would have repudiated with her whole soul the very thought of good works as the ground of her salvation. Christ and His atoning work was the rock on which she rested. The one and only name she looked to for salvation was *Jesus*. Several days before she passed away she lay in a semi-conscious state. As I bent over her for the last time I repeated some lines of which she was very fond:—

"The Saviour's precious blood
Has made my title sure ;
He passed through death's dark raging flood
To make my rest secure."

I also quoted that verse, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end."

The very mention of the eternal Lover of her soul seemed to infuse new vigour ; she warmly pressed my hands with both hers, and said,

"WE SHALL SEE HIM TOGETHER."

These were the last words I heard fall from her lips. Over and over again I have repeated them, "We shall see Him together." My soul has anticipated that blessed moment when the whole company of the redeemed shall be caught up "together." Dead and living saints united shall *see Him together*. We shall *see Him* as He is, *be like Him*, and *with Him for ever*. Our enraptured gaze will be an everlasting one. "Our Lord Jesus Christ died for us that whether we wake or sleep we should *live together with him*." "*Together*" with the Redeemer, and "*together*" with the redeemed. Surely the sum and substance of blessedness is to live with Him and them in life's eternal home.

I wonder if you, my reader, were dying, whether you also could say, "*We shall see Him together*." See Him *you will*, see Him *you must*. John said, "*Every eye shall see him*." Job could say, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, whom I shall see for my-*

self." Isaiah said, "Mine eyes shall see the King in his beauty." Balaam said, "I shall see him, but *not nigh*." Your godly parents are perhaps with Christ. Your converted sister is also with the Lord. Shall you see Him together? If Christ were to come whilst you are reading this paper (and I should not be surprised if He did), every redeemed and ransomed soul, from Abel downwards, would see Him together, and live together for ever. Would you? Are you among the redeemed? or are you making Balaam's mistake? He said, "*Not now*." His heart was filled with the present love of money; he bartered eternal blessing for the present wages of unrighteousness, hence will see Him, but "*not nigh*." If you say, "*Not now*," the time will come when God will say, "*Not nigh*." The rich man took his fill of enjoyment in this world; he opened his eyes too late; he saw a happiness he was debarred from sharing for ever.

This has always struck me as the bitterest drop in the cup of sorrow the impenitent will be called upon to drink. They will see the redeemed in the enjoyment of all that is meant by "Abraham's bosom," but see afar off, for an impassable gulf lies between. Balaam said, "*Not now*." God said, "*Not nigh*." What are you saying?

"Many are choosing Christ to-day,
Turning from all their sins away;
Heaven shall their blessed portion be—
Where will you spend eternity?
Eternity, eternity,
Where will you spend eternity?"

DIED AT HIS POST.

VERY solemn and still are the streets of the great city in the dead of the night. Theatres, public-houses, and night coffee-shops, all closed; the long line of lamps in the wet streets shining only upon a passing wayfarer at intervals—some one hurrying for a doctor for the sick or the dying; some outcast woman who is a sinner; some drunkard who has fallen asleep in a byway, where the cold has partially sobered him, and who now hastens home. So solemn and still are the streets that the measured tread of the policeman echoes on the way as he goes in a fashion never heard during the day. Overhead is a black, moonless abyss, wherein light clouds flit hurryingly in constant change, dropping rain as they pass away.

Quiet and still upon the streets, but in the crowded houses women and children innumerable, sleeping away the labour or play of the bygone day. Fast locked in the slumber that is so like, and yet so unlike, death, they are utterly self-defenceless should danger come, but carefully guarded by the wakeful policeman without.

As he passes upon his way, through one of the narrower streets of his beat, he sees a thin curl of smoke within one of the houses, and a small dull-red light in the basement, that he well knows should not be there. To draw his rattle and spring

it loudly, to hammer upon the door and shutters of the house with all his might, are things of course; and then through the silent street, up into the wild night sky, goes the fearful cry of "Fire! fire!"

A shambling, ragged scarecrow, whom drink has left homeless, comes up first; then a woman; then another; and while the scarecrow hurries off for the engines and the fire-escape, the women help to awaken the heavy sleepers by their shrill screams of "Fire! fire!"

They are hard to awaken, sleeping in a crowded house and a heavy atmosphere after a day of hard labour; but they must not be left to die in their sleep, or be burned in their beds; and hammering, and shouting, and screaming continue and increase, as more people gather in front of the high, narrow building.

Sleeping in the midst of a horrible danger, and liable every moment to an awful death—just like untold thousands of others in this great city, who have sinned long and deeply against a loving, merciful Father in heaven; who are cold and indifferent concerning their own eternal condition, sleeping carelessly with danger and death all around them, rapidly enclosing them in, and ushering them into an unknown and unprepared-for condition and judgment beyond!

Hark! there is some glass broken by the heat within, and from the opening thus made the smoke pours forth: at first in a light, thin curl, speedily thicker and thicker; while the dull-red light

brightens, and the crackle and roar of the fire are distinctly heard between the shouts of men and women's screams.

"Keep the door fast closed, or they will all be dead before help can come!" Minutes seem hours, and though only a very few have really elapsed since the discovery, murmurs are heard as to the delay of the engines and the tardiness of the fire-escape.

"Look! look! there is a woman at one of the upper windows! you can see her white night-dress and her face! There is a child come to her also! Look at the young face with an agony of fear upon it, clinging to the mother's side! God help them! for no one else can do so if the fire-escape does not come speedily; for the stairs are on fire, and the passage is a mass of smouldering flame through which nothing human can pass and live."

"Here comes the fire-escape at last! Make way! make way!" And dragged heavily over the uneven stones, carefully steered along the centre of the narrow streets, many willing hands lightening by sharing the labour of the fireman in charge, the huge machine is brought to the front of the house and placed against the upper wall.

Helmet adjusted, belt tightened, axe in its place, the fireman mounts the ladder, until he arrives at the window where the woman and the child are waiting in mortal fear.

"Stand from below!" he calls in steady accents, while his strong axe flies back and forth upon the

glass and the woodwork of the windows and the wreck comes crashing to the ground, where all is now dead silence and attention, the crowd watching the gleaming helmet and the flying arm of the fireman upon the escape.

“Here comes an engine! clear the way! clear the way!” And tearing and thundering upon its way, on which no shouting is needed to make a path through the silent streets, the first engine arrives. There is a sense of the fire being now in charge curiously apparent through all the assembled crowd. Speedily engine after engine arrives; a body of police come up and make a clear space in which the engines may work, and the firemen attend to their duty.

Falling back, quietly but unwillingly, the crowd form as much of a circle as possible round the burning building, whereof the basement and the ground-floor are now clearly in flames.

Meanwhile the fireman has planted himself firmly upon the window-space, taken the child upon his back, and gently assisting and encouraging the woman, he descends the escape step by step. At every step the crowd cheer, and encourage, and applaud with cries of “Hurrah!” “Well done!” “Brave fellow!” “Two saved at any rate!” until the fireman reaches the ground, and the woman and child are rescued from the fiercely threatening flames.

Saved! from danger and a dreadful death when their need was greatest, their danger nearest, them-

selves utterly unable to do anything for their own rescue or safety. Saved! by the courage and self-devotion of another. A striking illustration of God's way of salvation. Convinced of danger and liability to eternal death, the sinner, unable to save or help himself, looks around for succour; almost despairing, all but bereft of heart and hope, and weak and helpless. Then the Son of God comes to the rescue, and by self-devotion He seeks and saves those who else were eternally lost.

Again the fireman mounts quickly, for the fire is fiercer, and there is no time to lose. It is known that several more are in the burning house, of whom some are seen at the windows screaming for aid. There is an almost dead stillness below; limbs are quivering with anxious sympathy, faces upturned which are pale with suspense, for the fierce red glow can be plainly seen through the chinks of the shutters, and it is clear that the interior of the shop is a mass of fire that must soon make its way into the street, and up all the storeys of the high, narrow old house. The rescuer mounts the escape to a window where a man is sitting, partly inside, partly outside, the building. He is evidently measuring the distance to the ground, with so plain an intention to leap forth that the crowd can see it, and implore him to wait until the fireman can reach and save him. Speedily the fireman is by his side, and looking into the room he sees there a woman sunk down in fainting fear upon the heating floor, who is in even greater danger than the man seated upon the window. Tenderly

and gently she is brought down the escape, while the ringing plaudits of the ever-increasing crowd testify their sense of the fireman's courage, and inspire him to renewed efforts in his gallant fight for lives with the fierce fire.

For the third time, still more quickly, he ascends upon his dangerous work, and again descends with the life rescued from the very jaws of the destroyer.

"There are more in the building!" says the last man brought down, and again the steps are mounted, and cautiously passing the window the fireman is entirely lost to view. Now is heard the fierce hiss of the water falling upon the escape to keep it cool, and upon the houses on either side, though none is yet directed upon the flaming house; the steam would instantly slay any yet within its awful walls. It is life for life at the call of duty; how long the rafters will bear his weight, how long before the fierce, hot, blinding smoke will choke him, or the blazing fire consume him, the fireman knows not. There are lives to be saved, and though he has a wife dearly loved, and little children who are very precious to him, he is down upon his knees groping carefully for those who are unable to save or help themselves, rendered unconscious by the fear of death and the suffocating vapour all around.

"One more yet! that makes five!" comes hoarsely through the blinding, choking smoke, as the almost exhausted fireman makes his way to the window. With eyes all but sightless, teeth firmly clenched, he makes his way out of the heated air within to the

precious coolness and free breathing without. There, amid crying and sobbing, but no cheering, he now slowly but safely makes his way to the ground.

As they come, the man who is with him recovers more and more from the exhaustion and unconsciousness that must soon have been unbroken until the judgment. He tries to speak, but his hot lips and dry tongue forbid for a short space; renewing his efforts again and again, he is at last able to gasp out—"There is another on the floor in my room!"

Black with smoke and dust, almost exhausted with the strain and the heat, the brave fireman once more mounts the steps of the escape, and makes his way into the midst of the burning—plainly seen now, for the fierce flames are rushing out from basement and ground-floor. As they mount into the air they lick the escape as it stands, and, in spite of the drenching showers, strive hard to burn it and the man upon it. Not a sound, not a sigh, from the wordless multitude intently gazing on the brave, devoted man, who coolly disappears once more into the burning building.

Moments seem like hours in the feverish hearts of the gazing multitudes ere he once more comes forth from the fearful conflict. He is giddy and unsteady with the heat, but he clings as with a death-grip to the precious prize—the sixth and last whom he has rescued from that awful death!

Weeping and sobbing their gratitude, the friends of the rescued man receive him from the very border

of the grave, and they turn to give their thanks to his true-hearted deliverer.

But he is not there ; he is high up on the escape that is fiercely burning, himself choking in the flames, hopelessly entangled in the escape, while smoke and flame lick his brave life away. Held fast by his axe, and unable to rescue himself, the fierce fire all around him, he is struggling with his last strength in plain view of the multitude below, who shriek, and scream, and clasp their hands as the red flames leap and glow upon the writhing form, moving more and more feebly as the power of life dies away. His strong weapon has caught him in a deadly snare, and he is fast held by it to the blazing machine.

One last fierce, convulsive, despairing struggle, and he is free !—but free to fall from the fearful height ; and in an instant the brave heart is still, the devoted life gone, his wife widowed, and his children fatherless, as he lies at the foot of the escape, broken, dead at his post !

So, at his post, doing his duty nobly, died one of England's best and bravest, six rescued lives testifying to his daring bravery in his work ; his own life freely given for the salvation of others.

It was but natural that the hearts of his countrymen and women should respond with prideful sorrow as the sad, stirring account flew over the world. It was but natural that they should gladly help and provide for the loved wife and children of their fellow-countryman who died so nobly at his post. It was but natural that thousands upon thousands should

line the way of the unconscious body to the house appointed for all living, and bedew with tears of unaffected sorrow the path on which he was taken for the last time.

Dead and gone! Dying in the act of duty, as noble a death as ever man died under the sun; passing away in a successful endeavour to seek and save those who, without his aid, must have perished in the fierce fire. No wonder that his country is proud of him; that his comrades speak of him with pride that even yet melts into tears as they remember how suddenly, how grandly, he was called into scenes beyond the grave!

Very natural and right this love and pride in one so truly devoted to duty; but not easily to be reconciled with the utter indifference shown to One who also died, in greater agony and for infinitely nobler purposes than the fireman of whom I have spoken. The Son of God came down from the glory of heaven, from the bosom of the Father, to His chosen, freely chosen, post and place on this sinful earth of God's and ours. He who had created all things, "by whose pleasure they are and were created," came to be a weak, helpless babe at an earthly mother's bosom, that so from the very beginning of life He might experience *all* the trials and sorrows of the race He had created, and whom He loved with an everlasting love. When yet but a child He stood in the Temple that was His own—the Jehovah of Hosts in the lovely form of an intelligent child—learning by slow, sad experience, the trials and sorrows of a

human childhood, gaining by the same painful process the increase of earthly wisdom that is always the outcome of subjection. So He grew to manhood, doubtless labouring hard for daily bread, the Son of God and the Son of Mary; the Lord of Heaven and the Carpenter's reputed Son; the Architect of the universe and yet a Carpenter Himself (see Mark vi. 3). Remaining year after year unknown and unnoticed, living a poor workman's life of labour and care, honourably working for the bread His human nature needed, every day of this unknown and unnoticed life of eighteen years contains within itself a revelation of matchless, self-devoting love!

But who thinks upon it? who thanks and praises His holy and blessed name for thus *living* at His voluntary post? A few who love Him, one here and there who walk with Him; but the great mass—even of those who know the touching history well—pass unheedingly by, taking no note of His lovely ways.

And when He came forth from labour and retirement to be the greatest Teacher, Physician, and Friend earth ever beheld, how was it then? Having to depend on the charity of women for His clothing; not having where to lay His head; so poor as to have to work a miracle to pay the tax for the Temple that had been erected to Him and was all His own!

Going about doing good; taking little children in His arms, laying His hand on them and blessing them. Healing the sick; as when the poor,

loathed leper crept to His feet and looked up into the loving, pitying face with the low-breathed entreaty, "Lord! if thou wilt thou canst make me clean!" and was answered, ere yet the sound of his words had died on the air, "I will! be thou clean!" When for the first and last time He entered and passed through Jericho, where the blind son of Timæus sat by the highway-side begging, and hearing the footstep of the promised Messiah near unto him, met Him with the entreating cry, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" with what kindness he was attended to! how readily the whole gathering was stayed in its progress to pity and heal the blind beggar by the way!

Just as pityingly went the Son of God into the chamber of death, and awoke to fresh life the dead girl lying there, with the endearing words she had probably often heard from her loving mother's lips as the call to another day's love and care, "*Talitha cumi*!—Maiden, arise!"

But who thinks of Jesus? whose eyes follow lovingly His path of undeviating self-devotion? Who praises Him to-day for all His loving ministry to the blind, the lame, the hungry, the dying, and the dead?

Not to those only, but to that woman stained with sin, who was dragged to His feet in the Temple, and there used as an unconscious snare for His life. See Him standing there, with the captive in the death-net at His feet, and His enemies maliciously triumphant all around! See Him stoop

—write—look up—look down and write again. Look now at the malicious faces, dark with conscience-smiting; see them depart one by one till Jesus is left alone, with the woman standing by Him; the death-net rent to tatters, and the captive freed!

Stand with Him at the grave of "our friend" Lazarus; see the heavy tears of sorrow for sin and its dread companion—death, roll down the cheek of the friend of Lazarus and the Son of God! Hear His low, measured tones of command, "Lazarus, come forth!" and see His servants, Death and the Grave, instantly obey their Master, and loose their hold!

Yet who thinks of Jesus? Who gives thanks to the Master of Death that thus He opened the way of resurrection, and afterward threw it wide by His own rising from the dead lighting our way, and the way of our loved ones, through the valley of shadow and darkness into the regions of reality and light beyond?

Striving triumphantly with the worst that sin and hell could do, "he set his face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem," to die! See Him, sold for the price of the meanest slave, and condemned to a disgraced slave's death, on His way to the awful agony of such suffering for sin! See that holy face—never convulsed by passion or blushing for sin—insulted, spitefully used, spit upon, and smitten with the palms of sinful hands! Staggering, scourged, wounded, bleeding from cruel blows, so He came to die! Mocked by the soldier escort, deserted by His followers and friends, fainting from exhaustion at last,

prone on the earth He had made, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Of all that He had helped and benefited; of all men that had blessed Him and hailed Him king, there was no eye to pity, no hand to save; not one to whisper a word of comfort wherewith to help Him on toward the still greater agony on the hill of Calvary.

Spurned, with mocking and reviling, from the earth He came to save; over Him the darkening heaven, and the wrath of God whose utmost vengeance against sin He was bearing in that dread hour; look upon Jesus! Hear His words to His broken-hearted mother; to the disciple whom He loved, who had regained courage to come near and see Him die; to the dying, *converted* thief; to His Father in heaven, and to all the wondering universe. Hear His "It is finished!" when He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

Yet who thinks of Jesus, the Friend of man—sinful, dying, yet immortal man—and the Son of God, who for us men and for our salvation came down from the glory of the Father, and "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"?

Let *us* think, now, of His holy, loving life, of His wise and gracious teaching, of the example He has left us, of His death for our sins, and His present place in heaven for us, until we much better know Him "whom to know is life eternal," and are able truthfully to say, "We love him because he first loved us," and proved it fully, by dying at His post.

HOW AN ARMINIAN WAS SAVED.

IT is long since I heard the story of a dying Methodist preacher who, when asked if he were saved, made reply that he was; and, when further asked how his salvation came about, said that God did His part and that he did his. "How much did God do, and how much did you?" was then pertinently demanded. To this the dear old veteran in the wars of the Lord replied, "God saved me while I did all I could to hinder Him."

He attributed his salvation altogether to God, and frankly admitted that, on his own side, there was only that which hindered His Spirit. Now this may not be correct Arminian doctrine, a school to which our friend belonged, but his spiritual intelligence traversed the dogma of creed, and placed him on the solid ground of sovereign grace.

And, dear reader, it is grace, pure and precious grace, which alone can save the lost and guilty soul of man. We must start on this divine premiss; for unless and until the ruin of the soul, as lost and dead in sins, as well as guilty of sins innumerable, is fully owned before God in true repentance, so that grace may meet it, and save it as fully, there can be no settled peace, and no deep or abiding comfort. The more your lost condition is owned, in like proportion will be your sense of peace with God.

Certain I am that very much of the superficiality and worldliness of the day, amongst even true believers, is due to the lack of this acknowledgment.

There is not a single redeeming quality ; not a spark of love or of life toward God in the heart of man ; nothing therein which the Spirit of God can develop and make fit for heaven. Man is utterly depraved in mind and will.

Ah ! then he has a will ? Certainly ! and is therefore a free agent. Nay, though responsible as no other creature is, his agency can only be that of sin and Satan. He sold his freedom in the Garden of Eden, and has been accordingly the slave of Satan ever since. His will is perverted—his heart desperately wicked.

Conscience he has, no doubt, and its activity may render him miserable ; but conscience cannot show him the way of salvation, nor can it even justify his actions, though it may possibly excuse them. There is but one word which adequately describes his condition—a terrible word even though monosyllabic ; it is the word “lost !”

Ah ! you refer of course to the lapsed masses ? Exactly ! but let me assure you that the masses are all lapsed. Masses of all kinds, moral and immoral, high and low, rich and poor—all are lapsed and lost ! The whole world teems with lapsed masses, for “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Solemn fact !

Too sweeping ? No ! let me sweep on. Let the besom sweep all, without discrimination, on to this

common platform of guilt and ruin. Half measures are false. The bed-rock of total moral and spiritual ruin must be reached; the soul must touch the awful bottom; must learn that sin means more than an accident.

An accident! Ah! look at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Son of man, and never call sin an accident. Nought but His blood could cleanse it away or meet the claims of the eternal throne against us. You can never rightly appraise sin in its exceeding sinfulness, in its diabolical malignity, in its essential enmity against God, until you learn the deep meaning of Calvary.

The blood of the cross is the divine answer to guilt, and the blessed fact that Christ was "made sin for us" announces, first, the depth of the lost condition into which we had fallen, and then the completeness of deliverance from it through faith in Him.

Thank God, dear reader, you are not yet damned, not yet in hell. God grant you may never, never be; but if out of Christ, you are lost.

Lost in time, to be what for eternity? What for eternity? Shall it be damned for eternity, or shall it be saved for eternity? Which? You may, even you, may be saved for eternity; "for," notice, "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10).

There is salvation for the lost, but for none other; and for this simple reason that, in fact, there are none other to save.

Take the ground then, I beg of you, dear friend, of being lost—utterly, hopelessly, and absolutely—so that you may prove God’s saving grace as did the dying Methodist preacher, and then ascribe all the glory of your salvation to God and the Lamb.

J. W. S.

“FIVE HUNDRED SUCH MEN.”

IMPLICIT obedience is a jewel of great value.

We read of a general in the ninth century who with a force of 500 men opposed a king having 20,000. The king sent word that for so small an army to resist his legions was the height of folly.

The general listened to the messenger, and then, summoning one of his men, said, “Take this sword and drive it to your heart.” The man did so and fell dead. To another he said, “Leap into yon chasm,” and instantly the man obeyed.

Turning to the astonished messenger, the general said, “Go, tell your king *we have five hundred such men*. We will die, but never surrender.”

The messenger departed, and his report filled the whole army of the king with terror.

Now God requires implicit obedience to His commands, but every command is a gracious one. He “*NOW commandeth all men everywhere to repent*: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he

will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained" (Acts xvii. 30, 31). Reader, hast thou obeyed this great universal command?

In His goodness God has made it the *duty* of every man to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Hence men perish through disobedience, and are without excuse.

God will give "eternal salvation unto all them that *obey* him," but will inflict "vengeance on them . . . that *obey not* the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Reader, art thou obedient or disobedient? Art thou sheltered by the blood of Christ, or exposed to the wrath of God?

We would plead with the rebellious, as Jeremiah did of old, saying, "Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live" (Jer. xxxv. 20).

M. L. B.

FRAGMENT.

It is utterly impossible to drink into the spirit of Jesus, to breathe the atmosphere of His presence, and be occupied with self in any shape or form. The two things are in direct opposition. In proportion as Christ fills the heart, self and its belongings must be excluded; and if Christ occupies the heart we shall rejoice to see His name magnified, His cause prospering, His people blessed, His gospel spread abroad, no matter who may be used as His instrument.

C. H. M.

NAAMAN'S THREE VISITS TO JORDAN.

(Read 2 Kings v.)

THE lessons we may learn from this chapter are endless, but one point I draw your attention to is this—the way in which God regards the actions of men. Here you have, in contrast, a faithful, disinterested little maid-servant, and a selfish, lying man-servant. The little maid-servant was used of God in blessing to her master; but the lying, grasping Gehazi—that dared, in God's name, to traffic in money, and play with the things of God, for his own advantage—goes out under the curse of God.

The action of the little servant maid is very beautiful, and ought to encourage any young converted servant. I hear such a one perhaps say, "I live with an unconverted master." Win him for God. You have the opportunity. She got her master blessed, and his case was very bad. Her interest in him eventually led to the king's command which resulted in

NAAMAN'S FIRST VISIT TO JORDAN.

He was a splendid man, Naaman, and was, as men would say, commander-in-chief of the armies of Syria. We read, "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his

master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour; *but* he was a leper" (ver. 1). He was a grand, all-round man of the world, had got to the top of the tree, and doubtless scores of people envied him the place he had with his master, but there was something that spoilt it all. That little "*but*"—how much it contained. "*But* he was a leper."

Now, my reader, whatever you have, whatever you may be in this world, if you are still in the condition which, all through Scripture, is most strikingly typified by leprosy, your case is very similar. You may have been fortune's favourite, but that is only for time, is all transient and passing, and does not satisfy. The only satisfied heart is the one that has Christ. He does satisfy to the very full the heart that knows Him. But you will never get satisfied with Christ till you learn who He is, and what He has done. He came here to make God known, and to bring the love of God into men's hearts. He could not do that, however, save through the cross—*i.e.*, His death—of which Jordan is the figure, in one aspect.

Leprosy is an awful and a very repulsive disease; it eats up its victim bit by bit. It is a canker that spoils everything. There is only one disease worse on God's earth, and that is SIN. Forget not that you are a sinner; sin has cut you off from God; sin has put you at a distance from Him; and sin will yet put you into the lake of fire, if it be not cleansed

away. No matter what your outward life may have been, if the question of your sin is not settled, according to the claims of God's righteous and holy nature, yours is a sad case. I implore you to get it settled without delay." If you are serious you will.

God be thanked if you have begun to think seriously of your condition as a sinner. If you have not, the day is coming, and coming quickly, when you will think, but alas, too late, because if you do not now, in the day of God's grace and salvation, face the truth of your lost estate, you will find it out when too late to get your condition met and amended. You possibly think that you have a long life before you. Are you ready if God snapped the thread of your life this night? Where would you spend eternity?

First of all, face the fact that you are a sinner, that sentence of death is upon you, and after death comes judgment. That means the lake of fire for any one who dies in his sins, for he can by no possibility get rid of them then. Nothing will meet your case but the blood of Christ. You must know Him, therefore face the fact that you are spiritually a leper before God.

Sin is the creature doing his own will, and there is no one but must confess, I have done my own will; hence I have sinned, and "the wages of sin is death." God always pays sin's wages to the last farthing. "Then there is no hope for me," you say. Indeed there is, thank God. You can get blessing in the same way I got it. The wages due to me have been paid to another, and I am free, and

what I have I want to share with you. There is nothing like the knowledge of Christ. Oh, that you might know Him now! If you have been burdened with your sin all the better.

You very likely will say, "People cannot get saved in a hurry; I do not believe in sudden conversion." No, because you are not converted. If you are anxious you will get saved. Naaman wanted to be cured, but he did not know how. He tried all sorts of doctors, I have no doubt, and spent a lot of money trying to get himself healed. That he was in downright earnest to get cured of his malady there is no doubt, for he took a very long journey under a burning sun, and carried, as a fee for his cure, thousands of gold, besides silver and raiment. He was in downright, red-hot earnest to get cured. Would to God *you* were. If you had only half the earnestness Naaman had, you would get cured also.

There was another earnest person in Naaman's house—the little captive maid. God records of her: "And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy" (ver. 3). She was a captive, not one who could give up her place at will. She belonged to Naaman and his wife, and manifestly she took a deep interest in her master and mistress. There was something about this man that won the solicitude of the little maid, and she is not content till her master is healed. She knew he was all wrong. God knows *you* are all wrong; the devil knows you are all wrong; perhaps

you scarcely admit it to yourself. Tell me, would you not like to be all right? Only Jesus Himself can put you right—will you come to Him?

The little maid said, I know the person who can cure my master, and I know the place where he can be found too. "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy" (ver. 3). She was certain of the result of a visit to Elisha. I too know the Person who can save and heal you. His name is Jesus. Where now is God's Prophet? He is not in Samaria. He is in the Father's house, and in Acts iii. from the lips of Peter, and in Acts vii. from the lips of Stephen, there comes the testimony that Moses said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; *him shall ye hear* in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which *will not hear* that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts iii. 22, 23). "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; *him shall ye hear*" (vii. 37). God has put His Prophet—Jesus—into heaven, and declares absolutely that the person that will not listen to His Prophet shall be destroyed. You say, That is very serious. You are right, but, thank God, I can tell you something more—if you come to and listen to that blessed Jesus now, you will find that He is not only a Prophet, but a *Saviour*, who can meet your case, blot out your

sins, and save your soul just where you are this very hour. I wish with all my heart I could get you to the feet of Jesus. Faith will carry you where He is.

The gospel the little maid preached in Naaman's house went abroad—it leaked out, and some one told the king. The maid told the mistress, and the mistress, you may be sure, told her husband, the master. Then the king hears the good news, for we read—“And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel” (ver. 4). And then the king gave Naaman a push-off. I wish I could give you one. Who would have thought the little lassie's testimony about God's prophet was going to reach the court and the palace? Go on, young Christian girls, let your testimony for Christ go out; you cannot tell where it is going to end. She only told her mistress, but it went to the highest place in the land. “And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel” (ver. 5), *i.e.*, I will help you, Naaman, I will give you something to recommend you.

Here is a mistake many make. The girl had said, “The prophet that is in Samaria,” was the one Naaman must reach. The king ignored the prophet and said, “We will go to headquarters, we will send him to the king.”

People round you to-day would like to help you, but most of them will send you the wrong road. Some will say, You have just to go direct to God and pass Jesus by. Such leave out the atonement, the death of Christ, the blood of Christ.

My reader, you will never get to God that way. "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (John v. 23). We live in a day of bloodless theology, when the atonement is pooh-poohed; when Jesus, to whom God has sworn He will make every knee bow, is despised and set aside. Beware, lest you hurry on, thinking you are all right, and that you can finally get to God without turning to the Lord Jesus, the crucified, the despised Nazarene. No, you must bow to Jesus. In Joseph's day people who were hungry went to Pharaoh, but he said, "Go to Joseph." To-day, God says, "Go to Jesus." You had better get to Him now. Do not tell me you cannot. You may, and you will if you are in earnest.

Well, Naaman was in earnest, and without further delay made up his mind to seek God's prophet, so we read—"And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment" (ver. 5). He took those immense sums of money, for he thought he had to buy his cure. That is just what we all thought—that we must bring something to God. You are wrong. Leave everything else behind, and just bring yourself. What had the money and changes of raiment to do with Naaman's healing? Nothing.

A good bit of his journey was over when Naaman reached the fords of Jordan. As he crossed and viewed it, he evidently formed a very contemptuous opinion of the river. It was vastly inferior to Abana and Pharpar—rivers of Damascus (see ver. 12). Just

so do sinners, when they first hear of the cross of Jesus and of the value of His atoning blood, esteem Him lightly, and think slightly of His sacrifice. "When we see him there is no beauty that we should desire him. . . . He was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isa. liii. 2, 3).

As Naaman despised Jordan, have you, dear reader, similarly despised Jesus? W. T. P. W.

(To be continued.)

"THAT'S YOUR GOD."

TO make money and increase his stock was all that he lived for. True, he went occasionally to "hear a sermon" on Sunday, but that was more from habit than because he had any desire for the things of God, or care for his own soul. He was utterly indifferent in regard to eternal things; wholly unconcerned about his sin and its consequences, a man of the world, no worse than his neighbours, but without God, unconverted and unprepared to meet Him.

Many a laugh he had at his neighbour, whom he nicknamed "Revival Jamie,"—not a bad name; and, indeed, he was worthy of it, for Jamie was a born-again man, alive in Christ, revived from his sleep of worldliness, and living for God as a Christian ought.

Frequent prayer meetings and preachings were held in the Christian farmer’s kitchen, to which his neighbour had been often invited, but always found an excuse.

It was a Monday morning. One of the careless farmer’s dairymaids had been at the meeting in the barn on Sunday night, and God saved her there. She came home to the farm singing—

“ I’ve found a Friend, oh, such a Friend,
He loved me ere I knew Him ;
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him.”

The folks at the farm made a great ado over Jennie’s conversion, and the farmer said with a sneer, “ It’ll no’ last long; the Feeing Fair will knock it out of her.” But Jennie went on her way rejoicing, and some of the others, seeing the reality of her conversion, went to the meetings, and were saved also.

It began to get too hot for the ungodly man, when two of his maids and one of his men were saved, and singing the new song. He threatened to throw the preacher into the “ burn ” if he “ converted ” any others of his servants. Sunday night came, and, while the meeting was being held in the farm kitchen, only a few hundred yards across the fields, he could not rest in the house. Curiosity, and probably anxiety—for when men are most opposed to God and His work, they are sometimes ill at ease—he went to the back window to listen.

In the closing prayer, the preacher prayed for “ the

ungodly farmer who had no other God than his cows." That word went as an arrow to his conscience. It was meant for him, and it proved a message to awaken, as well as a prayer to God. He went home in deep distress. A cow "lowed" as he passed the byre, and a voice within said, "That's your God." He threw himself upon his bed, but could not sleep. Thoughts of God, eternity, and his sins kept him company all night. He rose more miserable than ever, and was glad when in the milkhouse, getting the morning's milk ready for the city, to ask his dairy-maid how she knew that her sins were forgiven. "Because Christ died for them, and God for His sake has blotted them out," was the answer. That was the first ray of heaven's light to reach his dark mind. He saw that it was not by works or reformation, but "for Christ's sake," in virtue of His shed blood, that he, a guilty sinner, could be saved. He cast himself on the Saviour, and God saved him.

Great was the joy amongst the servants and amongst all the saved people in that district, when they heard from his own lips that he had been born of God, and that he had turned to Him, the living and true God, to obey Him as his Father, and serve Him as his God.

Reader, who is your God? Is the God of holiness and heaven your God, or do you still grovel amid the vanities of earth unsaved?

ANON.

THE GAMBLER'S CONVERSION.

"FROM the age of ten years I had been fond of gambling, and although I had commenced with very small sums I eventually became an inveterate gambler. The chains of sin tightened around me, and I entered into betting transactions which far exceeded my income. Then as loss succeeded loss I added to my record the sin of dishonesty.

"I was employed by a large company, who entrusted me with considerable sums of money, and by a simple system of falsification of accounts I was enabled to appropriate certain sums without fear of immediate detection. It soon became evident to me, however, that the time was not far distant when my embezzlement would be discovered, and I accordingly enlarged my stakes hoping that I should win sufficient money to meet the deficiency before my employers became acquainted with my guilt. With feverish anxiety I scanned the racing news, frequently to find that I had lost by 'a short head,' and then I would turn my face heavenward and blaspheme God, as I thought that such an insignificant trifle as two or three inches in a race should cause my ruin.

"At last a crisis was reached. I knew I must at once refund the amounts I had taken or be discovered and branded as a thief. Filled with anxiety and apprehension I decided to take a drastic course. Collecting all available money, I caught the express

for London, *en route* for Sandown Park Races, where I resolved to stake all on the chance of winning; intending, if I won, to return and put my accounts in order, but fully determined that if I lost I would bring an end to my career by suicide.

“How I went through the maddening excitement of the race meeting I know not, for the horse on which I thought my life depended was not among the winners; and I found myself at the end of the day a ruined man within five minutes of a suicide’s hell, for my mind was now set on taking my life. I was walking along the road, after spending my last pence in drink, when suddenly and without any apparent cause I stopped, and said aloud, ‘If this is all the devil has for me after all these years, and well as I have served him, I’ll turn to God and serve Him, late as it is.’ But the enemy was not prepared to lose his captive easily, and there followed a fearful inward conflict. Time after time I stopped in front of policemen but could not get the words out. After some hours of mental agony, however, the step was taken. I related my story to an officer, and was marched off to the Metropolitan Police Station—thus giving myself up to the law and—to God.

“As in a dream I heard the command, ‘Step in here!’ and mechanically I obeyed. A sharp slam, a turn of the key, and I was a prisoner. Throwing myself on to the cold floor, forgetful of all else save my unendurable load of guilt before God, my anguish of soul found expression in these words, ‘O God! save me, for *Christ’s* sake.’ I shall never forget the

tremendous emphasis I put upon that precious word 'Christ.' I had heard but little of the gospel of the grace of God, but this I knew, that God could save for the sake of His beloved Son, and that was enough. A few moments passed and I had the consciousness that God had heard and answered my cry. *I rose to my feet with my soul at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* For the first time in my life I was a free man, yet strange to say at the very moment when I was for the first time a prisoner.

"It was somewhat remarkable that just at that time the sound of singing should reach me. I eagerly listened and caught the words—

'What can wash away my stain?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

Oh, precious is the flow,

That makes me white as snow,

No other fount I know,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.'

"I afterwards learned that an open-air service was being held outside the police station, but the singers that night little thought that in the heart of one of the prisoners there was such a joyful response to the beautiful words of their hymn. From that day to this I have never had a doubt as to the forgiveness of my sins, and I adore the grace of God that met a poor sinner like me in my dire extremity and saved me eternally for Christ's sake.

"It must not be supposed, however, that I escaped the consequences of my path of sin. During the

three months I spent in the lonely prison cell, and subsequently by many sorrowful circumstances, I learned something of what that solemn word means, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' I proved that God's governmental dealings with man go steadily on, while His grace may pardon and save the sinner. There was moreover the anxiety that the company whom I had robbed should have restitution of the amount, and this in an unlooked-for way has been effected.

"Nevertheless I have, in the great mercy of God, had the assurance throughout that in the sight of God I am 'justified from all things,' and have proved the power of Christ to deliver me from the snares that once entangled me. Truly God has fulfilled His own word—'For God speaketh . . . that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. . . . Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave and his life to the destroyers. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness, THEN HE IS GRACIOUS UNTO HIM, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom. . . . He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy. : . . He will sing before men, and say, I have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it hath not been requited to me: he hath delivered my soul from going down into the pit, and my life shall see the light. Lo, all these things

worketh God oftentimes with man' (Job xxxiii. 27-29, R.V.)"

Perchance, my reader, you are held captive by the chains of sin, and are hastening along "the broad road which leadeth to destruction." Your money, your character, your prospects, your health, and more than all, your soul of priceless worth, are at stake, and unless God in His great mercy saves you, as He did the subject of the above true narrative, you will assuredly lose all. Beware lest that great enemy of your soul succeeds in his foul design, and you are found beyond the reach of mercy, with no hope of escape and no expectations but a vast forever of woe.

Consider—as you value your soul—the marvellous offer that the God of all grace is making to-day. On account of the divine satisfaction He has obtained in the finished work of Christ, God is righteously prepared

To blot out for ever all your past ;

To deliver you from the captivity of sin ;

To bring you into relationship with Himself ;

To make you supremely happy in this present life ; and

To give you eternal security.

His conditions are "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." Will you not accept God's terms and close with Him to-day?

It is possible, however, that you may be flattering yourself that you have not been guilty of such crimes ; that you are a respectable, orderly person of good

character, and hence are passing God's offer on to some one else. Dear friend, do not allow yourself to be deluded any longer by the god of this world, who has blinded your mind to your true condition in the sight of God. "I have heard the voice of thy words saying, I am clean without transgression, I am innocent ; neither is there iniquity in me. *Behold, in this thou art not just*" (Job xxxiii. 8, 9, 12). God has declared, "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" ; and it behoves you to avail yourself of God's salvation and receive pardon and peace which are still to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. Then instead of your expectations resting on a bare chance, a forlorn hope, a doubtful prospect, your eternal blessing will be a joyous, positive certainty, based on the immutability of the Word of the living God, and your present joy will be found in Christ, the living glorified Saviour who is at this moment at the right hand of God, waiting to bless YOU.

F. S. M—H.

REPENTANCE is the judgment which the soul passes upon itself in the presence of God, believing the testimony of God. Repentance is not the stepping-stone to conversion. Repentance is taking God's part against myself, and judging that what God says of me is true, believing His testimony. Faith is the soul's reception of a divine testimony ; repentance is the result in the soul of that reception.

W. T. P. W.

A TRACT AT A BALL-ROOM DOOR.

IT was not a very likely place to get people to accept tracts, but our friend evidently believed in doing the Lord's work "in season and out of season." Anyway he stood at the staircase leading to the ball-room of a large inn in a country town giving gospel books. I do not know how many of the pleasure-seekers accepted tracts that evening, but among them was K——, a young lady the very picture of health and embodiment of gaiety. As he gave her a little book the donor said, "Madam, will you promise me you will read this?" With cheerful voice she promised to do so, and at once placed it in her bag, and probably forgot all about it in the midst of the music and dancing. Whether she read it or not I cannot tell you, but the little heed she paid to it may be gathered from the fact that the front page was torn off, the whole book crumpled and tossed carelessly into a drawer. If the giver of that tract had seen it lying there, he would have said, "I have laboured in vain."

Months rolled on, and with it disease sapped the springs of K——'s life. The bloom departed from her cheek, elasticity from her step. She not only had to give up the pleasures of the ball-room, but country walks, and even music and conversation. At length she became a confirmed invalid, unable to leave her room. Now she had time for reflection. A wasted life behind, and endless eternity before.

Do you wonder she was uneasy? Did you ever picture to yourself what it will be with you, as disease does its work, death stares you in the face, the great white throne beyond, and the books opened containing the records of your life? Oh, you say, I see no harm in having a little pleasure. Perhaps not.

Some years since a fire broke out in the Haymarket, London, and a large theatre was wrapped in flames. As the lurid glare lighted up the darkness of the night the crowd beheld with horror a man on the roof, *dancing*! Yes, actually dancing! with the devouring elements every moment drawing nearer. Everybody said the poor fellow's brain must be turned, he must be demented.

Ball-room-frequenter, pleasure-seeker, how like yourself! Hell fire is underneath you, the flames of judgment gradually drawing nearer.

To return to K——. One day, in utter desolation, she opened a drawer, took out the crumpled tract, and read it. It told her some very plain truths. It declared she was a sinner, nay more, an enemy. It insisted that if she died without faith in Christ she would be *lost for ever*. Now, you must not suppose that K—— made no profession of religion. She had attended church regularly as long as she could, she had been very kind to the poor, dutiful to her parents, in fact she considered herself an estimable character. Here was this little book telling her that she was a fallen being, that her devotions had sin in them, and that nothing would avail her but a new start altogether. It insisted upon the truth of the Lord's words, "Ye

must be born again." The Holy Spirit began to work in her conscience, she felt she ought to love God, and lead a new life. Did you ever feel like that? If so, please remember you will *never love God* until you find out how *Hè has loved you*, and you can never *lead a new life* until you *have a new life*.

Happily this little book went on to tell K—— that God's Word declared she was guilty before God, but it also declared how Christ the sinless One had borne all her guilt. It quoted this beautiful verse from Romans v.—"God commendeth his love toward us in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us." It ended with the words that fell from that blessed Saviour's lips—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

God in His matchless grace spoke to her. She learned she was lost. She also learned that Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. Now a lost sheep and a seeking shepherd just suit each other. The Shepherd found one of His sheep in that sick chamber. Henceforth her delight was to pass on the good news. She had found a more lasting joy than that of earth, pleasures for evermore were hers. E——, one of the friends of her worldly days, came to see her. Like K—— she had been careless and indifferent about her eternal welfare.

K—— passed away to be with her Saviour, but not before she had the joy of knowing that E—— was born again, saved, and satisfied with Jesus.

A year rolled away, consumption had done its work, and E—— too was passing away. The valley of the shadow of death was not dark to her. The light of her Saviour's presence filled her heart. Her delight since her conversion was the Word of God. "It is so different from other books," she said; "after reading them a few times I know their contents, but the Bible is ever presented in some new light, and each passage is so full of meaning."

"Yes," said her friend, "that has always struck me as proof of the Divine authority of the sacred writings."

E—— replied, "My own heart gives me abundant proof they are true."

Many friends visited her on her death-bed. To them she spoke of the Saviour. Perhaps in a coming day other links will be found in the chain of blessing resulting from the tract given on the ball-room steps. E—— passed away from her suffering bed, whilst Christian friends were in prayer in her room. She literally fell asleep here, to awake in that blessed scene where praise, unceasing praise, ever wells forth to the slain Lamb who has redeemed to God by His blood out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation.

Reader, have you learned the theme of that song? If you do not learn it *here*, you will never sing it there.

What of the tract distributor? As far as it can be ascertained, the gentleman who gave the book at the ball-room door never knew the result. *He will*

know. The Saviour said, "Sower and reaper shall rejoice together."

One special object in view in writing this paper is to encourage tract distributors to go on. Perhaps you say, "I have been distributing *Gospel Messengers* and other books for years, and have never seen any result." *Now, don't give up.* Put a little more prayer into the work, and a little more faith, and a little more perseverance. Let me tell you of a Christian who lived next door to a well-to-do sceptic. A man of considerable intelligence in natural things, he was thoroughly blind to spiritual things. Disease overtook him. It was of a lingering character, but must end fatally. Several Christians tried to approach him. A cold repulse disheartened them and paralysed their efforts. His next-door neighbour was often in his room, and made frequent attempts to induce him to speak on the concerns of his soul. He foiled every effort. He assumed an outward cheerfulness and indifference to death and that judgment which surely awaits the unrepentant. Prayer, earnest prayer, was made to God for his salvation. He was fond of reading, and when he became too ill himself to read, one of his little daughters used to read to him by the hour. One day the Christian neighbour found him asleep, immediately went home, and getting a tract containing a solemn appeal to a sinner in the prospect of death, returned, laid it on his pillow, and then back again home, to pray God to use it in blessing to his soul.

By-and-by the sick man awoke, his hand fell on the book, and without waiting to examine it, he called for his little daughter to read it to him. She had not read far before his eyes filled with tears, his bosom heaved, his lips trembled. The little girl's voice also trembled as she saw the effect produced on her father, but she continued reading. He then asked her to pause, and tried to regain self-possession, but presently told her to read on. She did so. Tears began to gush from his eyes; he wept violently, and could not conceal his emotion. The child read on as well as she was able, for she too was sobbing as though her little heart would break. His sins rose up before him as a mountain. Conviction came home with tremendous power. His scepticism was blown to the winds. "God be merciful to me a sinner" was the language of his heart. He saw the pit ready to receive him.

A messenger was despatched for the next-door neighbour, not now to meet scoffs and rebuffs, but to reply to a heart-broken "What must I do to be saved?" What a joy to tell him that the biggest sinner who ever lived was already saved, and he had only to come to the Saviour who had saved him, and who had declared that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Repentance toward God was accompanied by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That sceptic was saved. The human instrument a prayer and a tract. Perhaps another effort may succeed in that case you have almost begun to look upon as hopeless.

Prayer gives God His right place. It owns the truth of the Saviour's words, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Persevering labour rests in the assurance, "In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." Don't give up. It is sowing time now. Harvest time is coming.

H. N.

THE BIBLE-WOMAN'S POSER.

MRS J—— was for years a well-known figure to most in B——. With her well-stocked basket of Bibles, books, and tracts slung over one arm, while the other held, maybe, *a roll of the year's almanacs*, she would make her way along the busiest thoroughfares, and into one and another place of business, not only offering her goods, but speaking—very often to master and servant alike—the solemn truths of the gospel.

Her comings and goings in time began to be pretty much looked for on all sides, and in some cases appreciated. Business men found it a pleasant break in the monotony of everyday occurrence to receive a visit from the cheery, sunshiny old woman, and while on the one hand they parried her home thrusts, would rally her about herself, her profession, and the like. In almost every instance, however, it was Mrs J——, and not her opponents, who got the best of the argument. And just how much good resulted from these

little encounters, where God's Word aptly quoted was the all-powerful weapon wielded by our earnest old sister, only "the Day" will declare.

It was on one such occasion that something of the following nature took place. Two gentlemen stood talking together in the doorway of a store, when Mrs J—— appeared in sight. One, the master of the establishment, began to remark on the old Christian's peculiarities as he termed them; he being one who had often tried to corner her but in vain, as he then owned.

"I tell you," said he, "there's no matching her."

"Nonsense," said his friend. "I'll put a question to her now as she comes up that I bet she won't answer."

"You'll be beaten," returned the other; "I advise you not to try."

It was to be put to the proof however, for Mrs J—— came to a halt at this place and no other. Both accosted her in the friendly fashion that was generally accorded her right and left in the city, and number two shortly made opportunity to submit the masterpiece of a poser.

"I say, Mrs J——," he began, "I understand you can talk lots about the Bible and all that. Now I want to ask you one thing."

"Say on, sah," replied Mrs J——, readily choosing scriptural words in answer, after her quaint custom.

"Do you think," said the gentleman, "that God is going to have an old black woman like you in heaven?"

"No, certainly not," was the answer given without the least dismay and with great energy; "God won't have any old black woman in heaven, course not. But, sah, I tell you dis, I'm going to have a new body—a glorified body—like Christ's. Dat's what. The Bible says," quoting chapter and verse, "'we shall all be changed,' all who are washed in the precious blood of Christ. And then," she wound up with her old joyous laugh, "shall we be for ever with the Lord.

"But, sah," she went on, "lemme ask you dis here. Does you suppose dat God's goin to take a rich white man to heaven, wid all his sins 'pon him?"

Her questioner was dumb.

"I told you so," quietly observed the storekeeper.

Our sister was unquestionably victorious, and further improved the occasion by preaching Christ to them both in her simple, hearty fashion.

Extracted.

It is a grand thing to be able, come what may, to vindicate God, to stand, even if we can do nothing more, as a monument of His unfailing faithfulness to all who put their trust in Him. What though the horizon around us be dark and depressing—though the heavy clouds gather, and the storm rage, God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will, with the temptation, make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it.

C. H. M.

NAAMAN'S THREE VISITS TO JORDAN.

(Read 2 Kings v.)

WHEN Naaman had got well over the Jordan, of which he thought so little, and had reached Samaria, notice how he was misdirected. In his pocket he carried his letter of commendation from the King of Syria to the King of Israel. He had been told to go to God's prophet. He went to man's king. How many do similarly to-day?

Jesus is the only Saviour. Why is it, then, that He is the last the needy sinner goes to? He tries every apparent source of relief from the burden of his sins first, and only when all is seen to be of no avail repairs to Jesus.

Of Naaman we read: "And he brought the letter to the King of Israel, saying, Now, when this letter is come unto thee, behold I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the King of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the King of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent

thy clothes? Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel" (vers. 6-8).

This message from the man of God is very instructive. He was God's representative, and his action shows that God has a great interest in a needy, though misdirected man. Few believe the interest God has in men, and how He loves to meet anxious souls. "Let him come now to me," was a divine message of mercy to Naaman then. God is unchanged in His goodness. Methinks I hear a voice from heaven to-day. Who speaks? Jesus, the Prophet in glory. Are these lines read by an anxious soul—"Let him come now to Me," says the Saviour from on high. He once saw a very earnest, but utterly misdirected man on his way to Damascus to do the devil's work. That man—Saul of Tarsus—He converted on the spot by the revelation of Himself to him, and then bid him go to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified *by faith* which is in me" (Acts xxvi. 18).

In order to get salvation, my reader, all you have to do is to exercise faith in that *unseen* Prophet. You may say, But Naaman went up to *see* the prophet. Yes, but he did not see him till he was cured. Have you noticed that? You very likely are waiting to see, or *feel*, and experience something. That will not do. "Let him come *now* to me," was the prophet's word then, and so now, and God took

care that Naaman should hear the command. Some one evidently said to Naaman, "You have come to the wrong place—the wrong person; it was not the king you were to come to, but the prophet. You must go to him."

Now an earnest seeker for blessing always gets it. "So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood *at the door* of the house of Elisha" (ver. 9). I see him driving up with his great equipage, his money, his own thoughts, and his pride, and he had plenty of it. He had wrong thoughts of God altogether; you never saw such a conglomeration of wrong thoughts as he had, and there he stood with them all, and with his leprosy, and was full of expectation as to what was to happen.

Doubtless *you* too, dear reader, have your own thoughts as to how God will save you, but you are utterly wrong. Saul of Tarsus also in the day of his conversion had *his* thoughts—"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts xxvi. 9). His thoughts were all wrong. So were mine before I found Jesus. I thought I had a lot to do to get saved, and much to feel. Beware of thoughts. The Psalmist says, "I hate thoughts: but thy law do I love" (Ps. cxix. 113). The word "*vain*" you will find in your Bible. The translators thought to supply a missing idea. Hence, though not in the Hebrew, they inserted the word, but you will see it is in italics, and should not be there at all. David says, "What *I think* is not worth anything; what

God *says* is what I care about." Man's thoughts are sure to be wrong; he cannot tell what will suit God.

Look again at Naaman; he comes up, and Elisha is quite conscious he is there, a needy leper. And God is quite conscious that you are a needy sinner. You were born in sin, and have lived in sin, and your sins have accumulated so that you have never counted them. God has. They have never pressed very hard on your conscience; but they pressed upon the heart of Christ when He died on the cross. They pressed tears from His eyes, and the agonising cry from His lips, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I know *my* sins were laid upon Him, and He confessed them, and suffered and died for them, and praise be to His name, blotted them all out. Have your sins been covered? All this time have they never troubled you? It is far too serious to trifle with, this matter of sin.

Naaman stands at the door of the house, and has his idea of how his case should be dealt with. He expects the prophet to come out; but he does not get his expectation. Only a messenger comes. I am the messenger to *you* now. "And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (ver. 10). What a delightful gospel for Naaman! He did not believe it; no, and *you* have heard the gospel many a time, and have not believed it. He did not think it would meet his case. But how simple—"Go and wash in

Jordan." He had come over Jordan on his way to Samaria; his horses, weary and tired, were glad of the water; but he passed over it with contempt, little thinking that healing for him was in those waters. That is just the way in which many have looked at the cross of Jesus—with contempt.

Naaman had curled his lip as he first passed over the Jordan; and now the word was—Go back to the spot you have despised. Not at all, said he, what can that do for me? You also, my reader, very probably have heard the gospel a thousand times? Yes, and despised it. How true is God's word: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts xiii. 41). That is what men are doing to day; they hear the gospel of the atoning agonies of Jesus, and of the sorrows of Jesus on the cross. Alas! they despise it. They are told the only way of salvation is by the cross, they despise it, and then God says, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." Forget not the solemn fact that despising and perishing are bound up together. Thank God you have yet another opportunity of embracing the gospel.

When Naaman heard the words "Go and wash in Jordan, . . . and thou shalt be clean," you would have thought the man would have jumped at the command. But no, it did not suit his pride; and the gospel does not suit the pride of man's heart. Note the first effect on him: "But Naaman was

wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper" (ver. 11). I have seen many a sinner wroth when hearing God's gospel. At first the man has been interested, and then he has got angry, as he has had his own history portrayed, and the impossibility of his meeting his own case pressed on him. At length positive rank enmity has come out, and he has said, "I don't believe this, and I will never come back to this meeting." Have you never said something like that, my unsaved friend? God may take you at your word, and may never give you another chance; you had better be saved now. *I cannot save you, but I can tell you the way to obtain salvation.*

Take a good look at Naaman, and see his folly. This man is absolutely wroth when he hears how his case can be met, and his malady cured. Yes, he "was wroth . . . so he turned and went away in a rage" (ver. 12). That shows what was in his heart. Listen to his imaginations: "Behold, I thought he will surely come out to me and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand on the place and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage" (vers. 11,12). Naaman was upset because he received so little attention. He expected Elisha to come out to him. Instead of that he got only a message.

He felt that *he* was ignored. What a picture of ourselves !

We all like to be appealed to ; that is why men like the law. The law is all about you, and what you should do, and should not do. Hence people like the law, because, although it may condemn them, it *recognises* them. It tells you what you *ought* to be, and you try to be it. If you succeed fairly well you are pleased with yourself, and if you do not succeed the devil says, "God is merciful, and at least you have done your best." This suits your pride, and you will naturally prefer this line of things to God's gospel. Now the gospel *ignores* man, with all his righteousness, and makes nothing of him and his alms givings, prayers, doings, and self-reformation. The gospel is all *about* Christ, what He is, and what He has done, though it is *for* us. There is nothing *about* us in the gospel, though, thank God, it is all *for* us. The gospel says exactly what Elisha said here—Naaman, you go and get out of your own sight and every one else's ; go and bury yourself, and you will be clean. This he could not stand at all, and very likely you say, But I could not stand that. No, for we all like to be something, and do something.

Naaman was but the picture of your heart and mine. He had his cure all planned out in his own mind ; and you have planned out *your* cure, but it has never come off, and you are unsaved yet. Your thoughts have been wrong. If you are wise you will drop your own thoughts and listen to the Word of God. Naaman heard the very sweetest

truth of the gospel in the words Elisha sent to him : "Go, and wash in Jordan." Very frequently Jordan is used in Scripture as a figure of death. "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" (Jer. xii. 5). When you come to die how will it be with you? How will it stand with your soul? Are you already new-born, washed, cleansed, converted, and brought to God? No; then are you a total stranger to divine grace. You say, "I have been doing my best." Yes, doing your best to damn yourself.

You should thank God that you are not yet dead; but let me tell you of Another, who has died, and died for you. Jesus died in the room and stead of the poor, guilty sinner, and in His death I see not only that He died for my sins, and washed them all away from before God's eye, but I see also that He *died for me*. I thus see *myself* set aside; I see that what I deserved—death and judgment—have fallen upon Him, and I, as a guilty, responsible child of Adam, have ceased to exist before God through the death of His blessed Son. But in that He now lives, a man before God, He is my life, and the joy of my heart. Do you understand these words—"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. vi. 10, 11)? They have given me divine liberty.

When Naaman turned his back on Elisha, and went away in a rage, he drove, I doubt not, at full gallop, as he thought, homewards, but really towards

the spot of salvation. He did not think it, but every mile of the thirty 'twixt Samaria and the Jordan that his horses covered, brought him nearer to the spot where salvation was. Let us follow him, and in what occurs I see not only

NAAMAN'S SECOND VISIT TO JORDAN,

but a lovely illustration of the beautiful scripture, "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

Jordan's blue waters would seem to be in view, and probably the thirty-mile drive had cooled Naaman down and given him time for reflection, when "his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, *Wash, and be clean?*" (ver. 13). If the prophet had said, "Pay over everything you have in your chariots," he would have done it gladly to get healed. If he had said, "You must crawl back to Damascus on your knees, and your leprosy will be absolutely healed," I believe he would have tried to do the task, for the idea is in men's minds that they must do something to propitiate God. How few understand the golden words: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 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. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. iv. 4-8). Friend, do you want to be saved? Listen then to Paul, or heed Elisha's words, "Wash, and be clean." Turn to Jesus, rest your guilty soul on His finished work. Jesus has gone into heaven; He is out of sight, but His message comes by the Holy Ghost to you. Heed it!

Somehow the calm, kind exhortation of the leper's servants prevailed, and we read, "Then went he *down*, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, *according to the saying of the man of God*: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and **HE WAS CLEAN**" (ver. 14). Now here we have very simply illustrated the obedience of faith; the man humbles himself, and steps down from his chariot. When a man is in downright earnest—seeking God's salvation—he does not care who sees his anxiety. So was it with Naaman. Every one of his troop was looking on, but down he went, and buried himself in Jordan, out of his own sight and that of every one else. Seven times he dipped, and the seventh time he came up cured. He bowed to God, he believed His word, and "**HE WAS CLEAN.**" How simple is God's way of blessing, and how lovely the effects to the soul that obeys His word. "His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." This, in figure, is new birth and redemption. Look at his face now, how happy it is. The person that has the joy of the Lord will show it in his life and in his face.

“Go, wash,” is the sinner’s word ; that command Naaman had obeyed, and was immediately blessed. Later he got another command, “Go in peace,” which I will touch on in connection with his third visit to Jordan. He has paid his second visit to Jordan, which is the most important—the visit of faith. He will have a third presently, for he has to go back home, and live the truth he has tasted, and must therefore cross it again, and I will guarantee the third time he saw it he said : “God be thanked for that river. I thought very little about it when I crossed it first, but now I shall never forget it.” And if you get converted to God, *you* will never forget the cross. God loves to keep that cross of Jesus, which secured our eternal blessing, ever before our eyes.

W. T. P. W.

(To be continued.)

It is only as the soul is in communion with God that it gets a taste of the glory, and it becomes brighter and brighter as the night grows darker down here. If the Lord’s people make up their minds to have the same sort of life here that He had, they will be content to be like persons on a journey, who will find excuses to leave a case here and there by the way in order not to be hindered in passing quickly on ; and to be like Jonathān, who only stopped to dip his spear in the honey to get refreshed for the work he had to do. It is only by keeping the eye fixed there where Christ is, that we get a taste of glory.

G. V. W.

HE WAS IN EARNEST; ART THOU?

THE story is told, of a vessel that was wrecked at sea. Whether she had struck upon some treacherous rock, or whether wind and wave had joined to vent their fury upon her, we know not, but whatever the cause, she was now fast settling to a grave in the depths of the ocean.

Above the tumult the captain's voice was heard giving orders to abandon the ship. As the boats were hastily lowered the terrified passengers crowded into them. Soon the last boat swung clear of the sinking vessel, and all hope of escape was cut off from the group that still remained on deck.

To one of that number death must have seemed very terrible. This man, in a desperate attempt to save his life, plunged into the sea and tried to clamber into the nearest boat; but the men in the boat, fearing lest another passenger would capsize her, seized a sword and cut off the fingers of the hand that was clutching their boat.

As the man fell back, the salt water closed over his head. Still struggling for life he rose and seized the boat with his other hand, and again the sharp sword-blade did its work. What of that? If he cannot enter the boat he must DIE. With a strength born of despair the man gripped the boat with his teeth, and at such dogged determination the men in the boat relented; they took him in and he was saved.

How earnest men are to save their *lives*, and yet as regards their *souls* they are often quite unconcerned. It is true the stakes are great if the life is in peril, but when the danger threatens the soul, they are infinitely greater.

The man in our story had to face immediate death if he stayed on board the wreck, and by gaining the boat he grasped life for a few short years at the most. But, unconverted reader, *thy* choice lies between the unquenchable fire of the second death and eternal life with its fadeless joys. He was in earnest; art thou? Surely there is reason for earnestness.

Thou art like one on board a doomed vessel, for the storm of divine judgment must soon burst upon and overwhelm the impenitent. There is but one possibility of escape. Take refuge in the lifeboat of the redemption that God's grace has provided. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Christ died, the Just for the unjust; and, if thou turn to Him for the salvation He is waiting to bestow, thou wilt find a shelter from the storm of judgment, and a hiding-place in every time of trouble.

M. L. B.

PERSONS fancy that it makes people proud to be in the third heaven. Never. The danger is, when you get out of the third heaven, of the flesh being proud of having been there. We feel our nothingness in the presence of God.

J. N. D.

"IS THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS MY RULER?"

"**N**O, no, I cannot pray ; and if I *could*, I do not think I *would*. The world has many charms for me ; the life you lead has none. I cannot read ten verses of the Bible without yawning. Everything connected with religion is so dry ; at least I think so."

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

"Is that the reason ?"

"Yes."

"I daresay you are right. The Bible is dry to me, because I am not spiritual ; because this world is everything to me, and heaven just nothing ! because if I am under any spirit at all, it is the 'spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience.'"

Sadly and solemnly the answer came, "Yes."

"Oh, it was cruel, cruel to say that 'yes !' *Am I then so degraded ? Is the prince of darkness my ruler ? Am I his, body and soul, his for ever ?*"

The shaft had struck home. It had pierced the joints of her harness. It was God's way of arresting W——. She had all this world could give ; she was wealthy, young, talented, beautiful. Her heart had hitherto been absorbed with the world and its things.

A——, a Christian friend, had visited her, and, full of love for her soul, had sought to win her for Christ. Now the awful truth had burst upon her that she was under the devil's dominion. Has it ever occurred to you, unsaved reader, that your eyes are blinded, your mind and body captive, to an unseen, but malignant foe?

Your body and your mind have lusts (Eph. ii. 3). On these Satan acts. Do not confound your lusts with the devil who acts upon them. The devil tempted Christ. He found nothing in Him to answer to his temptations. It is not so with you. He baits his hook with the cunning of a serpent. You are fond of pleasure: he says, "Enjoy yourself." Money perhaps is your snare? he says: "Scrape all you can together." Perhaps you seek fame: he will aid you to get it. Pandering to, and acting upon your desires, he insensibly draws you under his power. One of the cleverest things he has done is to persuade people that no such person exists as the devil.

We plead with you to ask yourself the question, Is the prince of darkness my ruler? May God, in His mercy, open your eyes as He did those of W——. May the awful conviction be brought home to your soul that if you do not belong to Christ you belong to the devil.

To return to the two friends. A—— quoted verse after verse of God's Word to the poor deceived worldling. Conscience began to accuse, the Spirit of God to work. At last W—— said—

"If I could only feel the love of Christ."

"If, dear?"

"It ought not to be 'if,' and yet how can I give all up?"

"All what?"

"My busy idleness, my wild extravagance, my earnest pleasure-seeking, my selfish love of ease—they are my earthly all, can I abandon them? Is it possible that in *this life* Christ can give far more joy than I have had in the excitement of those pleasures which I must abandon if I follow Him? What is your own experience? are you happy, A——?"

"I am always at *rest* and sometimes full of joy, far more so than you can imagine."

"Indeed, and why?"

"Because my head rests on the heart that was pierced for me. Because I am loved and cherished, and the Holy Ghost brings me each day nearer to the *Perfect One*, whose likeness I long to bear! Because the everlasting arms are always round about me."

"Oh, A——, is it so? Is Christ *real* to you? You need not answer. As you speak of Him your face is radiant as if you saw Him face to face, whilst I, to whom He is nothing! nothing! I am wretched! Oh, A——, pray for me."

A—— prayed and read, and read and prayed, quoting all sorts of gospel texts until the day waned and the night fell, and still W—— was unsaved and unsatisfied.

She was making the grand mistake of looking inside, of thinking more of what she had to give up,

of what she had to *do*, instead of resting on what *Christ has done*.

A month rolled away, and still W—— had no rest. She sought it in visiting the sick, reading to the blind, in kindness to the poor. She had not yet learned it is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.”

Her friend remained with her reading the Scriptures to her, and praying for her. At length the light dawned. She came as a poor lost sinner to Christ. Now, that is just how Christ wants you to come. He came not to seek the righteous. God justifies the ungodly. It is him that worketh not but believes who gets the blessing.

Travel on with me for two years. We will enter a sick-room. In that room are the friends who were together two years since ; but oh ! how changed one of them ! W——, the young and beautiful, has been struck down by fatal disease, the hand of death is upon her, listen to what she is saying.

“Yes, A——, *I have nothing to do now, nothing to do but die !* I can look back on the past two years, and see how faithful God has been to His promise, and never leaves the soul that trusts in Him. Why He is taking me thus early I do not know ; but I can trust His love. *He doeth all things well*. If He should bid me live—I do not think He will—I shall not murmur ; but, A——, I would far rather die.”

“I know you would,” said A——, “but I do not

wish to lose you. Two years ago I loved you, but not as now; must we part?"

"We must—but *not for ever*. Erelong we shall be united, *and for all eternity!* '*Time is short.*' '*Eternity is long.*'"

Midnight came; calmly she waited the call home. The world, which two years since possessed so many attractions for her, had lost its charms. She had exchanged the rule of the prince of darkness for a new Master. She was translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. He had given her the freedom of His Father's house. Out of grateful love for the free salvation and great deliverance which had reached her, those years had been spent in holy, devoted service. She served because she was saved and satisfied. Now she was about to depart and be with Christ. With a smile on her lips, her ransomed spirit left earth, and entered on the blessedness of being with that Saviour who had loved and given Himself for her.

Reader, "*Time is short.*" "*Eternity is long.*" What is the world worth when you come to die? Is the prince of darkness *your* ruler? H. N.

SOME believers in Jesus are joyless, because they are so little looking to Christ. They are occupied with themselves, their circumstances, their bodies perhaps, something that is not Christ. They have too much of Christ to be able to enjoy the world, and too much of the world to enjoy Christ.

EMANCIPATION.

THE year 1838 stands out in West Indian annals as their great redemption year. Up to that time slavery held in cruel bondage numbers of human beings. Great Britain, moved to pity, paid twenty millions for their liberation.

Nineteen centuries ago a far greater ransom price was paid for the liberation of, not merely certain slaves in a few islands, but for men in every nation under the sun, the one to which you belong included. It was not millions of money, but something infinitely more valuable than silver and gold, even "the precious blood of Christ." It was the life-blood of the blessed Son of God, given up in death. The Creator Himself became the Redeemer.

As soon as the day arrived for the emancipation act to take effect in the West Indies, the poor slaves hurried to their masters; manacles and chains were knocked off, and they were free for ever.

Have you, my reader, had your chains knocked off? "Oh," you say, "I am not a slave, I love to sing 'Britons never shall be slaves.'" Wait a moment. Come with me to a London hospital. Do you see that poor fellow lying gasping on his deathbed? He also boasted as you do. What is his history? He came up from a Christian home with its sacred and hallowed influences, with the flush of health on his countenance, and then possessing a fine healthy body. What a change this modern Babylon was

from the quiet simple life of his village home ! The first step was to neglect his soul, and spend his Sundays and evenings with bad companions. Conscience spoke loudly at first, then died down, and at last he not only plunged boldly into all kinds of lust, but delighted in making others as bad as himself. At length he began to reap what he had sown. Health and vigour gone, money and friends gone, he was carried into hospital to die, the *slave of lust*.

Do you hear the cries from another slave, the agonising cry of one who was once as boastful of being a free agent as you are ? “Take them away,” he cries, “they are coming for me,” as in the agonies of delirium tremens he sees the demons surrounding his bed. This is no fancy picture. That man was once a Sunday-school teacher. He gave way to intoxication. One glass led to another. At last the habit so overpowered him that he was an absolute slave to it. Time after time he tried to give it up ; alas, in his own strength, and failed. One day he came home drunk, lay down on his dining-room table, and died, leaving his godly wife to mourn another victim of strong drink.

We will leave the man of lust, and the slave of drink, and visit a palatial mansion. The owner is dying. He has amassed a fortune. Crowds of people envy him. They recall the time when he left his home a poor lad ; they recount the various steps by which he rose in the social ladder, and at length reached the summit, as they thought. Ask him, Are you satisfied ? “Satisfied, never ! I always

wanted a little more than I had got. The more I possessed the more I longed to possess, and now I am dying and cannot take a penny with me."

What a *poor* miser! The almighty dollar had controlled him. The love of money had such a grip of him that principle was thrown to the winds; he cared not how many of his fellow-creatures were ruined, provided he could grow rich. He had never seriously pondered the Lord's question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Have you?

Again take the case of the professor of religion. He will turn with disgust from the openly profligate and the poor drunkard. He says, "I am not as other men." He will be regular in attendance at religious services, the more the better. Such a one was Saul of Tarsus. He was the prince of moralists, a leading light in the religious world of his day. He wrapped the robes of self-righteousness round him, and was blameless in all the outward ceremonies of the law. At the very same moment he was a murderer! He was so thoroughly the slave of an external religion, that under its influence he would have crushed the name of Jesus out of existence and annihilated all His followers. The race is not extinct. A gentleman was offered a gospel book; he refused it. Again the offer was pressed on the ground that God had wonderfully blessed that book to many. "Do you know who I am, sir?" he asked. "Do you know that I am a churchwarden?" In reply it was said, "I fear there are many holding such offices who are unsaved and

travelling to hell." This made him very angry, and he strode off indignantly. Another of the devil's slaves bound with religious fetters.

Which of these men are like you? The devil suits his chains to his captives. Some he binds with the fetters of lust. He tempts such to indulge their desires and visit the house of the strange woman. Alas, "he knoweth not that the dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell."

Others are in thralldom to strong drink. Every time the cup is raised to the lips, another link is forged in the chain that binds them. With what feelings of pity we look upon the besotted wrecks of humanity, many of whom we have known as fine handsome men. It all came about through indulgence, and being hail-fellow-well-met with others of like tendencies.

Money and religion are equally strong chains though much more respectable in the eyes of men. No matter what the particular chain is that binds you, what we want to point out is that a great ransom price has been paid for your deliverance. You may now be made as free as the poor Jamaican slaves were when England had paid down the price of liberty. The precious blood of Christ will do far more for you than England's millions did for them. "The redemption which is in Christ Jesus" will not only free you from present slavery and give you perfect liberty, but will introduce you to eternal happiness, and untold wealth of blessing.

There is only one condition: you must turn to

Christ Jesus for liberation. He is the only One that can free you. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John viii. 36). Whether your bonds are formed by lust or morality, by intemperance or covetousness, He and He alone can set the prisoner free. He came to give liberty to the captives. We want you to look into His grave, and see how all the chains that bind men are buried there.

Let us travel back in thought to that grave, and then onward to a scene in Jamaica which took place on the 31st day of July 1838. It was nearing midnight when every man, woman, and child were on their knees: some 14,000 men and women were gathered there, and similar groups throughout the island. They were still slaves. Midnight was the moment fixed to end their slavery. They dug a deep grave: they had already prepared a large mahogany coffin. In it they had placed all the badges of slavery—the whip, the torture iron, the branding iron, the handcuffs, the coarse frock, shirt, and hat, and a piece of the treadmill. The lid was screwed down, and all was ready for the midnight hour of deliverance to strike.

William Knibb, a Christian preacher, stood over the grave. At each stroke of twelve he cried, "*The monster is dying, the monster is dying,*" and at the last stroke, "THE MONSTER IS DEAD, BURY HIM!" The coffin was lowered, and that mass of human beings rose to their feet, free men, liberated by the act of others; and with one voice they sang:—

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow ;
Praise Him, all creatures here below ;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host ;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

The five thousand children present then welled forth in their glad clear voices—

"Send the glad tidings over the sea,
The chain is broken ; the slave is free."

Now travel back again to Calvary's Cross and the Saviour's tomb. On that cross a stupendous ransom price was paid. In that tomb lies buried every trace of slavery. No matter what form your slavery may have taken, you are free to look into that grave and see every trace of it removed. Liberty and deliverance are only found there. There is no other way by which your chains can be broken. The devil is your master. An old blind man used to say, "Jesus Christ is the devil's master." In the death of Christ he was mastered. If the master is conquered, the slaves are free. All you have to do is to claim your freedom. We were all slaves. I claimed exemption through the ransom paid for me. You may do the same. Come now in all your misery and bondage. God's blessed Son has given His life for your freedom. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," and free now by simply appropriating God's deliverance in Christ Jesus.

H. E. N.

THE BARRIERS ARE GONE.

NO man could possibly dwell in heavenly glory unless God Himself had opened the way. There were three insuperable barriers from the moment when man became a sinner, which none but God Himself could remove. But blessed be His name, in love He has done it. Hence the way is thrown open wide to all. Let us see what these barriers were, and how He has removed them.

The first was His own essential character.

The second was the great power of Satan.

The third was the momentous question of sin.

God is a Spirit, love, light, holy, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. Man, fallen and under sin, is totally (and as far as his own efforts are concerned, irretrievably) unfit for His presence. If he were suddenly translated to the heavenly glory of God, he would be utterly miserable. All that he is, all that he thinks, all that he says, all that he does, being mixed with sin, he is utterly disqualified. God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who has said that the very heavens are not clean in His sight, could not suffer a sinner in His presence for a moment. His very heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. His sin would be an insuperable barrier to God's lavishing His love upon him. His light would completely expose him in all the

dense darkness of his heart and mind ; His holiness, for He is a consuming fire, would wither him to the very roots of his being ; His majesty would overwhelm him ; His knowledge of him would utterly confound him ; His glory and power would consign him to everlasting misery. If God and a fallen sinner meet, apart from Christ, woe be to the sinner ! The lake of fire would be his irrevocable portion. The essential character of God is an insuperable barrier to any sinner entering heavenly glory. He alone can open the way.

Satan is also a spirit, great, powerful, but fallen, and essentially wicked. He hates God, and he hates man, into whose nostrils the Lord God breathed the breath of life. He holds the power of darkness and of death ; he is a liar, a deceiver, a murderer ; he beguiles and deceives the whole world ; he works in the children of disobedience ; he goes about to devour ; he sets innumerable wiles, and lays innumerable snares ; he transforms himself into an angel of light ; his depths are beyond the sinner's ken. The whole world lieth in him. His knowledge is wondrous, his power enormous. The sinner with his puny forces resists him in vain. His natural though unenlightened conscience may refuse a measure of evil, and he may struggle to release himself from Satan's power, but he stands as an impassable barrier between him and the heavenly glory of God. God alone can enable him to pass.

Sin, which keeps man at a distance from God so long as he is under it, dominates all, without ex-

ception (Rom. iii. 9, v. 19). It is another insuperable barrier between the sinner and God. However a man may struggle against it, he cannot possibly free himself from it; it has taken possession of his heart and mind; both are under its sway. He can neither eradicate it from his own moral being, nor escape from its powerful influence all around him. The world is full of it. It is a huge moral blot in the sight of God, and man, so to speak, is in the blot. Its workings in him are most terrible in their effects. He devises many plans to escape it, or to ameliorate his own or his fellows' condition under it, but he still remains more or less enslaved. It haunts him all his life; it mars both his circumstances and his pleasures; it affects his health. From his birth to the end of his days, though he live an hundred years, it threatens continually to pay him its wage, death, and eventually does so. It is the only wage man's heart would not like to be increased. And yet how often men, by what we call war, pay it to one another wholesale and relentlessly! Sin is a high and wide impassable barrier. None can surmount it by any effort of his own, and yet none, without surmounting it, can ever reach the heavenly glory of God. God alone can enable him, and that in His way, not ours.

The sinner's position, then, is this, and not one is exempt. God's holiness, Satan's power, sin's mastery, are three insuperable barriers to his reaching the glory; and yet, if he thinks seriously about the matter, that is the goal of his desire. How, then,

can he reach it? What is impossible to man is possible to God, for with Him all things are possible. All his own plans are worse than folly. But God Himself, in love, has devised a plan whereby, as Scripture puts it, His banished be not expelled from Him (2 Sam. xiv. 14). And He does it for His own glory and heart's joy, in a manner worthy of and consistent with Himself. What is it?

BY THE GIFT AND DEATH OF HIS SON.

When the fulness of time had come, God sent forth His Son. The Son came into Manhood, sin apart, the holy One and the Just. Ever dwelling in the bosom of the Father, He walked in bondsman form on earth. He was the Lamb of God's providing, sent in infinite love to man to remove every barrier. He was without blemish and without spot. The strictest priestly scrutiny could find no speck of evil in Him in any form whatever. His delight was the will of God, and He went in perfect obedience to the cross. There He endured the holy judgment of God and died. And He rose again from the dead. All the claims of the holy nature and character of God were maintained and fully met. All the power of Satan was faced, overcome, and annulled. All the dominion of sin was broken. He glorified God in death infinitely more than if sin had never entered the world. He completely annulled the whole power of Satan, triumphing in resurrection over his power of death. And being made sin, He put it away from

beneath the eye of God so completely that grace has flowed through righteousness from His heart of love towards man ever since ; and sin with all its terrible consequences will at the end of time be finally removed altogether.

The love of God has broken every barrier down through Christ's finished work. On the ground of accomplished redemption, the price, His precious life's blood, God welcomes and receives any and every sinner who returns to Him. The glory of the Father claimed and raised Christ on the other side of death, where Satan has never trodden and sin has never come. God, in absolute righteousness, and for His own glory, forgives, justifies, reconciles, saves, and brings into blest relationship with Himself *every one that believeth*. He casts all his sins behind His back ; He justifies him from all things ; He reconciles him to Himself ; He delivers him from the world ; and He folds him in His fond embrace of love as one of His own sons.

Every barrier is completely and eternally removed on God's side, and His heart of love invites all alike everywhere to come home to Him. His everlasting arms are outstretched to receive them. Christ, and Christ alone, is the way. So complete is God's great and wondrous salvation that His holiness invites instead of repels, and the one who believes on Christ, His Son, is cleansed from all sin by His precious blood, and is perfectly fitted for the light of His holy presence in the risen Christ Himself, even the beloved (1 John i. 7 ; Eph. i. 6). The once far-off sinner,

with insuperable barriers between him and God, is brought right home and made at home in the holy presence of Him who is love, where Satan never has obtruded and never can, and where sin never has been and never can be. God does His work perfectly, and hence all the barriers are as though they had never been—to the one who in child-like simplicity of faith wholly submits to Him. Believing Him, we find ourselves in His presence without a spot. And He gives us His Holy Spirit, whereby, being exercised, we keep ourselves in His love, and without spot in our walk and ways, until we shall be in the full enjoyment, without hindrance, where Christ has already gone, of the salvation which is in Him with eternal glory.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, but One, Jesus, the Son of God, came up to that glory. Such an One died for God's glory and for us. Through Him our sin is gone from before God, and in Him we become God's righteousness, rejoice in hope of His glory, and wait with patience till He claims us for it for ever. This may be realised at any moment by Christ's return, for *every one that believeth*. Dear reader, are you one?

E. H. C.

Oh, to think of the Lord Himself, whom none of the princes of this world knew, but who was the Lord of glory, sitting weary on the well, thirsty, and dependent upon this world for a drink of water—the world that was made by Him, and knew Him not.

J. N. D.

"I'LL TAKE MY CHANCE FOR ETERNITY."

"COME along, Uncle George, and hear the Gospel to-night. There's a soldier who went through the South African War to speak, and you'll hear something to do you good for time and eternity." The speaker was a fine, stalwart young fisherman, who had just been converted to God, and, like all the royal family of heaven, he wanted to see his friends and kindred saved and happy too. But "Uncle George" had no desire to hear of things eternal. Long continuance in sin, and several narrow escapes from a watery grave, had hardened the aged fisherman against God and His Gospel. Strong drink had mastered him badly, and most of his earnings and evenings were spent in the public house.

Looking up to his nephew who stood awaiting his answer, the old man said in a determined tone, "I'll go to no such place, Johnnie, my lad, and I'll take my chance for eternity." Further remonstrance and invitation only drew forth a torrent of angry words; so the young fisherman had to go, heart-sore at his uncle's indifference to the things of God.

Three nights after that aged fisherman dropped down dead in the public-house, and was ushered suddenly and without God into that eternity he had spoken of so lightly.

Reader, do not trifle with God or mock His Word. There is no "chance" at the close of a Christless life. So surely as God has said "The wicked shall be turned into hell" (Psa. ix. 17) He will do it. Equally sure is the salvation of the sinner who comes to God, reposing in the merits, the atoning death of Jesus Christ as his only plea for salvation. As the damnation of the unpardoned, unbelieving sinner is sure (John iii. 18), so is the present salvation and eternal glory of the sinner who believes in Christ (John iii. 16, 36). On which side do you stand? Are you a Christ-acceptor or a Christ-rejector? There is no middle class, nothing between heaven and hell.

ANON.

NAAMAN'S THREE VISITS TO JORDAN.

(Read 2 Kings v.)

IT is interesting to see the effect which his perfect cure had on Naaman. No sooner does he come up out of Jordan absolutely clean, than he sets out for a thirty-mile ride back to Samaria. We read, "And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant" (ver. 15). This is very fine, and withal very natural. Absolutely blessed, he returns to the blesser to

express his gratitude. This is as it should be in every case of conversion. It was so with the New Testament leper—one of ten whom Jesus healed: “And one of them, when he saw that he was healed: turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed; but where are the nine?” (Luke xvii. 15-17). The path of these two lepers every convert should note.

Naaman had been all alone in his misery, but he has “all his company” with him in his joy, his emancipation, and in his blessing. The moment a man gets really converted and saved, there should be seen in him what we see here in Naaman. In his case you will find three things take place; his understanding is enlightened, his heart is enlarged, and his conscience gets exercised. Naaman had undoubtedly these three things; his mind was enlightened, for he says, “*I know* that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel” (ver. 15). The true Christian says just the same, only with fuller knowledge of God the Father. If rightly instructed he enjoys his Lord’s words—“And this is life eternal, that they might *know* thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3). Again, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life” (1 John v. 13). It is all “knowing” in Christianity. *Hoping* is all over, *i.e.*, as to uncertainty; we *know* the Lord.

So was it with Naaman. He knew God, and one is not surprised to hear him say, "Take a blessing of thy servant." He does not want to pay for his cure, but his heart is enlarged, hence he would like to express his gratitude. That is as it should be. The moment a man gets really converted his heart is opened, and his pocket also.

Now carefully note Elisha's reply:—"But he said, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused" (ver. 16). If he had, under those circumstances, taken even a bit of silver from Naaman, it would have left the idea that he had paid for his cure. That must not be. Grace is free and salvation also. God is a giver, not a seller of salvation. This is plainly written in Scripture, and Elisha's action simply illustrates it. What answers to it in the New Testament is the Lord's dealings with those whom He healed. When He healed a man's body He never said "Follow me." He said to Matthew the publican, whom He attracted from his money bags, "Follow me," but when He healed the body He always said, "Go thy way." Affection for Christ is spontaneous; and devotedness to Christ is spontaneous. I do not say, fellow-believer, that you *must* follow Christ; you *may*—take care you do not miss your chance. Are you going to waste your time in the world? Be earnest, serious, and serve the Lord while you have the opportunity.

But the man whose healing we have been considering had a conscience as well as a heart, and

so have you; and that his conscience got exercised as to God's claims and the way of worshipping Him, is charmingly apparent: "And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? For thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord" (ver. 17). Now how could Naaman have learned of God's way of being worshipped? The little captive maid evidently knew the Scriptures, and had not hidden her light under a bushel in her master's house. I feel sure that she had heard or had read God's Word:—"*An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon*" (Exod. xx. 24-26).

If Christians had only read and heeded these three verses, there would not be all the things to meet the natural eye that one sees all around to-day. This is what God says, If you are going to draw near to Me in worship, make Me only an altar of earth. That is not very grand, you say. No, the very reverse. The moment you put man's work into God's things all is spoiled.

Naaman had somehow heard these words, and

now when he is cleansed, and his heart enlarged, his conscience gets exercised and he says, I should like to worship the Lord according to His word. You say, "It does not make very much difference." What, it makes no difference where I go? Naaman knew better than you. Christians tell me a number of things are quite "unessential." Naaman says, God has a way in which He is to be worshipped, and I should like to obey Him therein. Well done, Naaman! I wonder if *you* have found out God's way. You may have to give up a great many things you have been born and bred in. What of that if you please God? Again, you will have to break with the world and go forth to Jesus without the camp; that is, you will relinquish man's religion, which is always of a sensuous and worldly order, because it is not according to God.

But why did Naaman want the two mules' burden of earth from the land of Israel? People think to-day very much as he did, and consider that there is some value in a little bit of so-called *consecrated* earth, or stone, or lime. This is all flesh and folly. One can overlook it in Naaman, for he knew no better. He had the idea—it was foolish of him—that the earth of the land of Israel was better than that of Damascus whereon to worship God. We do not hear that he got his "two mules' burden of earth." Doubtless Elisha assured him that the earth at Damascus was as good as Israel's to put his offering on.

Then he says, There is only one thing troubles me, "In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that

when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing" (ver. 18). That amounts to this: When I go and by my presence sanction idolatry—which is a denial of the rights of Jehovah—when I go and do what I know I should not do, the Lord forgive me. We perhaps would have said, "No, that will never do," and he would have gone away with a chain of bondage round his neck. Elisha says, "Go in peace." Does that mean, You may go and do it, Naaman? Certainly not; he could not say that. To have said "You may go," would have been to sanction idolatry. To have said, "No, Naaman, of course you cannot go," would have put him in bondage, and God never does that. Can I say to any one, Go and do what is wrong? No. What Elisha says is—"Go in peace"—i.e., You have just tasted God's grace, go away and enjoy it. Do not worry your head as to what will happen next week or the week after.

Thus cheered and blessed, Naaman turns his face homewards, and of course has to pay

HIS THIRD VISIT TO JORDAN,

and as he crossed it one can well imagine the feelings of thankfulness that swelled his heart on the recollection of the deep blessing he had got through its waters.

And the house of Rimmon, what of it? Did he

ever go to it again? I doubt it. When he got home he found his master was sick, and soon after Hazael, a fellow-servant, flung a wet cloth over his face and smothered him (see 2 Kings viii. 7-15). I should gather from the narrative that Naaman never was tested in the way he thought he would be, and more than that, Elisha's visit to Damascus must have been a great comfort and stay to him.

Young believer, do not be troubled as to what will happen if you follow the Lord. Come to Him if you are a sinner, and set your heart to follow Him if you are a saint, and do not think about consequences. How blessed is the Word of God! In our story we have first the sinner's word, "Go wash"; and then the saint's word, "Go in peace." Have you set out to walk through this scene, a child of God through faith in Jesus, and is your heart set to please the Lord? Then "Go in peace." Enjoy what His grace has given you, and let the morrow take care of itself. Why? Because he says, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

W. T. P. W.

WHILE *watching* is the attitude of the servant, *working* is his characteristic. How sweet to notice that the Lord has given "to every man his work." There is room for all, place for all, and work for all that love Him. No two have the same work, nor can another really do that which is allotted to each. Therefore to know one's work, and then to stick to it, is of prime importance.

W. T. P. W.

“SINKING INTO HELL.”

IN a small town of South Wales there existed for some years an “Infidel Club,” the members of which were generally known by their dissipated lives. Loud were their blasphemies against God and His Christ, and terrible their boasting, each seeming to do his best in ridiculing the things of God. However, “God is not mocked,” though in long-suffering grace He bears with man.

One of the members being suddenly taken ill, the doctor was speedily summoned, and pronounced the case hopeless. As the time of departure drew near the dying infidel was filled with terror, that which was his boast in time seeming to give no comfort as he neared eternity.

A club comrade visiting the dying man, seeing the anxiety plainly depicted on his countenance, asked “What’s the matter, mate? Hold on.” The dying man with some effort replied, “I’ve held on too long; I’m sinking into hell!” and fell back dead! Thus warned of God, the club comrade left, but seemed soon to forget that death-bed scene. Hardening his heart against God, he pursued his evil course, until one night, turning out of the public-house where he had been drinking, the poor infidel missed his way, and was found in the mill-pond dead! Reader, God is not mocked!

“Beware, lest he take thee away with his stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee” (Job xxxv. 18).

J. W. H. N.

MY HIDING PLACE.

HAIL! Sovereign Love, which first began
That scheme to rescue fallen man!
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace,
Which gave my soul a Hiding Place.

Against the God who built the sky
I fought with hands uplifted high;
Despised the mention of His grace,
Too proud to seek a Hiding Place.

Enwrapt in thick Egyptian night,
And fond of darkness more than light,
Madly I ran the sinful race,
Secure without a Hiding Place.

And thus the eternal counsels ran,
"Almighty Love, arrest that man!"
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no Hiding Place.

Indignant Justice stood in view,
To Sinai's fiery mount I flew;
But Justice cried with frowning face,
"This mountain is no Hiding Place."

On Jesus God's just vengeance fell,
Which would have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for a sinful race,
And thus became their Hiding Place.

Should sevenfold storms of thunder roll,
And shake this globe from pole to pole,
No thunderbolts shall daunt my face,
For Jesus is my Hiding Place.

A few more rolling suns at most,
Shall land me on fair Canaan's coast,
Where I shall sing the song of grace,
And see my glorious Hiding Place.

ANDRÉ.

These lines were written by Major André, a few days before he was executed as a spy, during the Revolutionary War in the United States.

Reader, if you cannot from your heart say "Jesus is my Hiding Place," remember it is your own fault, for He (Jesus) says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. ii. 3).

We must all some day stand before our God, with our sins either on us or washed away through faith in Jesus Christ, who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the cross. Let me ask you in love to your never-dying soul, How will you stand in that all-important day? Now is the day of salvation, God says, NOW.

T. S. E. W.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

IT was on an autumn morning now many years ago, that a child of God, a young doctor, went on board one of the Laird steamers for the purpose of crossing from Sligo to Glasgow. Shortly after the ship left the harbour, the breeze freshened and in a short time had increased to a tremendous storm.

The young doctor loved the sea, and was greatly delighted at being out for the first time in a real storm. The ship rocked and rolled, but he made his way to a sheltered spot, and settled down quietly to enjoy the wonderful sight. There was danger, he knew, but knew also that God was his Father, and that He held the waters in the hollow of His hand, so that in his heart there was no fear.

He had been sitting for some time, watching with delight the waves in their wild play, when his attention was attracted by a little cry, and looking up, he saw a poor old woman crouching down close by him, her face the picture of anxiety and terror. Pitying the feeble-looking creature, he asked her gently, "You are not afraid, are you?"

"It is a terrible storm, sir," she answered, "and it is hard to say how it may end."

"I will tell her about the Lord Jesus," he said to himself, "perhaps she will listen when she is so much afraid;" and making place for her beside him, he said, "Sit down here, and I will tell you a story."

She looked into the gentle face, and quickly gathering confidence, she sat down close beside him and was soon ready to listen to his story, so he began.

“There was once a very great King who reigned over a very great kingdom; indeed He was the greatest King that ever reigned, and had a vast number of subjects under Him. He was a very good King, too, and had a very kind heart, He loved His subjects so well that He thought nothing too good for them.

“One sad day an enemy of the King got in amongst His subjects, and by saying unkind things about Him sowed discord amongst them, so that very soon they all, rich and poor, old and young, rose up in rebellion against Him.

“Now, in that kingdom, the punishment for rebellion was death, and the King was greatly grieved to think that the people He loved so well had made themselves liable to such a penalty, and He began to consider what was to be done in order to save them from destruction.

“He had one Son who was very dear to Him; indeed He was the delight of His heart, and He always took Him into His confidence about everything which He wished to do; so He told the Prince that He wanted to save the people from the punishment which they had brought upon themselves. They consulted as to what could be done, and soon came to the conclusion that there was no remedy except in the death of a substitute, one who was innocent of the crime of which the others were guilty.

“At once the Prince said, ‘My Father, I know you love them and want to save them, and as I delight to do what you wish, I will die instead of them.’ Was it not very kind of the Prince? but, you see, He too had a very loving heart, and did not wish to allow the rebels to be destroyed. It was a great grief to the King’s heart to think of allowing His only Son to suffer, but He saw it was the only way to save His people, and so He gave Him up to die.

“Well, the day came when the Prince left His palace-home, and was given into the hands of wicked men, who hated Him and killed Him, yes, He was slain by the very men for whom He had left His home to die.

“Now that the claims of the law were satisfied and that the King could righteously forgive them, He sent out heralds far and wide through His kingdom to proclaim a free pardon to every rebel who would lay down his arms and accept it.

“Some of them accepted the pardon, laid down their arms and were freely forgiven; others would not accept it but continued in rebellion, and there was nothing left for the King but to allow the sentence of the law to be executed on them.

“Now I will tell you the meaning of my story. The great King is God. You and I and every other sinner are the rebel subjects, the Prince who died for us is the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, and God has sent us a message to say that if we will only accept the Lord Jesus as our Saviour and come to Him for pardon, it will be freely given to us.”

That was the doctor's story, my reader, and now, how do you think the message of God's love so simply given was received? I will tell you.

The look of interest faded from the old woman's face, as she coldly said, "Ah, that is too easy a way, sir, for us to be saved; we must work for it."

The young Christian grew very sad when he saw how his message was received, for he felt that "the truest heart that ever loved" was misunderstood and misrepresented, that God's great love was despised and His salvation rejected.

And now, my reader, what are you going to do with God's message of love? You too are a rebel, and if you do not come to Christ for salvation you must surely be lost, for there is no hope for you but in Him. *To-day* He offers you pardon, He has died to obtain it for you, will you accept it or reject it? "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and *by his stripes* we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 5 and 6.)

As sinners we had brought upon ourselves the penalty of eternal banishment from God, but the sinless, holy Lord Jesus took our place when on the cross and bore to be forsaken by God, so that we might bask in the sunshine of His presence for ever.

God raised His Son from the dead and now He sits at His right hand in brightest glory, for He must show through all the ages His delight in the One who

delighted to do His will. Do you want to give joy to the heart of the God who gave up so much for your sake? Then give the affections of your heart to the One whom He delights to honour, even to His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. w.

YOUR SINS WILL MEET YOU ONE DAY.

SIN is an awful reality. It is one of the most stupendous facts in the universe. As a hydra-headed monster it has been stalking about this world for the past six thousand years, cursing, blighting, withering, blasting, damning all that it comes in contact with.

Wherever it travels it brings poison with its breath. Whatever it touches it inflicts a sting more deadly than the most venomous reptile. It has put the whole world out of joint, and turned it into a moral chaos. Its devastating effects are seen in the various forms of misery around us to-day. Its awful curse is witnessed in the drunkenness and immorality, lying and deceit, practised both in town and country. The workhouses, asylums, and graveyards tell the ghastly tale of sorrow and suffering it has brought in its train. No one has escaped its poisonous venom. The king and the peasant, the learned and the illiterate, are alike affected by it. No circle of society can claim exemption from the evil. The sad havoc it has

wrought no plummet can fathom, no human understanding can grasp. It is only known to God, and will not be fully manifested until the judgment throne is set.

Have you the forgiveness of sins? "A plain question," you may answer. But you will admit, my reader, that it is a most momentous one. Your everlasting weal or woe hangs on how you stand in reference to it. Sinned against God you have: for "all have sinned." If you die and meet God in your sins, you will be banished from His presence for ever. "Be sure your sin will find you out."

You may ask, What is sin? Let the sacred page answer. "The thought of foolishness is sin." "All unrighteousness is sin." "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." "Sin is lawlessness" (N.T.), which is simply doing one's own will.

You may say, "I am not as great a sinner as many a person I know." Granted! But remember one sin drove the brightest cherub out of heaven. For one sin the angels, that kept not their first estate, are reserved in chains under darkness, until the judgment of the great day. One sin banished Adam and Eve from Eden. For one sin Ham, the wicked son of Noah, was cursed of God, and his children made subject to perpetual servitude. One sin hindered Moses from entering the promised land. For one sin the covetous Achan was stoned to death, and all Israel were smitten before their enemies. One sin brought down wrath upon King Uzziah, and

he was plagued with leprosy until the day of his death. For one sin Ananias and Sapphira were stricken dead. The awful results of one sin—Adam's—brought the eternal Son of God from heaven's brightest glory to earth's deepest misery, and led Him to go into the dark dominion of death, and through the unutterable anguish and unfathomable suffering of Calvary's cross. And one sin unforgiven will keep you out of heaven, and shut you up in hell for ever. How solemn!

Do not think, my honest reader, that sin is a light thing in the eyes of unsullied purity and divine holiness. Think not that you can evade looking at your sins, however unpleasant the task may be, or that God will forget one of them. A faithful register of them is kept in heaven, and your sins will meet you one day. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after" (1 Tim. v. 24).

It is in vain for you to be like the ostrich, who, deprived of reason, hides her head in the sand, and forgets that her pursuers will overtake her. Your sins will surely overtake you, perhaps when you least expect it, and are least prepared to face the just and awful consequences of them.

Another has graphically described an awakened conscience thus, "with whip of scorpions, over bed of spikes, in pinch of midnight darkness it chases guilt." If your conscience is hardened through lust, or religiousness, or both, and has not yet been awakened to the gravity and perilousness of your

position, it will yet be aroused, if not on a death-bed, in the awful torments of hell-fire.

Remember, "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You must either honestly face your sins now in the searching light of God's holy presence, as a repentant sinner, confessing your sins, saying, "I have sinned," and hear Him say to you, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace"; or else have them bound upon you for all eternity, in the anguish of dark despair, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Sin and holiness cannot dwell together. Holiness abhors sin, and righteousness must punish it. My past history of guilt God cannot overlook. If He took no notice of it, He would forfeit His claim to be a righteous God. To admit me into heaven in my sins would be to deny His holy character.

How then can God righteously clear me? is a question of the utmost importance to my soul, and to every awakened sin-burdened conscience.

Only one way was open, and that was, that some one be found who could bear the penalty for me in such a way as would meet the requirements of God's righteous throne. This in mercy God gave His own Son to accomplish. Christ came as the sent One of God to bear the judgment. God's grace can now flow out to me through a righteous channel. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many"

(Heb. ix. 28). "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6).

I ask myself, Am not I one of the "all," whose sins Christ bore? Am not I one of the "many" for whom He offered Himself? Did His death settle the whole account for me? Is God fully satisfied with what His Son accomplished? If so, can I be any longer charged with the guilt of my sins? Am I then justified, or reckoned righteous, on account of what another has done?

Hear what Paul says, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 25, v. 1). "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. v. 9). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5).

These scriptures drive all uncertainty from my mind. I do not wait until the judgment day to see whether I will be acquitted or condemned. I am justified now by God Himself from every charge of sin. All was charged to my substitute, whose resurrection is the evidence that I am eternally cleared. "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that con-

demneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 33, 34).

Now it is important to state for the sake of young believers and others who may not be clear, that justification is one act. Justification is from something. Hence it says, "All that believe are justified from all things." We are cleared from all charge, and pronounced righteous by God Himself. At the end of Romans iv. we are justified from our sins. At the end of Romans v. we have justification of life which is simply life in a risen Christ, to which no charge of sin can ever be attached. We are completely severed from all the responsibility of Adam, which involved death and condemnation, and we are now connected with Christ—the last Adam. He is our life, and our righteousness before God.

I never can lose my justification by anything I may do, however grievous it may be in God's sight. I may do many things I ought not to do, and grieve the Holy Spirit who dwells within me, and defile my conscience, and have to hang my head down before God, or even before my fellow-Christians. David and Peter had to do this.

When both these men sinned so grievously, we do not read of them seeking to be justified again, though we well know that each of them turned to the Lord, and sought restoration. The difference between justification and restoration is simply this, that justification is from a state in which I was by nature,

but in which I can never be before God again. Restoration is to a condition of soul which I may have lost through my carelessness and unwatchfulness.

David prays, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Ps. li. 12, 13). The Lord having warned Peter of Satan's desire to have him before his failure, said to him, "When thou art converted (or restored) strengthen thy brethren." He would know himself better through his sad failure, and consequently would be able to warn others of danger, and encourage them also through the Lord's grace to His failing servant. After his restoration the Lord committed His most precious treasure to Peter's keeping. What grace! How unlike man it is, but how very like the Lord.

In 1 Corinthians vi. 11, Paul distinctly says to the Corinthians, "Such were some of you"—speaking of their past state—"but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Notwithstanding that the Corinthians were justified in the full value of the name of the Lord Jesus, which involves all that He is before God, their ways were not satisfactory, but the very contrary. They were a great grief to Paul's heart. He had to weep and break his heart over them. Yet for all that he did not unchristianise them. He rebuked them very sharply, but in the deepest love. He tried to awaken their slumbering consciences to a sense of their moral

state. He exhorts them to "awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some have not the knowledge of God." This does not mean that they were not converted, but that they had become utterly insensible as to what suited God's presence in their conduct there.

Paul's love for them, in seeking their restoration, represented the Lord's love for them. He loved them as a father loves his children. If a child sins ever so much against his father, it does not thereby break the relationship that exists. The father might reprove the child, and even put him at a moral distance from him, that he might be led to feel the gravity of his offence against his father. But if the child was humbled and broken, and came before the father in the spirit of self-judgment, owning his offence—if we understand a father's affection—what father would then keep the child at a distance? The father would only be too glad to have the distance removed that there should be no restraint upon his affections flowing out in the fullest manner to the child.

Though the Scriptures exhort the believer against committing sin, and exhort us also to be holy as God is holy, yet we may and do sin. "In many things we all offend." To please oneself is the very essence of sin, and not to walk before God with a perfect heart is sin. If we were always abiding in Christ, and thus in communion with God, we should not please ourselves. The pleasure of God would control our whole life. But who would dare to say they never please themselves, and always walk before God with a perfect heart? Sin is not measured by our

poor thoughts, but by what suits the divine presence. The light of God's presence so penetrates and searches the hidden springs of our moral being, that we could not stand before God for one moment but for the consciousness that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. No matter what the light detects or exposes in us, the blood is the abiding witness that all has been cleared away before God.

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). We never could restore ourselves, nor would we seek it were it not for Christ's advocacy. He is there in heaven in the unchanging value of His own work. He maintains our cause before the Father, and in the face of our accuser, the devil, who ever seeks to hinder us in our approach to God and in our testimony for God, by his accusations whether true or false. The Holy Spirit, who dwells within us in response to the Advocate, makes us feel our state. He takes us back to the point of departure, and if truly humbled we not only confess our sins, but we judge ourselves—turn from and repudiate what we may have fallen into. We then get a more just estimation of what we are in God's sight, and a deeper, fuller sense of what His perfect grace is. It is helpful to remember what another has said, "We cannot mend the past, but we cannot be right in the present without judging the past, if truly humbled, and we had to live our life over again, we will not think we could do it any better."

Salvation is all of grace. Those who know them-

selves will be the most ready to confess it. Grace at the top, grace at the bottom, and grace all the way between. God has taken us up to exhibit His rich grace in us, even now. In the ages to come He will show us what is the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

May the deep sense of grace cause our hearts to abound in praise continually. Amen. P. W.

SUICIDE ARRESTED.

“**F**OUND drowned in one of the ornamental waters of a London park, the body of a man who had evidently committed suicide sometime during Sunday evening.” I cannot tell you the conclusion to which the jury came as to the motives which led to the act, but I can tell you the steps leading to the poor fellow’s sad end. That man had a friend, a companion in sin.

Their lives had been spent in self-gratification and drunken orgies. One of them had served his time as a soldier, and after he left the army had settled down with his wife in the cellar kitchen of a crowded London street. He obtained work at his trade, but no sooner was a little money in his pocket than he hastened to a public-house to gratify his passion for drink. This at length preyed upon his health, and consumption set in. He became weak and ill, and to all appearance was a hopeless wreck, morally and

physically. He still pursued his sinful course with his boon companion.

Things got worse and worse, until both became so wretched that they decided to take away their lives, supposing this would end their misery. They made a solemn compact with each other on the following Sunday to end their existence. The one man carried out his purpose. Did he end his misery? Let Scripture answer, "In hell he lifted up his eyes being in torment." He had gone "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Can a suicide's death atone for a sinful life? Man is an immortal being. He does not cease to exist when he dies. If unsaved, he departs to learn that "indignation and wrath," "tribulation and anguish," is the portion of every soul that doeth evil.

What about your soul, my reader? "Oh," you say, "I am not a drunkard, I do not intend committing suicide." Perhaps not, but if you die in your sins you will spend eternity with that drunken profligate and suicide. Do you like the prospect? It is not said that the rich man who lifted up his eyes in hell was a very bad man. He only did what you are doing. He enjoyed the good things of this world, and left God out.

Now what became of the other man? He was fully determined to carry out his part of the compact. He left home on the Sunday evening with his mind full of how he would carry out his promise to his friend and end his misery. On his way he had to pass the entrance to a building where a number of

earnest young men used to preach the gospel. Their congregation was a very changing one, and was chiefly recruited from the passers-by in the public streets.

One young man named A——, specially set upon getting hold of people, observed a poor wretched-looking man leaning against a lamp post, sunk in deep thought. It was the miserable would-be suicide, cogitating how to end his life. He was so absorbed in thought that before he was aware an arm was put round him, and ere he realised where he was, he found himself sitting where the gospel was being preached. My friend Mr B—— was preaching. As this poor man came into the room those lovely words fell upon his ear, "*Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.*" They are part of John iii. 16, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

There and then that man was saved. The Spirit of God brought the Word of God in living power, and he passed out of death into life immediately. He had not been in that room two minutes before he was converted. There was no mistake about it. God saved Saul of Tarsus on his way to take other people's lives away. God saved poor O—— on his way to take his own life away. He can save you, dear reader, as He did them. Why wait? Why not put yourself into that word "*whosoever believeth*" and get salvation, life, and blessing now? Oh, you say, I do not believe in sudden conversions. Perhaps not,

but if you read the Acts you will find that nearly all the cases recorded are those who were suddenly converted. Any way, you cannot be in death and life at the same time.

O——'s conversion had such a wonderful effect upon him that the neighbours marvelled. His bodily disease and his spiritual disease appeared to have gone together. He was a miracle of mercy. He brought his wife to the preaching, and she too got blessing. He lived many years a witness to the matchless grace that had saved him from a suicide's death here, and eternal death hereafter in the lake of fire. The God of all grace met and saved him. That same blessed God desires your salvation. Come to the graveside of those two men. One died in his sins; the other died without them. One went straight to misery; the other went straight to happiness. One became the companion of suicides, murderers, and men who lived to please themselves; the other went to the presence of his Saviour, and will spend his eternity with "whosoever believeth." With which one will you spend yours?

"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?

“WHY TARRIEST THOU?”

“**A**ND now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized,” was the question and injunction addressed by Ananias to Saul of Tarsus at Damascus, and I wish to pass the query on to you, dear unsaved reader. “Why tarriest thou?” Why are you still unsaved? a stranger to grace and to God—why?

Are you afraid of your companions—of what others will say? Yours will be the coward’s doom, *i.e.*, “The fearful . . . shall have their part in the lake of fire, which is the second death” (Rev. xxi. 8).

Are you held back by considerations of what you will have to *give up*? Or, in other words, does some idol, wrapped in Satan’s tinsel so as to hide its true character, struggle to maintain its supremacy in your soul and to exclude Christ? Cast it out, it is but an idol, a hideous idol. “Why tarriest thou?” Arise! cast it out. Why should it rob you of Christ and salvation.

But again, you may say, “I mean to be saved some day.” Yes, some day, so did Felix! so did thousands now keeping company with the rich man in hades. “The way to hell is paved with good intentions,” some one has said. “They make it easy walking, but the end of the way comes, the gulf of an eternal hell lies across the path, and remorseless death hurls the helpless procrastinator over the brink. “Why tarriest thou?” this is the road *you* are on. O soul

get off it this very hour ; “ thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Why should eternal justice have to brand you as the fool who meant to be saved, but put off and was lost—lost for ever !

“ Decide for Christ to-day,
Procrastinate no more ;
Now mercy pleads, soon wrath will burn,
The Judge is at the door.”

Oh ! what answer can you give to God when He asks, “ And now why tarriest thou ? ”

If thy hapless soul stand before His judgment bar, unblest—the summer ended, the harvest past and thyself not saved, what wilt thou answer Him ? Ah ! thy speechless lips will refuse to utter a word, and self-condemned thou shalt pass to thy doom. But arise ! it is still the day of grace, the Saviour waits to receive thee, in spite of thy long slighting of His person, in spite of thy cold procrastination.

In accents of mercy and tender entreaty He is asking thee “ Why tarriest thou.” He is saying in mournful regret, “ Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.”

O soul, give Him the joy of receiving thee, the joy of blessing thee. Let fears, idols, delays go ; tarry no longer, thy precious soul is at stake, thy eternity is in the balance. Flee to Christ, receive Him, confess Him, live for Him, wait for Him. Then shall Christ’s love, Christ’s joy, Christ’s home be thine, and thou shalt be for ever satisfied. “ Arise, why tarriest thou ? ”

CHRIST'S FULNESS FOR MAN'S NEED.

(Read Luke v.)

YOU find in this chapter four men brought into contact with Christ, all of them alike in being sinners, but all different as to their state when the Lord meets them, yet each perfectly and divinely met by Christ, and therefore all of them afterwards witnesses of the grace of Christ.

In the first three you have the direct effects of sin on the conscience and on the body. In the last, it is more a question of the heart. But whether it be conscience, body, or heart, Christ meets every one of them perfectly. And, my reader, whatever the state of your conscience or your heart, Christ is more than able to meet that state. The body, as a rule, He does not touch now.

When the Lord first came to earth He did heal the body, as an attestation of His divine power, but the man who only believed in Christ, because of His miracles, had not soul-saving faith. You must get down before Christ in the sense of what Christ is personally, and as the Saviour of your soul, the Saviour of man. Christ is a perfect Saviour, the one who meets every need, and to whom the Holy Ghost would direct each heart. Let us see the way in which the Lord meets these four men.

1. THE CONVICTED MAN CALMED.

First we have Peter. This is not Peter's conversion. He was doubtless a converted man at this time, but he had not personally clung to and followed the One who converted him. He was like many souls to-day who are not at home with Christ, they are not happy with Him, though they have been touched by the Word of God.

Do you ask, When was Peter converted? In John i. you get his conversion. The Lord meets Peter there, shows He knows all about him, and changes his name too, that is, asserts His authority over him. You belong to me, the Lord says, as it were. Peter did not, however, learn his lesson; and now in this fifth chapter of Luke, the Lord enforces this truth, emancipates him, and brings him out on His side.

In the scene before us the Lord does not say to Peter, "Lend me your boat," for He is Lord of all. He has bought the world, as well as created it. Men may deny Him, but He is their Master. I do not say all are redeemed, but all are *bought*, and the price was His own blood. All is His, and the Lord therefore took Peter's boat, preached to men, and then He paid Peter for the use of his boat. He is beholden to no man. "Launch out into the deep," He says, "and let down your nets for a draught." "Master," says Peter, "we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing. Nevertheless, *at thy word* (that was faith), I will let down the net." Have

you, my reader, ever let down your net for a draught? Do you say, I have toiled and striven to get peace, to know that I am forgiven, and I am anxious still. *Now, then, at His word*, let down your net. "*At thy word*," I obey in faith. That is the link between God and the soul. Peter acted on Christ's word, and the net was so full, it brake; *i.e.*, the blessing was too great for the vessel. You are sure to be blessed when you obey Christ; when you let down at His command.

When Peter saw it, he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." What was his sin? Was it sin to lend the Lord his boat? Was it sin to say he had toiled all night and taken nothing? Was it wrong to let down the net? No. What then had raised the question of sin in his conscience? When he saw the fish filling up his net that day, after his night of fruitless toil, he found out it was more than a man he had in his boat that day; he found out he was in the presence of God, and, further, though long since called by Him, that he had failed to follow Him.

The divine glory of the blessed Lord shone into the recesses of Peter's guilty heart, and in a moment he goes down and judges himself to be, as he was, "a sinful man." Not merely a sinner, but "a sinful man." "Born in sin and shapen in iniquity." Sinful in the very springs of his being, the sins of every day were the outcome of a nature irretrievably bad. This discovery is always made when the soul gets into the presence of the Lord; and yet notice, where

does Peter fall? "He fell down at Jesus' knees." At the very moment when I discover that I am not fit for Christ, that is the moment when I feel I *must* have Him. "I am not fit for Thee, Lord," Peter says, as it were, "but I cannot do without Thee"; and I believe that, had the Lord moved one step from him, Peter would have clutched Him.

Have you, my reader, ever known in your history a moment like this? If not, do not delude yourself with the thought that you are converted. Has there come a moment when you, in the presence of the Lord, have found out that you are a ruined, undone sinner? Then you will also find that nothing but Christ will do for you. You may not have discovered this in the vivid way Peter did; but if you have not known it, depend upon it you and the Lord have never met.

What does Jesus now say? "Fear not." He loves to say this to the trembling soul. Have you ever heard His voice saying to you, "Fear not"? It is thus Christ speaks to souls; and if you say I have never heard Him say, "Fear not," I expect He has never heard you say, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." You have never taken your true place as a ruined sinner, and therefore you have never met Him as the peace-giving Saviour. The two go together. When a man learns what he is before God he does not incriminate his neighbours, he says, "I have sinned," not "we." When an awakened soul gets before God every other living being is left out, and that soul and God are alone.

Have you, I ask, known this moment? It is a moment of blessing, for when I learn what I am I learn also what God is. If I learn that I am full of guilt, I learn also that God is full of grace.

Peter from this time left all to follow Christ. He had an object now in Christ that eclipsed all down here. And notice this, he left his business when it was at its best and brightest. I suppose he had never had such a draught of fish as that day.

2. THE DEFILED MAN CLEANSED.

Look now at the next man, a man full of leprosy. Here we have the outbreak of sin. Sin not only gives me a guilty conscience, and makes me know I am unfit for the presence of God, but there is also the sense of defilement. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," the leper says. He knew His *power*, but he doubted His *willingness*. Are you, my reader, conscious of your sin, knowing you are defiled by it; do you know that Jesus could remove it, and yet do you doubt His *willingness*? Oh, prove Him. Come to Him and know this very day the touch of His hand. "I will, be thou clean," He says, and touches the leper. Here His divinity is proved again. Had any mere man touched a leper he would have been defiled, but when Jesus touched the leper his leprosy was healed. This man had just enough faith to come to Christ, and just enough unbelief to make him doubt Christ; but he got blessing, for it was Christ he came to. You come to Him too, my

reader. He is enough. His blood is enough to wash your sins away, and nothing but the blood of Christ is enough.

3. THE PALSIED MAN PARDONED.

Look at the next scene, the palsied man brought by the faith of others. Paralysed—the fruit of sin—he must be carried to Jesus by others. They could not come in by the door here, because Satan had that blocked up by an indifferent crowd to keep these four earnest, anxious men and their sick friend from Christ. What do they do? They break up the roof and let the man down at the feet of Jesus—the true place of blessing.

This is one of the most magnificent flights of faith. What do you think the people round about said when they saw the bottom of the bed coming down through the roof. No doubt many thought it impudent, audacious. What did Jesus think of it? He was *delighted*! “When he saw their faith, he said unto him, ‘Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.’” Faith and forgiveness are joined together by the Lord in such a way that nothing can rend them apart. The moment there is faith there is forgiveness.

We have seen then a man to whom sin has given a guilty conscience, and Jesus says when he draws near to Him, “Fear not.” We have seen a defiled man in his guilt, and to him He says, “Be thou clean.” We have seen one paralysed by his sins, and He says to him, “Thy sins are forgiven thee.” This

is the Christ for you, my reader, for He is the same to-day as He was then ; you come and trust Him.

4. THE RICH MAN SATISFIED.

Now comes the fourth man, "a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom." Jesus passes by and speaks two words, "Follow me." There the man was with bags of gold, but he was not happy, for money never made a man happy yet. Two words fall on his ear, "Follow me," and what happens? All goes ; he leaves all, rises up, and follows Jesus. He does not stay to gather up his money or anything. Two words from Christ changed the whole current of that man's life.

"Follow me ;" and he left all and followed Him. He dropped immediately into the feelings of the heart of Christ, and filled his house with sinners for Christ to address them. The moment this hitherto unsatisfied man gets his heart satisfied he sees what Christ was about, in calling sinners to repentance, and goes out and gets a house full of the right kind to a gospel feast. What a conversion ! What a grand conversion ! He had a portion in this blessed Saviour, an object to fill his heart for time and for eternity, and sought to share his new-found joy with others. Oh for a legion of Levis now-a-days ! Rob me of Christ I am poor indeed, but give me Jesus and *I have everything* my heart can want. Will not you, my reader, come to Him, listen to Him, hear His own voice, and henceforward follow Him ?

W. T. P. W.

WHICH IS BEST?

A GENTLEMAN lay dying at middle age, after a busy life spent in a useful calling. An honourable upright man, well-meaning and popular, his life had yet been passed without God, and now the end had come. Was he happy? Far from it.

All his interest in his scientific work, in business, in pleasure had gone with the ability to go on with them, and he had no hope, no faith, in the great beyond.

He was a sad example of the warning of Eccles. xii., "Remember now thy Creator . . . while the evil days come not . . . when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them," and of the warning, "The world passeth away and the lust thereof" (1 John ii. 17).

An elderly woman had also come to the close of life. Day by day she was nearing the great eternity, but her mind was clear, her soul at rest, her faith in the Saviour she had long known and loved, bright. With a decided testimony to His grace she passed away, telling her friends, "I am going to my Father's house."

Reader, which ending to life would you choose? A dark gloomy exit, or a joyful going home, secure in the power and love of Him whose "grace is sufficient"?

While life and health remain, see to your immortal

soul. Accept Jesus as Saviour, live to His praise, as this old woman did, and when death calls you His presence will be with you, and your eternal home be in "the Father's house."

W. S.

GOD'S NATURE AND PURPOSE.

THERE is nothing like the gospel, because it is the revelation of the heart of God. The Church displays His counsels and His purposes ; the gospel His nature and His heart. The latter unfolds what He would like to have, and therefore goes out to all men ; the former shows what He is determined to have, and therefore it is more limited than the other. In plain language, the nature of God which is love, is deeper, wider, fuller, more extensive and more comprehensive than His purpose, which, however blessed and large, is to a certain extent limited. The remembrance and the maintenance of these two truths would preserve all the Lord's servants right, for it would keep them fresh in the gospel, which is the expression of God's nature, and also delighted with His purpose, in the blessed assurance that what He has purposed in Christ will be yet effected, to His own eternal glory. These two aspects of God's truth it is of the last importance to preserve in their due balance ; otherwise we become lop-sided.

W. T. P. W.

"HOW SHE GOT CONVERTED."

MRS W—— lived in a little country village in Buckinghamshire. She was in the habit of attending the only chapel in the village.

A servant of the Lord one day received a letter from his brother requesting him to come and preach as they had no minister. Said he, "I considered the matter, and on conditions I went." Let us hear the story from his own lips.

"I took with me a good number of books, so that each person should have one. Time for the meeting came, and I gave orders to each deacon to see that every one received a book.

"I had a good time that night, and the chapel was full, and among our number was Mrs W——. The following day I went from door to door in the village. I came to one door and knocked. No answer came. I knocked again, but no answer. I then uplifted the latch and stepped inside. Seeing no one, I shouted, 'Anybody in? anybody in?' I listened and heard a weak voice saying, 'Yes, come up here.' It was rather dark, and I found it very difficult to find the staircase, having to pass through several doors, but at last I found it, and up I mounted.

"I found there a woman lying in bed, who greeted me with, 'Ah! I thought 'twas you, Mr C——, come and sit down.'

“ ‘Well, what brings you here?’ said I.

“ ‘I’ll tell ye all about it,’ she replied. ‘It is about two years ago when my little boy was drowned. He was playing round our well, and you know, sir, he tumbled down, and was drowned.’ Here she began to cry bitterly, then she laughed, saying, ‘Ah! but I sees it all now.’

“ ‘I could not make the woman out. I thought she must be hysterical, so I said, ‘Come, Mrs W——, whatever is the matter?’

“ ‘Holding a book up in her hand she said, ‘This is it, Mr C——, I sees it all now.’

“ ‘Well, Mrs W——, was it anything I said last night that helped you?’

“ ‘Oh no, it was nothing you said, it is this book,’ and she pressed it to her bosom.

“ ‘Taking the book from her, I saw what it was. The writer was speaking about children going to heaven, and explained how ‘the Son of man came to *save* that which was *lost*,’ and also that ‘the Son of man came to *seek* and to *save* that which was *lost*’ (see Matt. xviii. 11, and Luke xix. 10).

“ ‘She then told me all the story. Said she: ‘When my little boy was drowned, I went to one of the deacons about him, and he told me that he had not gone to heaven, he had gone to hell. And I asked the clergyman too and all the deacons, and they all told me the same. They said children could not go to heaven because they could not believe. And, oh, sir, I have been in a dreadful state since. I have had to keep my bed, being so very weak, it troubling

me so much, but oh! thank God! I see it all now. I shall meet my little boy again.'

"Truly that little book had been the means of giving her rest as to her little boy. We can all thank God for that."

Is the reader in the same difficulty? Look then at the Scriptures. Do you not see "the Son of man came to *save* that which was lost"? (Matt. xviii. 11). That refers to the little ones of whom Jesus speaks. If, on the other hand, you are a big grown-up sinner, like Zacchæus of old, He says, "The Son of man is come to *seek* and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10).

Another common delusion of to-day is, that if the child be not baptized and it dies, it will go to hell. Away with such a notion, dear reader, it is but a delusion of the devil, and is not the truth of God at all. It is not baptism that takes one to heaven, it is the precious blood of Jesus. Jesus came to save that which *was lost*, whether young or old. To this end He shed His own precious blood, and that is our title to heaven.

Well now, to come back to our story. "Said she: 'I will tell ye how I got converted. It was just after my little boy was born. I had been anxious about my soul for a long time, but I did not know what to do, and how to pray I could not tell. But thinks I, I will go and be prayed for. And you know, sir, in the chapel there is a special seat for all those who want to be prayed for, and you have to go and sit there, and then the preacher

knows you want to be prayed for. So away I went, and took my seat in the right place. The service commenced, he prayed, and then he prayed again, but he never so much as mentioned my name; no, he never prayed for me. I went away with my heart in my shoes, as they say. I thought I must be too bad a sinner, and he will not pray for me, but it only increased my anxiety. What to do I did not know. I did not know any one to whom I could tell all my heart's desire, so I made myself ill.

“‘My husband said, “Look here, you must have the doctor.” So he fetched him. He treated me for a few weeks, but one day he said, “Mrs W——, you have something on your mind, and until you relieve yourself of it, you will never be well; now tell me what it is.”

“‘Well, you know, sir, I could not tell him. I knew he was not a Christian, and he could not help me. He left off coming, and so I got gradually worse and worse, and could hardly crawl about the house.

“‘My husband was not a Christian, and I knew he could not help me, and what to do I did not know. A few weeks went on, and I got so ill that I had to call a woman in to do the washing.

“‘As I lay in bed one morning, I remembered there was something she had not got as I wanted her to wash, so I just slips something on, and comes downstairs.

“‘“Why, Mrs W——, you just look as if you were going to die. Whatever is the matter?”

““That’s just how I feel ; I think I shall die.”

“““But, Mrs W——, whatever is the matter?”

““And you know, sir, I saw in that woman’s eyes something I had never seen before. I felt I could trust her.

“““Well, it is just like this,” said I ; and I told her all about it.

““Then she wiped the suds off her hands, and says, “Why, woman, that is just what happened to me last week. Come now, down on your knees,” and we both went down. Then she started to pray, and, sir, she did pray, and as she prayed I felt the burden fall right off, like it did off Bunyan’s pilgrim, and oh, it was a happy feeling ! Then when she had finished I started to pray for the first time, and we had a grand prayer meeting that morning, sir, in the scullery. And, sir, that is how I got converted.’”

May this simple narrative lead you, dear reader, to come to Jesus now, for “now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).

E. W—L.

FRAGMENT.

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of light. It is a wonderful thing light. Scripture says, “Whatsoever doth make manifest is light” (Eph. v. 13). The light shows exactly what the true state of affairs is ; and therefore, until a man is in the light he does not know what he is, and he does not know God. In fact, until a soul is brought into the light, it really does not understand its true state before God.

W. T. P. W.

AN UNFAILING REMEDY.

A BISHOP was one day conversing with a physician who was an infidel. "I am surprised," said the doctor, "that such an intelligent man as you should believe such an old fable as the gospel."

The bishop replied, "Doctor, suppose years ago some one had recommended to you a prescription, and taking it according to order, you had been cured of a terrible disease, what would you say of the man who would not try your prescription?"

"I WOULD SAY HE WAS A FOOL."

This was the reply of the doctor. The bishop continued: "Twenty-five years ago I tried the power of God's grace. It made a different man of me. All these years I have preached salvation, and WHENEVER ACCEPTED, I HAVE NEVER KNOWN IT TO FAIL."

Tens of thousands in every rank of life could bear the same testimony as the good bishop.

With all man's inventive powers he finds himself to-day utterly unable to remedy his own wretched state. He cannot make himself happy in the present, nor can he avert the inevitable doom he so much dreads in the future. Infidelity can do nothing but condemn those who accept it. What is the good of men talking against the remedy the gospel proposes when they have nothing to supply in its stead?

Death is here, and we want a remedy. Sin is here also, and we want victory over it. Death would cause us alarm if sin were not here. Sin has brought death, and man has a conscience which every time he sins reproves and makes him feel it. "Conscience makes cowards of us all," said Shakespeare, for he knew what God had said — "After death the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27).

It is admitted that there are many social improvements to-day. But often those who are highest in the social scale are the most inveterate sinners towards God. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?"

Improve or restrain man as we may, *the evil is in himself*. If it does not break out in one form it will in another. So it is asked in Job, "How then can man be justified (made right) with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?"

The answer to these questions is found in the gospel only. "Being justified (made right) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. v. 1, 2).

Three things come out very plainly in these verses:—

First, justification and its result—peace with God.

Second, acceptance and its result—freedom of approach to God.

Third, joy now in a future hope—the glory of God.

JUSTIFICATION AND ITS RESULT.

It is an utter impossibility for man to justify his fellow. We may pardon an injury, but we find it almost impossible to forget it. God alone can justify—that is, clear from all charge of guilt.

It cannot be insisted on too strongly that the only right way in which God could justify a sinner is through the work of Christ; it alone could meet the claims of that throne we, as sinners, had rebelled against. He through the eternal Spirit offered Himself up as a willing victim to make propitiation for sin.

Had this not been so, no gospel could ever have reached us. On our side we were absolutely without hope, and must have remained so for ever had God in grace not acted on our behalf. David brought back Absalom, without judging his sin of murder, because he loved him, hence in God's righteous government he himself suffered in consequence.

If we are brought back to God righteousness must be maintained. In love God gave His own Son to die for the guilty. He, blessed be God, came in full accord with His holy mind, to do His will, and accomplish our eternal redemption. Nothing was left incomplete on His side. All that Divine wisdom and love could do has been done. He said, "I have glorified thee on the earth, and *finished the work* thou gavest me to do." "IT IS FINISHED." Wonderful words!

Nothing more is needed. Nothing more does

God ask. God is glorified and the eternal justification of the believer is secured. Our justification is a *present* thing. "Much more then, being now JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, we shall be saved from wrath through him." "And by him all that believe ARE JUSTIFIED from all things" (Rom. v. 9; Acts xiii. 39).

The resurrection of Christ is the fullest evidence of it. In love He settled all for us. In righteousness God has raised Him, in proof that all is settled to His satisfaction and glory. "He was raised again for our justification." If He is raised we are as clear of our sins as He is. What a Saviour!

PEACE WITH GOD is the sure result of knowing my perfect justification by God, who, instead of being my judge, has become my best Friend—my justifier. Besides being cleared of all the past, we have received a new life in Christ, to which no charge of sin can be attached. This Scripture calls "justification of life." We are made the righteousness of God in Him, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, RIGHTEOUSNESS, sanctification, and redemption."

God may well challenge the whole universe to bring a charge against the subjects of His grace. If the question is asked, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" the answer is, "IT IS GOD THAT JUSTIFIETH. Who is he that condemneth?" Before angels, men, and demons we may hold up our heads and walk fearlessly on, because God is for us, and if He be for us who can be against us?

ACCEPTANCE AND ITS RESULT.

FREEDOM OF APPROACH TO GOD *is the result of knowing my perfect acceptance with God.* This is the grace or favour in which we always stand. This never changes because it is all of grace. *The experience which flows from the knowledge of it may change, but the favour itself changes not.*

What would it be for any sovereign to pardon a man who attempted his own life, and to give him liberty to have access to his household, and sit down at his well-spread and richly furnished table? All would exclaim that such would be marvellous grace. If the same man were made to feel when he sat as the king's guest that he was very much an object of royal favour, how glad would that pardoned man feel. That would be grace abundant or "much more" grace.

So the believer has not only been forgiven and completely justified, but he has free access to God in Christ who is the beloved of God. The Holy Spirit has been given to us to assure our hearts of this love. He makes us feel that we are objects of Divine and special favour. The favour of God is only measured to us by the measure in which it rests on Christ.

"AS HE IS, SO ARE WE in this world" (John iv. 17). "He hath made us accepted IN THE BELOVED" (Eph. i. 6). Marvellous statements! Both passages are pregnant with meaning of the deepest spiritual kind to those who believe in God's love.

If we walk in simplicity and live in the light of all this wonderful love or favour, there will be no difficulty in our being happy. Our rejoicing in hope of the glory of God will be a real thing. I would rather say that the difficulty would be not to rejoice or be happy. Happiness is not something we can manufacture. *It is the result of enjoying the favour we have been brought into with God.*

If believers are not happy there are two reasons for it at least. Either we do not understand or live in the enjoyment of grace, or else we are allowing in our heart and ways what is inconsistent with holiness.

True happiness walks hand in hand with holiness. The enjoyment of grace makes me happy. When I am happy in the sense of grace, God commands my whole moral being. *I live to Him in the power of His grace.* That is holiness. I love what He loves, and hate what He hates.

Holiness is not an attainment as some think, it is a result. I cannot live to God by an effort of my mind, I must have power—inward power—for such a path. The enjoyment of grace gives me, by the Spirit, all the power I need. If I walk in grace the flesh is subdued or mortified without effort. Though I say without effort, I do not mean without exercise.

But even exercise is the fruit of grace working. In my exercise I think of what pleases God. I turn to Him for grace that I may not fail, and in confession and self-judgment if I do fail. Effort is the effect of legal strain. It only shows I am not estab-

lished in grace. Exercise is healthy, and it promotes spiritual growth. An exercised state leads to self-distrust, which is always a safe state.

OUR FUTURE HOPE.

THE GLORY OF GOD takes in all that shall be displayed in the millennium or the world to come, when the Church, the loved object of Christ and the subject of eternal counsel, will be brought out before the astonished universe to be the eternal witness of all that God is in His nature and character.

When Jesus comes all the saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air. He will introduce us into the joy of the Father's house, where we shall enjoy the Father's love in all its fulness as that love is known to Himself as man. That will only be known by us; it will not be seen by the world. The Father's house will not be display. The glory of God will be the full and perfect display of what His heart is.

What a future is ours! We may well rejoice in view of it, and count the trivial things of earth as vanity or worse in comparison to the glory that awaits us. Paul, who suffered the loss of all things for Christ in this world, endured privations of every kind and martyrdom at last, said that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be *displayed in us*." "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

We are unknown to the world now as the children

of God. We only appear like other men to it. Our Master was unknown also, yet He was God's Son. That makes its guilt the more awful for rejecting Him. Because it rejected Him and covered Him with shame instead of glory, we ought to be content to be unknown by it. If we follow in His footsteps with our eye fixed on Him who is our hope, we cannot look for great things here.

Christ is heir to all things in the vast universe. We are joint-heirs with Him. All the world's glitter, glory, pomp, and pageant dwindle in utter insignificance and nothingness in comparison with what shall be our eternal portion.

But besides and underneath all, we shall enjoy His love in a special and peculiar way. This will be even greater than the glory. What were the glory if we did not know His love! Of course the glory is the result of His love. But oh! *His love*. What a sweet spring of deep eternal joy to the heart that has tasted it now and drunk into its living depths!

After the apostle has taken in the vast expanse of heights and depths, and lengths and breadths, he falls back on the love he had lived in the enjoyment and constraining power of when he said, "And to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge" (Eph. iii.). That love will bring us to heaven.

"Glory supreme is there,
Glory that shines through all,
More precious still that love to share,
As those that love did call."

A RUNAWAY SLEEPER.

“What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.”—JONAH i. 6.

THE foregoing words were spoken to a runaway sleeper. The Lord had told Jonah to go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, instead of which he fled from the presence of the Lord, and went *down* to Joppa. He there found a ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare thereof, and went *down* into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

A storm arose, and Jonah was gone *down* into the sides of the ship, and he lay and was “fast asleep.” He next went *down* to the bottom of the sea.

Such is the path of the sinner, always downwards. Such is yours, my dear unconverted reader. Away from God, and slumbering in your sins, unless you wake up, you will soon be in the depths of an eternal hell. May God in His mercy wake you up. “What meanest thou?” said the shipmaster to Jonah.

What meanest *thou*, dear Christless one? Dost thou mean to die in thy sins? Arise, it is high time to bestir thyself. Death is approaching, thou hast a holy God to meet. Thou art disregarding the mercy of God, and slighting the Saviour’s blood.

“Arise, call upon thy God.” Why? “For the

same Lord *over* all is rich *unto* all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 12, 13).

"Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not," said the ship-master to Jonah. You cannot say that, for you will find, dear reader, when you call upon God that He *has already* thought of you. He thought of you before the world was created, and planned a great salvation for you.

He has accomplished it all in the death and bloodshedding of His own beloved Son. Such is His great heart of love. That blessed One is risen from the dead and lives at God's right hand, a Saviour for you. Forgiveness, peace with God, and eternal glory, through the crucified, risen, and glorified Jesus, may be yours if you only turn to Him in faith.

As one who loves your soul, let me plead with you. Be in earnest *now*, do not delay. Life's voyage will soon be over. Where will you spend eternity? Be no longer a runaway sleeper, turn to God and perish not. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

"What meanest thou?" my reader.

"Do you mean to miss
Eternal bliss?"

Do you mean to know
Eternal woe?"

“HOLD ON, MOTHER.”

HE left his home unrepentant and unsaved. He was determined to go to sea, and to sea he went. During his visits home, all that an affectionate mother, interested in the eternal welfare of her children could do, she did. But counsel, advice, persuasion appeared utterly unavailing. For eleven long years she prayed on. Night as well as day witnessed the fervour of her prayers. At length one and another of her children were awakened.

The Holy Spirit wrought, they were convicted and converted. Only a few now remained unsaved, among them her sailor boy. Many a letter sped across the ocean *to* him, many a cry went up to heaven *for* him. At last an answer came which gladdened her heart, then a second, then a third. In each letter he told her of the deep concern he had felt as to eternal things. He traced his awakening to his mother's faithful warnings and persevering prayers, and now the Saviour in whom she trusted was his Saviour. Joy which no words could express filled her soul, thanksgiving and praise went up to God for another brand plucked from the burning. His letters home breathed a fervent desire for the salvation of her other children. In order to encourage her to go on praying, he wrote, “Hold on, mother; your prayers may yet be answered in their conversion.”

Was he not a witness how God had heard and answered prayer for him? Our object in narrating the above is to encourage all Christian mothers to continue to cry to God. To all such we say, "Hold on, mother."

"In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not."

H. N.

TERROR AND LOVE.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God. . . . For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. . . . Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 COR. v. 10-21.

A DISTINGUISHED theologian is reported to have once asked a noted stage actor, "How is it, when you act, you can move your audience, almost at your will, either to laughter or tears, whereas when I preach they are unmoved?" To this, quoth he, "My lord, the answer is easily given. I PLAY FICTION as though it were FACT, whereas you PREACH FACT as though it were FICTION." Pointed, though doubtless unpalatable

words, which all who preach or write to souls may well give heed to. Paul needed them not. FACTS pressed heavily on his spirit, and made him most urgent in dealing with precious souls. If you doubt it, my reader, afresh peruse the solemn, most solemn, yet blessed verses at the head of this paper, and then ask yourself, Do I believe this fervent ambassador?

I shall briefly draw your attention to TWO FACTS in this passage which were the mighty springs in the apostle's soul of earnest and affectionate appeal to men. They were—(1) "*The terror of the Lord*" (ver. 11); (2) "*The love of Christ*" (ver. 14).

The verses I have quoted give a wonderful picture of the whole family of man. Christ is the central object. His wondrous love to ruined man evidenced in His death is the theme. His love, and His atoning work for sinners, blessed, and reconciled to God by His death are in bright relief in the forefront of the picture, if I may so say, while the background (for every picture has its background) is the judgment-seat of Christ, with "the terror of the Lord" for all those who know not His love.

Let us look at the picture a little more closely, and first, we will examine the background.

1. "THE TERROR OF THE LORD."

Remember this is a fact, not a myth. "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" What gives rise to this "terror"? "We must ALL appear (be manifested) before the judgment seat of Christ."

Does Paul fear it for himself? Certainly not. He says, "We ARE *made manifest* unto God," *i.e.*, even now. He has had all out now with God, sins, sin, guilt, ruin, everything he has had fully exposed to God's eye, and he knows how all has been fully met, by that death of which he speaks in a moment. He does not wait for the judgment seat to detect anything; grace has led him into God's presence in the full acknowledgment and confession of all even now, and *that all* has been fully met by Christ's death. He is very clear on this. "We ARE *made manifest unto God.*" Reader, are you?

But what a terrible moment will that be for the sin-screening, guilt-hiding, iniquity-covering, transgression-veiling, gospel-neglecting sinner, when, compelled to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, ALL will be exposed, manifested, and brought to light. "The things done in the body" are in view. Of things "good" there are none; of "bad," abundance. The Christless soul, having "done evil" only, comes forth "unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 29). What can be the only issue? The lake of fire. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). Unsaved reader, do you believe this? God says it. Paul *knew* it. I believe it. The devil believes it. And you doubt it? You—who are most concerned in the matter! Can it be? What madness! what utter folly! Be persuaded. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men."

Yes, beloved reader, I would persuade you to flee

from the wrath to come. **It is a fact.** It is no use your ~~denying~~ it. God has said, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess i. 9). Paul was so impressed with the terror which that moment must bring to unsaved souls that his whole heart longed for their salvation, hence his words, "we persuade men." The last account the Holy Ghost gives of his preaching is in Acts xxviii., and then he spent "from morning till evening" "*persuading* them concerning Jesus" (ver. 27). It is a mighty, solemn fact, that there is judgment coming most surely. Sinner, I warn you, flee!

Do I hear you saying—I am persuaded, I see my danger, my sin, it's certain judgment, my inevitable destruction if I go on as I am going; how am I to escape? Oh! you have seen the background of my picture and like it not. It is well. Fix now, therefore, your undivided attention on the lovely One who is found in the foreground, and all your terror shall vanish, and your fears flee away.

2. "THE LOVE OF CHRIST."

"For the love of Christ constraineth us." Charming words! Earnest as this blessed ambassador might be, urged by the sense of the "terror" of the day when the majesty of God will be maintained by the final and eternal judgment of sin, personally, in those who are there found in their sins, he was only the more urgent because he had discovered that, in

order to save men from that day of judgment, He who will then be the Judge had Himself died to deliver the guilty.

Love was the spring of this marvellous act. Sin had come in. This, God must judge in maintenance of His own character. But sin brought death, and viewed in this light, "ALL were dead." Further, "ALL must appear before the judgment seat of Christ." To appear there with a single sin is certain and everlasting condemnation. What is to be done? He who knows the extent of man's offence alone can meet or atone for it. After the offence, but before the day when He will judge it, Christ (who will be the Judge) enters the scene and becomes a man that, as a man, He may die and bear the judgment resting on man. This indeed is love! What was man's condition in God's sight because of sin? "*Then were all dead.*" But oh! what news! "*One died for ALL.*" Magnificent grace! Unparalleled love! Uncalled, unasked by one, He "DIED FOR ALL."

This is a new kind of love. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). Mark the words "no man." Here, however, dear reader, is love which exceeds that. The love of Jesus, the God-man, far exceeds this limit, for He died for all—for *His enemies* certainly, not the less for His friends, if He had any. Blessed Jesus! It is this love manifested in death—love stronger than death, and which many waters could not quench—which wins the heart to Him. Does He love me? Yes. Does He love you? Yes,

without a doubt. Are you sure? Positive. Why? Because He died. For whom? "For ALL." Now get out of that number if you can.

But how can I be sure that He loves *me*? Because He died for you. Why did He die? Because He loved you. Well, if this be so, I ought to live unto Him who died for me. Quite so; and that is just what Paul judged. So wonderful is Christ's love in dying for such guilty sinners as we have all been, that the moment the heart discovers it the judgment is formed—I ought to be for Him who is so thoroughly for me. The soul that gets hold of this is "a new creature" truly, and has the sweet sense of being "reconciled" to God. Enmity is cast out and annihilated by such overwhelming love as the cross displays. All is of God. The desire to have us near Himself, and the love that effects this blessed result by the cross are both divine. Further, He sends out the message of reconciliation first by Christ, next by ambassadors, who, standing in the very stead of Christ, proclaim the heavenly tidings in the ears of all who will listen. It is suited to ALL, it is designed for ALL, it is proclaimed to ALL, that "One died for ALL," and if "ALL" do not believe, it is their own fault, and to their own eternal loss. Reader, beware lest you slight heaven's message. Hear it!

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God DID BESEECH you by us; WE PRAY YOU in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

What a message! God now beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself, because He once on the cross took up with Christ the question of sin, there and then His judgment of it fell upon Christ, so that now whoever believes in Him stands before God in all the value of that work by which God has been glorified and sin put away. God's righteousness and His estimate of that work are seen not only in His taking Christ out of the grave into glory, but by His putting the believer in Christ in the very same place before Him that Christ now has. In death on the cross He took our place, in life now before God He gives us His place. What righteousness and what love!

We are reaching the close of another year of grace: soon will 1906, with all its opportunities and privileges, have passed away. Let me beseech you, dear reader, not to let it pass away and leave you still in your sins, unblessed and unforgiven, because still unbelieving. "We persuade men," said Paul; fain would I persuade you, if you have never yet received the Lord Jesus Christ, to receive Him now, without a moment's further delay. You have but to bow before Him, acknowledging what you are as a sinner, and that which He is as a Saviour. You have but to believe in Him to taste the joys of forgiveness, and the blessedness of the possession of eternal life, as God's free gift to you in Him in whom you believe.

Again, then, let me say, make no delay; procrastinate no longer. By the dying agonies and blood-shedding of that blessed, loving Saviour, who

gave Himself for you and me ; by the awful realities of that judgment, and eternity of woe, which the expression "the terror of the Lord" so solemnly defines as the portion of the unbeliever ; by the perennial joy and unfading bliss of the redeemed in heavenly glory, who reach that glory through the blood of Jesus only—let me urge you, with all the affection of my soul, to decide for Jesus at once. God grant that the closing days of this year may find you a simple-hearted believer, and an earnest follower of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Surely the days that have gone by have been enough to spend in sin and distance from God ! You have but one life. **LIVE IT FOR CHRIST.** Get life from Him by believing in Him, and then spend it in living like Him and for Him. Paul's judgment was very just—"We thus judge . . . that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

My reader, can you find it in your heart once more to refuse God's appeal to you ? Say not like Agrippa, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"—but, receiving the word simply, may your response be in the words of this ambassador, Paul, "**I AM PERSUADED** that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

W. T. P. W.