

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER:

A Monthly Magazine.

EDITED BY

W. T. P. WOLSTON.

VOL. XXVI.

1911.

EDINBURGH:

"GOSPEL MESSENGER" OFFICE, 2 BRISTO PLACE.

LONDON:

THE CENTRAL BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT,
12 PATERNOSTER ROW,

INDEX.

	PAGE
A Letter to Napoleon	A. J. P. 205
"A Little Child"	J. A. T. 18
A Living Bible and a Dying Triumph	H. N. 141
A Prophecy that Seriously Affects You	A. J. P. 120
A Remarkable Prayer	Anon. 292
A Strange Creed	A. J. P. 175
A Sudden Awakening	J. H. 180
A Train Missed and an Opportunity Caught	A. J. W. 309
Afraid to Think	* * * 292
All to do at Death	* * * 314
Almost Saved	Anon. 51
An Infidel's Interruption and its Sequel	W. S. F. 197
An Innkeeper's Conversion	E. M. 233
Another Marvellous Invention	H. P. B. 259
"Ashamed of the Gospel"	W. T. P. W. 183
Backsliding and Decision	W. T. P. W. 281
"Blotted Out"	H. N. 15
"Certain Strange Things"	E. P. R. 52
"Confirmed but not Converted"	W. T. P. W. 151
"Dust to Dust"	C. S. R. 202
Earth to Earth	J. W. H. N. 54
Facts	J. W. S. 69
Faith's Amen	B. 194
Fragments	G. V. W. 9, 102
Do.	W. T. P. W. 112, 140, 239
Do.	A. A. B. 150
Do.	C. H. M. 215, 237, 261, 321, 332
From Infidelity to Christ	Art. C. 169
God's Love Like the Sun	Anon. 238
God's Truth, or the Devil's Lie: Which?	E. A. 148
"He Died for Poor Me"	W. R. 240
How a Partiole of Sawdust became God's Instrument	W. W. 166
How I was Converted	J. O'K. 126
"I am the Way"	J. G. 98
"I Want no One but Jesus"	A. E. A. 168
Is it Real?	P. I. B. 178

	PAGE
"It Breaks my Heart to Go"	A. J. P. 90
Justification in Five Aspects	P. W. 241
"Last Year I Would Have Sought the Redeemer"	Anon. 10
May We Know?	J. B. 181
My Life's Story	A. H. 113
Peace with God, and the Peace of God	P. W. 133
Peace with God: Is it Yours?	W. T. P. W. 272
Persuaded: Never, Almost, or Fully	W. T. P. W. 216
"Pray, Am I not a Christian?"	A. J. P. 253
Privilege: a Blessing or a Curse	A. J. P. 305
Pursued by Divine Love	Anon. 262
POETRY—There is no Time to Lose	A. J. P. 251
What shall it Profit me Then?	* * * 155
"When I See the Blood"	T. C. M. 111
Reception of Christ's Testimony	J. W. S. 302
"That Little Bit"	E. J. E. 12
"That Means Me"	T. C. M. 225
The Boat at Anchor	* * * 293
"The Heavy Sinner" Converted	A. J. P. 315
"The Lord Shut Him In"	J. W. S. 29
The Morasthite's Questions	H. P. B. 163
The Prophecy of Mr Wiggins	H. P. B. 38
The Ransomed Prisoner	Anon. 94
The Sweetest Name	Anon. 196
The Three Brothers	W. T. P. W. 1
The Three Looks	W. T. P. W. 57
"The Two Ways," and their End	W. T. P. W. 322
The Unchanging Nature of the Gospel	J. W. S. 210
Three Aspects of Justification	W. T. P. W. 33
Time	J. R. 319
True Riches	A. J. P. 160
Unselfish Devotion	J. W. S. 156
"Unto the Uttermost"	B. 294
"We would see Jesus"	W. B. D. 298
What Love Provides and Faith Receives	P. W. 103
What Peace with God Rests Upon	J. N. D. 331
"What Shall the End Be?"	P. W. 42
"Where are they Now?"	J. W. S. 85
Where are you Going?	<i>Quo Vadis</i> 73
Will Believers Stand Before the Judgment Seat?	
And Why	P. W. 21
Will God call Men to Account?	P. W. 79
Without Notice	R. W. 236

The Gospel Messenger.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

“ I’LL have Christ to-night, Doctor, I’ll trust Him now. I do trust Him. Thank God I see it all. I believe in Him, and I am saved.”

This confession of faith came rapidly from the lips of a young man, as tears fell fast from his eyes, one Sunday evening, some years ago in the Freemasons’ Hall, Edinburgh. A crowded gospel meeting was followed by an after-meeting, to which some hundreds remained. At the bottom of the hall I noticed three young men, apparently aged between twenty and thirty, sitting together, who were total strangers to me.

Getting into conversation with one of them, whose Christian name was J—, I said, “ May I ask if you are a Christian, sir ? ”

“ I am sorry to say that I am not, but I wish I were,” was his reply. By his side was sitting a younger man, named T—, to whom I put a similar question.

“ No, but I wish I were,” he immediately replied, as he burst into a flood of tears.

“Are you on the Lord’s side?” I then said to the third, the eldest of the three, named S——.

“I wish I were a Christian, with all my heart, but I am sorry to say I’m not one yet,” was his answer.

“I suppose you three young fellows are companions?” was my next query.

“We are brothers,” was their answer.

“So you are brothers, are you, and each anxious to be saved?”

“Yes, very anxious, if only we knew how to be.”

“I don’t remember your faces; have you been in this Hall before?”

“Oh yes, we have been coming here for quite two months to hear you preach.”

“And now you are really anxious to be the Lord’s, and to be saved by His grace.”

“That is just it, if only we knew how,” was their joint reply, acutely emphasised by the emotion and tears of the youngest brother T——.

“Well, God’s salvation is a very simple matter. ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,’ was what the Philippian jailer was told. He believed and was saved that same night. You must do as he did, each of you. Just trust the Lord Jesus. You have apparently found out that you are guilty lost sinners, which is the fact, and a most serious one too! I would urge each of you, before you leave this Hall, to have this matter of your soul’s salvation definitely settled. You have but to believe in the Lord Jesus, receive Him by simple faith in His name, and the matter will be settled.”

At this point, as there were many other anxious inquirers in the Hall, with whom I wished to speak, I asked another servant of the Lord to converse with the three brothers, which he did, while, for nearly an hour, I was dealing with other inquirers. By this time the second meeting had closed and all had gone away, save two dear Christians, a doctor and a railway guard, who joined me, as I drew near again to the young men. Then I found as I had left them, still undecided, and then asked them, "Do you each really wish to have this matter settled to-night?"

"We do, we do," was the immediate answer.

"Then get down on your knees before God, and in His holy presence believe His word, trust His dear Son, and He will save you on the spot. We will pray for you." Acting on this advice they fell down on their knees, as also did I and my two friends. I prayed first beseeching the Lord to enable them to simply believe in Him, and boldly confess His name. The Doctor followed in similar earnest entreaty when the youngest of the three, T——, still weeping much, suddenly burst out, "*I'll have Christ to-night, Doctor, I'll trust Him now. I do trust Him. Thank God, I see it all. I believe in Him, and I am saved.*"

This blessed confession of Christ naturally stopped the Doctor in the middle of his prayer, so I suggested to him to finish it, as there were still two unblessed. He then continued his petition to the Lord, mingled with hearty thanksgivings for T——'s salvation.

Then the railway guard, whose voice I had never

before heard in prayer,—greatly moved in his spirit—pled most fervently with God for the other two. He had not, however, been long so engaged when the eldest brother, S——, a man of thirty-two, 'mid tears of joy exclaimed, "*I'll have Him too. I will, I will. Christ for me too. I'll trust Him also; I believe Him. Christ is mine. Thank God!*"

Dead silence, only broken by sobs, now reigned, for the guard was checked in his prayer. At length I suggested, "You might finish your prayer, dear brother. There is still one to be saved. The Lord will forgive the interruption, I am sure. I fear that not often is prayer to Him thus interrupted."

The guard finished his prayer, as best he could, through his tears. Then J——'s voice was heard, "*If only I knew what it was to believe in my heart and confess with my mouth, I would do it.*"

"That is easily explained," said I to him. "Let us turn to the Scripture which refers to this subject." So we opened our Bibles and read, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt CONFESS WITH THY MOUTH the Lord Jesus, and shalt BELIEVE IN THINE HEART that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto SALVATION. For the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed" (Rom. x. 8-11).

"That is a very simple gospel for simple souls, and shows how you get right with God and with man.

You get right with God in your *heart*, and you get right with man by your *mouth*. Are you prepared, J——, to confess Christ before men?"

"I would not be ashamed to do so now," was his immediate reply.

"Very good. Do you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead?"

"Most certainly I do."

"Would God have raised Him from the dead if He had not effected the work of atonement for which He died?"

"I don't think He would."

"You may be absolutely certain that He would not have done so. But the question is, 'For whom did He die?'"

"He died for sinners."

"Can you tell me one sinner that you are sure He died for?"

"He died for me. I'm sure now that He died for me."

"You believe that Jesus died for you, bearing your sins, and God's judgment of them?"

"I do believe that, with all my heart."

"Thank God for that," said I. "And do you further believe that God raised Him from the dead?"

"Yes, I truly believe that also," was J——'s fervent reply.

"Now then, if Christ died for your sins, and God has raised Him from the dead, what does that prove? That the sins remain unatoned for, or that they are all blotted out from God's sight for ever?"

"Oh, it proves that God is satisfied, and that my sins are blotted out by Jesus' blood."

"Quite true, and you may surely know now that you are saved. Observe the two conditions, and the conclusion of the verse you partly quoted just now, 'If thou shalt (1) *confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus*, and (2) *believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead*, (3) **THOU SHALT BE SAVED**. Could anything be plainer or simpler?"

"I see it, I AM SAVED TOO, thank God," quietly responded J—— as his soul slipped into the peace and rest of God's salvation, and joy beamed in his face.

Deeply thankful that the three brothers had now really found Christ as their own Saviour, we all dropped on our knees again and rendered unfeigned thanks to God for His mercy and grace, thus so signally manifested.

The moment we rose J—— asked if I would speak to him privately. Getting alone he said, "Doctor, my wife is as anxious to be saved as I have been; you will call and see her to-morrow, won't you?"

"I have a very full day of work to-morrow," I replied, "and I have to go off to London before daylight on Tuesday morning. I scarcely see how I can manage to do as you wish."

"Oh, you must come, you really must. She's terribly anxious," pled he, with tears in his eyes. Seeing his deep earnestness I promised that I would call next day at 5.30 P.M., and, satisfied with this assurance, he left the hall with his two brothers—all rejoicing in their newly-found Saviour.

Precisely at 5.30 P.M. on Monday I called at J——'s house, where his brothers also resided with him and his wife. Ringing the bell, the door was opened by a pleasant-looking young lady, who without delay said, "Oh, Doctor, why have you been so long of coming? I've been expecting you all the day."

"I told your husband I would be here at 5.30, and here I am. What is the matter?"

Ushering me into the dining-room, where a bright fire awaited me, she replied, "Oh, we are all so anxious about our souls."

"All anxious? Why, I thought your husband got saved last night, did he not?"

"Yes, I'm afraid he did, and I'm not," was her sad rejoinder, as she burst into tears. How wife-like was this reply, but it let me see how really anxious she was.

"What did he and his brothers say, when they came home last night?"

"Oh! they all came home rejoicing, saying they had found the Lord, and were saved. They then sat down at once, each of them, and wrote to their Christian parents, who live some thirty miles away, telling them the good news of their conversion, and to-day they've been telephoning to each other, at their respective places of business, saying how happy they are in the Lord. I wish I could say the same."

As she told me this I could only praise God, and hoped these telephone messages had been heard by some others than the senders and receivers—which

is oft-times the case. Finding that for some months she had been in real exercise of soul, I then put the gospel simply before her. Hungry and thirsty for the bread and water of life, she eagerly grasped the truth that "God is love" (1 John iv. 8, 13), that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3), that "the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us . . . their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 15, 17). The climax was reached when we read, "To him give all the prophets witness that through his name *whosoever believeth in him SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS*" (Acts x. 43). She found herself amongst these "whosoever," believed in the Lord then and there, surrendered herself fully to Him, and found herself filled "with all joy and peace *in believing*" (Rom. xv. 13).

The clock was striking six as her husband J——, just home from his work, entered the room. With face grave and serious lest he might not find what he wished, he drew near and said, "Mary, dearest, are you saved?" Her answer, bright, true, and joyous, was delightful to hear. "Yes, J——, thank God, I AM SAVED TOO." They fell into each other's arms, and saluted each other with a holy kiss of affection in the new and heavenly relationship which they felt now existed between them as children of God, while tears of joy rolled down their cheeks, and, I am not ashamed to say, down mine also. It was a sight never to be forgotten, and a lovely finale to the over-night scene in the after-meeting.

I have often seen these young people since. They

have confessed Christ boldly, identified themselves with God's people, and the last time I saw them in the old Freemasons' Hall—now pulled down—they said, "We have never had a doubt since that night, and get happier and happier as each year rolls by."

This is a good testimony to the Lord Jesus. Can you give a similar one, dear reader? If not, would you not be wise to imitate these young folk? Surely "the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles" (1 Pet. iv. 3). Begin 1911 by decision for Christ. Read this absolutely true tale over again, and as you read it let the counterpart be found in your history, as you *believe* in your *heart*, and *confess* with your *mouth*, the Lord Jesus. Thus are you—SAVED. W. T. P. W.

FRAGMENT.

DIRECTLY you know Christ you must follow Him. He traces out a path for us that does not allow of retreat in any way. He gets people directly, through faith, into present association with Himself. If you and I were to go forth this week full of faith in the power of the Holy Ghost, occupied with Christ, really as seeing Him, what single thing of our own would stand? Following Him, as a little vessel towed along by a large one; and not only that, but our fellowship, joy, and glory being all in Him, because we are His blest people. Oh, for grace now to serve and follow Him. Oh, for grace openly to confess Him, who has enabled us to say that we are accepted in Him, that all His glory is our glory. G. V. W.

“LAST YEAR I WOULD HAVE SOUGHT
THE REDEEMER.”

AN accomplished and amiable young woman, in the town of —, had been deeply affected by a sense of her spiritual danger. She was the only child of a kind and affectionate parent. The deep depression which accompanied her discovery of her guilt and depravity awakened all the jealousies of the father.

He dreaded the loss of that sprightliness and vivacity which constituted the life of his domestic circle. He was startled by the answers which his questions elicited, while he foresaw, or thought he foresaw, an encroachment on the hitherto unbroken tranquillity of a deceived heart. Efforts were made to remove the cause of disquietude, but they were such efforts as only unsanctified wisdom directed.

The Bible, at last—oh, how little may a parent know the far-reaching of the deed when he snatches the Word of life from the hand of a child!—the Bible and other books of religion were removed from her possession, and their place was supplied by works of fiction. An excursion of pleasure was proposed and declined. An offer of gayer amusements shared the same fate. Promises, remonstrances, and threatenings followed.

But the father's infatuated perseverance at last brought compliance. Alas! how little may a parent

be aware that he is decking his offspring with the fillets of death, and leading to the sacrifice, like a follower of Moloch! The end was accomplished, all thoughts of piety, and all concern for the immortal future were banished together.

But, oh, how, in less than a year, was the gaudy deception exploded! The fascinating and gay L—— M—— was prostrated by a fever that bade defiance to medical skill. The approach of death was resistless, and the countenance of every attendant fell, as they discerned the flight of his arrow.

I see, even now, that look directed to the father by the dying victim of folly. The glazed eye was dim in hopelessness; and yet there seemed a something in its expiring rays that spoke reproof, tenderness, and terror in the same glance. And that voice—its tone was decided, but sepulchral still—“My father! last year I would have sought the Redeemer. Father—your child is——” eternity heard the rest of the sentence; for it was not uttered in time.

The wretched survivor now saw before him the fatal fruit of a disorder whose seeds had been sown when his delighted look followed the steps of his idol in the maze of a dance.

Oh, how often, when I have witnessed the earthly folly of a parent, banishing from a child the thoughts of eternity, have I dwelt on that utterance, which seemed the last reflection from a season of departed hope, “Last year I would have sought the Redeemer”!

"THAT LITTLE BIT."

SEVERAL years ago there lived in the East End of London a man, known to the writer, who was a notorious ruffian, and one to whom the respectable class of his neighbours gave a wide berth. Still he was not beyond the saving grace of God, and his conversion caused, at the time, no small stir in the neighbourhood, where he was known as a costermonger.

Sixteen years have rolled away since his marvelous conversion and departure to be with Christ, the tale of which I will give in brief.

A servant of the Lord was suddenly called to the bedside of poor Bill, and found him in rapid consumption. Turning to the dying man he asked what he would like him to read. "Anything you like," was the reply. He opened his Bible and began to read the story of the brazen serpent, but the poor dying man seemed ignorant of the whole matter; to him the Bible was a strange book. After praying with him his visitor left, promising to call the next day, which he did, and found him in an anxious state of soul. Then, with regret, Bill told his visitor how much of his time and money had been spent upon the racecourse. But the God of all grace was about to turn his thoughts to that which was far more important than all the pleasures of sin that the world offers. Calling to see him one evening, after a prayer meeting,

Bill was told that there had been a thousand people praying for him, and he at once fervently exclaimed, "Thank God!" He was visited every day—on one or two occasions twice a day—and earnestly pled with to come to Jesus. 'From 14th April to 25th May not a day passed but what he was pointed to Him who alone can save the vilest sinner. On one occasion he said, "Do pray with me, I want to be saved." He was in deep earnest now.

The servant of Christ explained to him how Christ on the cross took our place, bore our sins, and suffered in our stead.

"I see it now," said Bill, "He suffered for me then." From that moment he took God at His word, and in simple faith believed the testimony concerning His blessed Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The passage God blessed to him was Isaiah xliii. 25: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Christ taking his sins, and he receiving Christ as his righteousness, was now all clear to him.

Calling upon him on one occasion, I found a rather rough-looking individual in the room and was led to speak of Christ to him. Bill, as he lay there, chimed in, "You can have it for nothing, mate." Another time his son was present, and he also had an opportunity to hear the Word, when, all of a sudden interrupting the conversation, the dying man said, "Give him that little bit,"

"What bit?"

“That little bit about Christ taking my place and bearing my punishment for me, that’s the bit.”

When the end was nearing I took him by the hand and said, “Is there anything I can do for you?”

“No, God bless you; you have done me the best turn in my life.”

“It is all peace then, all clear?”

“Yes, indeed.”

“No doubts?”

“What’s them?” said he.

“Well, I hardly care to tell you, it is when Satan comes and tells us perhaps we are not saved.”

“No, I haven’t any of them yet.” He never did. A short time after he passed away to be with Him who loved him and gave Himself for him.

You may wonder, my reader, why I have told you this story. First of all to show that God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,” and further, also to appeal to you now to decide in time and not to put it off.

What great pains often God manifests in His interest in one soul. Oh for more earnest desire on the part of all His children to interest themselves in the solitary ones, or the twos and threes, that may be in our neighbourhood, yea, even on our very threshold. May we all enter more into the spirit of these lines:—

“Joy to confess Thy blessèd name,
The virtue of Thy blood;
And to the wearied heart proclaim,
Behold the Lamb of God.”

"BLOTTED OUT."

TRAVELLING by train, I was struck by the very cordial "Thank you!" of one of my fellow-travellers, to whom I offered a little book about Christ.

"You know what peace with God is, I should judge?" I said.

"Yes, thank God, I do," she replied. "I am rejoicing in the finished work of Christ, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin."

"Then you are quite sure that you are saved, and that there is no judgment for you?"

"Quite sure, sir. There was a time when I could not say I was saved. Nay, more, I was most miserable. You may remember the great revival in Scotland some years since. At that time I was living there. I was stricken in conscience, and convinced that I was a sinner, aye, *and a lost one*, too, and I was most wretched, and unhappy. I felt, if I died as I was, I should surely be lost, and go to hell, and I knew I richly deserved it. I tried to get peace, but all in vain. I found that instead of getting better, I was getting worse, for I looked inside to my feelings, instead of outside to Christ.

"Gradually my poor body was worn out with exhaustion. I had to take to my bed, and there I lay, never expecting to recover. One day I felt as if my end was drawing near. I seemed to lose all consciousness of present things, and found my-

self in a large room, and standing out before my eyes a large book with my name on it. In distinct characters all my sins, in their terrible reality, were before me. I gazed, terror-stricken; I looked again, my terror gave place to joy and peace, for I saw a hand covered with blood, which I knew to be that of my blessed Saviour. It passed over every leaf and, instead of my sins, I saw only *the blood which had blotted them all out.*

“From that time to this, I have had the calm sense in my soul that the precious blood has washed all my sins away, and I am rejoicing in my Saviour. When the load of my sins was taken away my body speedily recovered.”

A good many years have rolled away since then, but the remembrance of that woman's happy face, and the rest, joy, and peace she experienced, when she knew the blood had blotted out all her sins, leads me to ask my reader, “Are your sins all blotted out?” Perhaps you say, “If I had a vision like that, I could then be sure mine were.” Let me assure you that you may have a more sure, certain, solid foundation than any vision can give.

The Word of God in its unerring testimony to the work of Christ surpasses every vision. A vision passes away. Memory fails. *God's Word remains.* You can always turn to its unchanging statements.

Tell me, are your sins a burden? Do you long to know that the records of your life are all blotted out of God's Book? Those secret sins? Those things you

would blush for anyone to know you had thought, said, and done? If so, you may know it *now* whilst reading this. Look away from self to Jesus. Lean the whole weight of your soul upon this word, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Søn cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 8). The ransom price, paid to wash away your sins, is the precious blood of Christ. The spotless Lamb of God has made full atonement for your guilt, God's Word is, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." By it you can be made nigh. Peace has been made.

All you have to do is to rest satisfied with God's estimate and satisfaction in the work of his Son. Cease from your own doings. *Rely on what Christ has done.* The Word of God gives you certainty. Your feelings will go up and down like a barometer. The Word of God is abiding and changeless. That Word testifies that it is the blood which maketh an atonement for the soul. There is efficacy in it to blot out the sins of the very worst, *yours included.*

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." May this be your enjoyed portion through resting in the blood. Well did a poet sing:—

"When first, o'erwhelmed with sin and shame,
To Jesus' cross I trembling came,
Burdened with guilt and full of fear,
Yet drawn by love, I ventured near,
And pardon found, and peace with God,
In Jesus' rich, *atoning blood.*"

"A LITTLE CHILD."

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."—
MATT. xviii. 3.

WHILE preaching in a town in the South of Ireland, I was much struck with the earnest attention of a little girl about ten years old, and when the address was over, I made my way to her, to try and find out if she was at peace with God, in the knowledge that her sins were forgiven. I asked, "Do you know the Lord Jesus?"

She looked up with a bright smile, and answered, "Yes; at least I know that Jesus died for me."

"It is very blessed to know that," said I, "but how can you be so very sure that the Son of God came down into the world and died on the cross for a little child like you?"

"God says He died for sinners, and I am a great sinner," she said very solemnly.

"Yes, dear child, it is written in His blessed Word, 'God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;' and again, 'It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.'" He has shown you what a sinner you are, and now you see that you must believe what God has said. So your sins are all forgiven?"

For a moment there was no answer, and the tears filled her eyes. At last she said, “I am afraid not.”

“What!” I said, “can it be possible that you know that Jesus died for you, and yet you do not know that you are forgiven?”

She looked up with an expression of deep anxiety, as though she would find out what I meant; for, like many, she had truly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, but she did not know what His work had done for her. She had been attracted to Jesus; her heart had opened to His love like the dear woman in Luke vii., but she had yet to hear Him say, “Thy sins *are forgiven* thee, go in peace; thy faith *hath saved* thee.”

So I asked, “Why did the Lord Jesus die for you?”

“To save me,” was her prompt reply.

“But why must He have died to save you?”

She thought a moment, and then said very solemnly, “Because He bore my sins on the cross.”

“Where were your sins, then, when Jesus hung on the cross?”

“On Him.”

“Yes,” I said, “for, the Lord hath *laid on him* the iniquity of us all, and where are they now?”

She had almost said “On Him still,” but checked herself, and was silent.

“Think of where He is now,” I said.

She answered at once, “He has risen and gone into heaven.”

“Where then are your sins?”

“Left behind in His grave,” was the dear child's happy answer.

Her difficulty was gone now. She saw that He who was delivered for her offences had been raised again for her justification, and being justified by faith, she had peace with God through Him.

“Yes,” I replied, for God says, “When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. i. 3).

After a little further talk with her, she was called away. On reaching her home, she ran to her mother, a good Christian woman, then unable to leave the house, and threw her arms around her neck, saying, “I shall go to be with Jesus too, mamma.”

She was startled and wanted to know what it all meant.

“My sins are all gone. Jesus, who bore them on the cross, is now at the right hand of God, and, don't you see, mamma, they could not be on Him there. He has left them all behind in His grave.”

The mother and child, now more dear to her than ever, rejoiced and praised the Lord together. Years have passed since then, and the risen Christ, at the right hand of God, has been the ground of a peace for her that never could be disturbed.

How many a dear, troubled, anxious soul wants what that little child learned so simply, and blessedly—that the knowledge of forgiveness comes from the eye being turned to Christ, and not from the feelings passing in our poor hearts.

The moment the eye rests in simple faith on Him,

all is settled as to sin before God, by His work on the cross; and the proof is that He has raised Him to His own right hand. If God is satisfied, surely we may well be, for have not all our sins been against Him?

Besides, just as surely as Jesus said, when He was here upon earth, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke vii. 48), so the Holy Ghost conveys the same blessed assurance to the faith that believes God now, saying, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Reader, let me earnestly ask you, "Are your sins forgiven?"

J. A. T.

WILL BELIEVERS STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT? AND WHY?

WHEN the sense of our responsibility is brought home to us, the thought of being exposed before God in the light of His holy presence is terrible, when grace is not known.

Not a few have been thereby driven into the helplessness of dark despair because of the revival of the past, and their inability to meet it.

When God is presented as a consuming fire (apart from the love that has met all that fire and consumed it for us), it may well make us tremble, like Moses, who said, "I exceedingly fear and quake."

Though it is appointed unto men as such to die, and after this the judgment, yet there are many who will never come into the judgment, as criminals do. In fact, their bodies may not even die at all.

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment), but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

In one sense, though death may overtake the body of the believer, it may be said he will never die. The Lord Jesus, whose authority cannot be disputed, has said, "He that believeth in me shall never die"; "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

The believer has passed from death unto life, and thus has been brought through grace into a life that is indestructible—that shall never perish. There is an *inward man* as well as an outward man. The outward or material man may perish so far as we can see, but the inward never! Even though the body should go to what Scripture calls sleep, yet there is a part which, though absent from the body, is present with the Lord. It is wide awake. The body may return to dust, but the spirit or inward man goes to Christ, which is far better. "To-day shalt thou be *with me* in paradise."

So death need not, and indeed does not, ever really trouble those who are established in the true

grace of God in Christ. By the Spirit's power they are brought into a region where there is no condemnation, where the sunshine of God's love lights up the whole sphere. Hence the fear of death is utterly unknown.

Is it quite possible, then, to escape judgment—the judgment of God that sin has brought upon all mankind? In what way is this possible? “Shall we not all be manifested before the tribunal of Christ to receive according to the deeds done in the body?” 2 Corinthians v. 10 says so. None shall escape from that searching ordeal. None.

But all depends on the way in which we shall stand there. Some will be brought there as criminals to the bar, and receive the execution of their sentence for their life of sin spent in disregard of God. Others will stand there as believers in Christ, whom God had already justified from all charge of sin, because the One who then sits on the judgment throne had already stooped to the cross and borne the judgment of their sins.

Besides, they will appear there in a new and glorified condition of life. They will have bodies of glory, made like unto the glorified body of Him who shall be Judge (Phil. iii. 21). That will make a vast and substantial difference.

Another thing to remember is that when a man is brought before a judge it is to prove his guilt, that the sentence of the law may be imposed accordingly. Not so with believers. When God works in them it is to bring them to the acknowledgment of their

guilt *now*, that they might receive the fullest absolution of it. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

If God, in grace, remember our sins "no more," He will not bring them back or call them up again to make us suffer the penalty of them. That would be unlike and utterly unworthy of the God of all grace. Besides it would not be faithfulness or justice to Him who has borne the judgment of them. God's absolution is eternal, because in Christ we have eternal redemption.

How could God ever bring up, in a righteous way, the past, as guilt upon us, that He Himself judged in the death of His own holy Son? Christ's one offering and atonement was absolute and eternal. Therefore it is unchanging in its value. All our sins having been fully atoned for in that death of shame and agony, and God glorified thereby, we are justly cleared of them eternally.

The basis or ground of God's righteousness has been laid, and thus God's holy throne is established and vindicated in the same death that cleared us. There righteousness and peace kissed each other. There mercy and truth met together. All these moral traits or glories were harmoniously blended. What a perfect and wonderful display of the nature and character of God!

How all this sets forth the greatness and glory of the Person who was able to accomplish such a mighty work. The Son, who was God manifest in flesh, only could do it. And He has done it.

Blessed be His glorious name for ever! He is worthy of all honour and renown. God, the Father, has now honoured Him with the highest glory. He alone is worthy. Amen.

On the ground of that work all believers are *now* justified before God and made the righteousness of God in Him. On the ground of that work we shall be glorified with Christ, when He is glorified before men as well as angels. Being made the righteousness of God in Christ places us beyond the reach of judgment as criminals. Our justification never can be undone, nor does it ever need repeating. "Whom he justified them he also glorified." What certainty! What assurance!

Why, then, will believers stand at Christ's judgment-bar, if judgment has fallen on the devoted head of Jesus, God's holy Son? Will it not be to assign us our place in the coming visible kingdom of Christ, when He is placed at the head of all the governments of this world? His suffering day has passed and His crowning day is coming, when God shall put down all rule and all authority and exalt Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him."

Grace will give us our place in heaven amongst God's children. Righteousness will award us our place in the millennium of universal blessedness reserved for the earth, "Which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me in that day," said Paul, with keen prophetic vision, as he looked through the tunnel of his prison and the gloom of a martyr's death.

Nothing will be overlooked or forgotten by the searching, scrutinising eye of Jesus, the captain or leader of the armies of God. Even a cup of cold water shall not be forgotten. Why? Because those who gave it were not afraid to identify themselves with Christ in rejection. Not that there is much value in the water, which is usually so cheap and so easy to obtain. But there is the great fact in the Lord's eye, that when His name and cause were in reproach, there were those who were not ashamed to identify themselves with that name, even though it brought the odium and contempt of their countrymen upon them.

Such was the case in His own day when on earth ; such has been the case since then, and such will be the case in a later day, when the remnant of His brethren, the Jews, shall suffer such unparalleled trial, under the power and oppression of the Antichrist.

It is trueness of heart that the Lord values most, and faithfulness as the result. Who does not value trueness of heart in the time of reproach and rejection? It is the proof of true love. Faithfulness will get its due reward. To have His "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," will be our crown of reward for suffering here.

When the rejected King comes out of heaven with the tens of thousands of His glorified saints and the myriads of His mighty angels to reign over and rule this world, and thus put down man's misrule, and usurpation by Satanic power, then faithfulness to Him will be brought to light. All shall see what place in

His glorious kingdom He, in His righteous judgment, will give His faithful servants.

If any suffer loss it will be loss in the sense of not getting the distinction in the rule of the kingdom that otherwise they might have obtained, had they been more devoted to His interests in His absence. This would have proved their faithfulness to Him during His absence and the period of His rejection. No cross no crown is quite true. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." Now is the time for the reproach of the cross. To-morrow may be the day of His crown and kingdom.

Many saints, like Lot, who was a righteous man, will suffer loss in the coming kingdom. Lot will be in heaven through grace as much as Abraham. He got into bad associations and under worldly influence, as the result of allowing his covetous heart to rule him. What he built up in this world was all lost in the fire of Sodom, and he himself merely saved as by fire.

His eye coveted the well-watered plains in Sodom's district, and he went there, not as guided by the Lord, but to get gain. As the result he came to great grief in the end, besides vexing his righteous soul from day to day listening to the filthy conversation of the wicked.

Let all beware who are in like danger!

Lot's uncle Abraham walked in faith, as under the Lord's guidance, and he never laid a foundation in this world. His mind's eye was filled with another world, of which Christ was the central light and attrac-

tion. The Lord Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad." He walked in the joy and sustaining power of that day when Christ shall be everything. He looked by faith for a city which would abide, and therefore did not make his rest here.

His tent and his altar declared his pilgrim character and the state of his heart. Communion with God, pilgrimage, and strangership to this world marked his course. His was the walk of faith, Lot's was that of sight. The former looked at what was unseen, the latter had his eye fixed on what was seen. The one was controlled by the invisible, the other by the visible.

As both their lives appeared here so will they be manifest at the judgment seat, and in the kingdom, when it is established in power. In the Father's house all will be there through pure and sovereign grace. Hence no distinctions will be recognised there. All will be equal, as children of the Father and as sons of God. Not so in the kingdom where reward shall be given to us as *servants*. If grace gives us our place in heaven, righteousness will reward us in the kingdom. So Paul, as a suffering servant, was buoyed up with this blessed hope when he said, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us." What a stimulus this was to Paul, and ever has been to the suffering servants of Christ!

"THE LORD SHUT HIM IN."

DID you notice that when the last of the animals which followed Noah into the ark had got inside, the door swung to as if it had moved automatically?

Yes, I did notice that!

I wonder how that could be! It is certainly very strange; anyhow we are shut out; but, what may happen to the motley crew inside, it is hard to say—close quarters to all appearance!

Ha, ha! we can only wish them a pleasant voyage and a safe return home. Meanwhile let us, who are better employed, go and have something to eat and drink.

Certainly, we must all do that; it is necessary, and if we work for our food we may well betake ourselves to the full enjoyment of it. In our prosperous days we are good hands at eating and drinking.

Quite so, and then after our repast we must prepare for that marriage ceremony. It is to be a grand affair, and will be attended by a large company. The marvel is how people can find leisure, in these busy times, to get to so many weddings; but then we know that marriage is honourable, and it is always happy to show an interest in the pleasures of others; and what can be more joyful or proper than "marrying, and being given in marriage?"

Nothing! It is an excellent institution, and every way to be encouraged for the sake of morality and

domestic comfort ; and, in fact, our days set a good example in this, as in the habit of conviviality.

But, surely, old Noah will have a very dark time of it in that ark of his ; for, saving the feeding of his ship-load of stock, he can have nothing really to do. It does seem a most hare-brained adventure to build a huge vessel, to stock and store it, live in it for an indefinite period, shut yourself, or rather be shut in mysteriously, on the mere hypothesis of a flood of waters ! Yes, indeed, and it is just as well that no more of our wealthy neighbours have fallen under the same delusion, and turned the place into a dockyard. It is said that Noah was warned of God concerning this flood . . . , but time is slipping away, and we must be off to this wedding or we'll be too late.

But what is this ?

Well, it looks like drops of water falling from the clouds, and downright heavy they are !

And that ?

Why, " the windows of heaven " are being opened !

And that ?

Oh ! the fountains of the great deep are being broken up !

Then can this possibly be the flood of waters predicted by Noah ?

Very like it !

It will put a stop to the wedding !

Alas, it will ; and do much beside that !

Come along then, let us make for the upper storey till this rush of water is past. Such an unprecedented storm cannot last long.

Do you notice that the ark is drifting from her cradle and beginning to float? Yes, and I see that the water is gradually deepening all round her. She is forty-five feet in height, but the flood has reached her water-line, and she rides as steady as a rock. I can't but say, now, how much I wish that I were aboard of her. Yes, but you see the door is shut; so that, if we could swim out to her, we would be no nearer safety. Come up to the garret; it will be more comfortable there. Oh, how long this blast continues! These terrible waters keep on increasing. What are we to do? Pity we had not listened to Noah when he preached righteousness and told us about God; but then we said to God, "Depart from us, and we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

Now, alas, we have to suffer for our folly, for we closed our ears to His call, and went on with our eating and drinking and marrying, as though life consisted in these things alone, and left God out of our calculations. This was our sin; and now His righteous judgment has fallen on our wicked ways. We deemed Noah a madman, but now we see that he was wise and that we have been the fools. He has been "shut in," whilst we have been shut out. And this is to be the end of our busy little world—destroyed by a flood! How appalling! But, when the waters shall have subsided, and the earth be restored to her former condition, purified of such a sinful race of men as we are, and the family of Noah shall begin life in a new world, it is to be hoped that the record of our doom may be traced by future geologists, that the very

clouds may radiate, in the shape of an arc, the sun's prismatic colours, and that some able descendant of Noah may write an accurate description of the ark and the flood, and of our watery death. For such records will surely convince coming generations of the need of listening to God.

Our curtain falls on this watery waste and its universal devastation, but the record of it is handed down to us, even us who live five thousand years after it happened. Scripture and geology bear witness to it. And yet, spite of all, infidelity presumes, in our proud generation, to deny the flood. Noah, who preached its advent, was disbelieved in his day; Moses, who penned its history, is discredited in ours; but, as Noah was a true prophet, so has Moses been a true historian; and let us remember the words of One infinitely greater than either—"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. . . . Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed" (Luke xvii. 26-30). That day approaches! Would that our voice could reach the careless, thoughtless crowds of this critical moment, and urge them to make for safety ere judgment overtake them.

It is a thrice blessed thing to be shut in by the Lord and to know it, to be saved and to know it; to be pardoned, justified, a child of God and to know it, and to be waiting, in faith, for the Son of God from

heaven, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come. May I plead with you, dear reader, to see to it that you are ready. Remember, it must be either shut in with the Lord, or shut out by Him—one or other—and that, when the door swings to, for ever! for eternity!

J. W. S.

THREE ASPECTS OF JUSTIFICATION.

(Read Rom. iii. 23, 24, iv. 2-8, v. 1, 9.)

HOW did Abraham become righteous? By faith. How can you become righteous? By faith. Did Abraham acquire righteousness by works? Certainly not. Listen to these words: "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham *believed* God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 2, 3). He had no righteousness of his own, but what God said he believed. He took God at His word. He gave God credit for doing as He said He would, and as a result God said, You are a righteous man, Abraham.

Now, is that the way you and I are justified? In principle, exactly so. We are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24). This is not on the principle of works. "By the deeds of the law there shall no

flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20). What does the law give? The knowledge of sin. What does grace give? Justification, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. From the law there comes only a sentence of condemnation. What the gospel gives you is a present and eternal salvation. I prefer the gospel. Do you cling to the law still? You will rue it.

Listen again: "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. iii. 19). Has your mouth been stopped yet? You surely cannot talk about what you do and what you are. If "all the world" is "become guilty before God," you are guilty. Perhaps you have never yet pleaded "guilty." You will have to after a while. I pleaded "guilty" long ago, and God has justified me.

But probably you will say, "Must I not do something towards my salvation?" Well, do you think you ought to do something? Listen again to Scripture: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." If you work, there is no grace in getting payment for your work. If I work for a man, I do not think it grace that he should pay me for it. If the one for whom you usually work knows that you need money, and sends it to you, though, through illness or accident, you have done no work for it, that is grace.

Carefully note the principle of the passage: "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" (Rom. iv. 4, 5). Thank God, Abraham and I stand upon the same ground. Abraham, how did you get justified? God told me what He was going to do, I believed Him, and He has counted my faith for righteousness.

And you may say to me, How are you justified? By faith, just the same as Abraham. God told me what He had done; that His Son had gone into death for my offences, and that He had raised Him from the dead. I believed Him, and found that I was "justified by faith." Every believer is on the same ground before God. Notice that, for it has ever been true that "to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness." In proof of that the scripture before us turns us to David's history: "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. 6-8).

The gospel goes further than merely giving pardon, for it avers that the Lord will not *impute* sin to you—that is, He will not reckon sin against those who have believed. He might forgive you, and yet you might not have the sense of being justified before God. But when you learn that through faith in Jesus, and, by virtue of association with Him, you now stand

before God in Him, and as He is, at the right hand of God, you occupy new ground altogether. You learn that righteousness is imputed to you, if you believe on Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and, therefore, being justified by faith, you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel for us is exactly on the same lines as it came to Abraham. He takes God at His word. The Lord imputes his faith to him for righteousness, of which he had none in himself. He stands reckoned as a righteous man because of his faith in God. He rests upon what God was about to do; we are to rest on what He has done; but the principle of our justification is exactly the same.

Justification is presented in three ways in the Epistle to the Romans. In the third chapter we get the complete ruin of man detailed, and then the statement, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (ver. 23). That is our condition by nature. Then we are told that we are "*justified* freely by his *grace* (God's grace) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (ver. 24). In the first verse of the fifth chapter of Romans we read, "Therefore being *justified* by *faith*, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." In the ninth verse of the same chapter we have, "Much more then being now *justified* by his *blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

So you here see justification spoken of in three ways. Are there then three ways of being justified? No, but there are three parties to my justification.

Who are they? God, Christ, and myself. What is God's part in it? GRACE. "Being justified freely by his *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." *Grace* is the *spring* of it all. It all comes from God.

What is the next thing? "Being now justified by his BLOOD"—the blood of Jesus—"we shall be saved from wrath through him." That is Christ's side—"His *blood*" is the *basis*, or instrumental means. And what is your side and mine? It is FAITH. Righteousness shall be imputed to us "if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 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" (iv. 24, 25, v. 1). What is your side and mine? Faith! That is the *principle* of justification. God's side is *Grace*. That is the spring. It all flows from Him. And Jesus' side? *Blood*. His Death is the instrumental means and basis—the groundwork of our justification. Your side and mine is *faith*! And what is that? It is the hand put out to take the blessing which God's grace offers, and Jesus' blood secures.

Justification, therefore, is by grace, through blood, and on the principle of faith—not works.

"Oh, joy of the justified, joy of the free,
I'm washed in that crimson tide opened for me!
In Christ, my Redeemer, rejoicing I stand,
Being saved by His grace and held by His hand."

THE PROPHECY OF MR WIGGINS.

MR WIGGINS was a Canadian gentleman who had devoted himself to the study of the science of meteorology. He had become quite expert in making forecasts of what the weather would probably be in the immediate future.

In the year 1882 he ventured to make a notable prediction. He declared that a terrific storm would rage in North America in six months from the date of his announcement. It would sweep up from the Gulf of Mexico, he said, and would travel up the east coast of the United States. Then it would turn westward and devastate the country between the coast and the Rocky Mountains, south of the 45th parallel of latitude. From the mountains it would veer northward and eastward, and would pass over the Canadian capital and the great lakes, at a given hour.

This wonderful prediction made a deep impression on the minds of multitudes. Thousands altered their plans, and made preparations to guard their property from possible damage. Ships that would otherwise have left port about the time when the storm was predicted, put off their day of sailing till the danger was past. Crops were harvested earlier than usual, in many cases before they were properly ripened; exposed buildings were protected and strengthened, and every precaution was taken to minimise the threatened disaster.

Yet it was by no means *certain* that the predicted

storm would come. Mr Wiggins was but a fallible man. The science of meteorology could not be relied upon to speak with the exactitude of astronomy. It might be, after all, a huge mistake.

But men wisely decided to take no risks. Whether the prophecy came true or not, they would be prepared for the worst.

Do we blame them for being too credulous? By no means. But is it not greatly to be wondered at that men treat with indifference *the sure prophecies of the Word of God?*

It is predicted therein, for instance, that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8).

It is also foretold that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. iii. 10).

Once again, we read that "the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire" (Isa. lxvi. 15).

Such prophecies as these, foretelling just retribution for the sins of the impenitent, might be quoted by the score. Yet multitudes spend their lives as if there were no such prophecies. They do not pay the slightest attention to them.

Some one may say : " But many nowadays do not believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and that its prophecies are certain of fulfilment."

When people speak like that, their words generally afford conclusive evidence that they have never really examined the matter. Have they ever carefully studied the Bible, and considered the *internal* evidence of its truth and inspiration? Have they ever read a book like Dr A. T. Pierson's " Many Infallible Proofs," and weighed the *external* evidence of the authenticity and divine origin of the Scriptures? The contention of critics, and the quibbles of sceptics have been answered, again and again, by men of profound learning. Have those who raise questions as to the credibility of Bible prophecies read any of these answers?

Unless they can reply to these queries in the affirmative, they are not competent to express an opinion on the subject.

But even if nothing further than *possibility* be granted with regard to the fulfilment of the prophecies of Scripture, if *certainty*, and even *probability*, be denied, what then? Is not the bare *possibility* of these predictions coming true enough to make every sensible man see the wisdom of taking precautions?

There was no *certainty* that the prophecy of Mr Wiggins would come true, yet men bestirred themselves to provide against possible disaster.

Tens of thousands of sensible, hard-headed men and women believe that there is sufficient reason to

give absolute credence to the prophecies of the Bible. And they have accordingly made preparation lest the fulfilment of these prophecies should mean disaster to them.

What have they done? Listen! They have simply availed themselves of the provision which God in great mercy has made for sinful men. They have taken refuge in the Shelter that He has provided. In other words, *they have trusted themselves to Christ*, in accordance with the words: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 30).

This is the only means of safety. But in Christ, not only *safety* is found, but *joy*. It pays to be a Christian. The black clouds that lower upon the horizon of the world's future have no terror for the believer in Christ. And not only so, his present life is one of real happiness and deep, true joy. Suppose all the predictions of coming judgment turn out to be mere fables, the Christian's present joy would yet prove him to be wiser than the worldling.

They who neglect the salvation of God are guilty of two acts of unspeakable folly. First, they are running a terrible risk. Second, they are missing a priceless boon, and depriving themselves of much joy.

Reader, do you blame us for being in earnest about this matter? Do you consider we are taking an unwarrantable liberty in addressing you in these terms? Consider for a moment whether you are truly wise to ignore the sure predictions of the Bible.

Why not ensure your safety by betaking yourself at once to the feet of the Saviour of sinners? H. P. B.

“WHAT SHALL THE END BE?”

WHEN Solon the Athenian sage (at one time the political leader of the Greeks) was asked by the rich eastern King of Lydia, whose capital was Sardis, and whose wealth was a proverb, “Who was the happiest man you have ever known?” Solon replied, “Call no man happy until you know the nature of his death.”

When Croesus, the proud, wealthy King of Lydia, was conquered by Cyrus, and reduced to nothing, it is said that in the hour of his misfortunes he remembered with regret the words of Solon, which in his prosperity he had despised. When stretched on the pile to be burned to death, he exclaimed: “Solon! Solon! Solon! let all who are proud, haughty, and prosperous learn from my end.”

One of the ancient poets composed some striking lines upon what Solon said, which are well worthy of notice:—

“Let mortals hence be taught to look beyond
The present time, nor dare to say a man
Is happy, till the last decisive hour
Shall close his life without the taste of woe.”

Illustrations are not wanting in history to prove how true this is. Nothing perhaps in the whole of Irish history is more heart-touching, more deeply pathetic, than the end of the great Irish agitator Daniel O’Connell. When beyond middle life he was raised through his magnetic personality and

powerful eloquence to the giddy heights of worldly fame. He was admired, applauded, and almost adored by his impetuous, warm-hearted countrymen. He was almost within sight of that which he so eagerly sought and earnestly desired. He thought to have eight millions under his power. He was named (or nicknamed) the uncrowned king. But events turned against him. Misfortune frowned on all the projects so dear to his heart. What seemed his greatest opportunity was really his defeat. After his largest meeting, at which it is said were a quarter of a million, he was arrested by the Government, and sentenced to pay a fine of £2,000, and twelve months' imprisonment. The consequence was his health broke down, and as his biographer tells, "He was seized with a profound melancholy. His youth had been a wild one, in more ways than one, and he had been long under a deep penitence.

"In his old age, and sinking days, the errors of his youth and strong manhood came back upon him, and he longed to steep the painful memories in the sacred influences of Rome. He hurried to Italy. His strength completely failed there, and he died, far from Rome, on 15th May 1827."

What a sad end to such an apparently brilliant career. It was truly from gaiety to gloom. As a rule what a man sows he reaps; he that sows to the wind, must reap the whirlwind; he that sows to vanity must reap vexation in the end.

The end of a man's life is often the outcome of what the beginning and middle have been. The

worst and meanest of men have often exclaimed as death approached: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Everything in the world has an end. Babylon and Nineveh with all their glory had an end. Greece and Rome the same. Hannibal, Napoleon, Byron, Shelley, Hume, Payne, and Voltaire, the same. What misery and remorse marked their end. "Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this,

THAT THEY WOULD CONSIDER THEIR
LATTER END!"

Two men died in America the same year—Colonel Ingersol, the infidel, and D. L. Moody, the evangelist. What a striking contrast between their latter ends. Sadness and gloom characterised the former, gladness and triumph the latter. The death of the infidel had not a ray of hope; his wife and daughter, who loved him passionately, could not bear to have the body removed from the house until corruption made it compulsory. A daily paper describes the scene at the crematory as "being enough to break the hardest heart with pity, however little you might sympathise with the views of him who had passed away."

The death of D. L. Moody was one of the brightest ever witnessed. As his son sat beside his father he heard him speak in a low tone of voice; the words he heard were, "Earth is receding; heaven is opening; God is calling." "You are dreaming, father," said the son. "No, Will, this is no dream, I have

been within the gates. Is this death? This is not bad; there is no valley. This is bliss. This is glorious."

Thus dear Moody, the saint and great soul-winner, passed into the presence of his Lord and Master. The tremendous contrast between infidelity and Christianity, as witnessed in the end of these two leaders, must strike every thoughtful man. The one was marked as inglorious, and the other glorious, the one manifested weakness, the other victory.

Who ever heard of a true Christian on his deathbed repenting that he had become a Christian? None! Many true Christians have repented that they had not yielded themselves to Christ earlier in life, or that their lives had not been more truly Christ-like, but none ever repented that they had given themselves to Christ, and received Him as their Saviour and Lord.

On the other hand, most infidels have been seized with remorse, and died in the bitterest soul agony. Not one case of an infidel's death has ever been recorded who died in triumph, like D. L. Moody, or Augustus Toplady, the celebrated writer of "Rock of Ages." Toplady said to those at his bedside, from whom he was taking a last earthly farewell, No mortal man could live in the body, and see what he had seen, and enjoy what he had enjoyed.

Even the late Professor F. W. Newman, the writer of "Phases of Faith," or rather "Phases of Infidelity," repented, and a notice of his death in the *Times* stated "that on his death-bed he drew nearer to Christ,"

If the truth were really known, there are no *happy* infidels. Many who have been converted from infidelity have declared it, and they ought to know. *Infidelity is a mere subterfuge for the torments of remorse, through impure living* in most cases, if not all.

Let the truth be told out plainly that whosoever will may hear it. Would any infidel, from Bolingbroke to Charles Bradlaugh, or from Bradlaugh to the most blatant living infidel to-day, dare to have his life exposed before the eyes of God and men, and say—as the late C. H. Spurgeon said when challenged—

“YOU CAN WRITE MY LIFE ACROSS THE SKY
IF YOU LIKE.”

Remorse of conscience, the result of wrong living, lashes its victim to despair, if not to suicide or to infidelity! Those are the devil's opiates for his victims. “Conscience makes cowards of us all,” said the keenest observer and most fascinating delineator of human nature. Instead of conscience driving men to God, who has revealed Himself in grace as a Saviour God, they fly to what is only like the deceptive mirage in the desert.

Is Rome any better? There is little to choose between them. The “sacred influences,” so styled, “of Rome” O’Connell never reached. Therefore, according to his own showing, he carried his tortured mind into eternity. Holy water, sacred shrines, and indulgences granted by a man, who assumes to be the vicar of Christ on earth, cannot wash away the stains of sin, or the pangs of guilt.

What authority has Rome to assume such a place? One historian called her history the “Annals of Hell.” If the Word of God be not the only authority, then infidelity may be accepted. If the Word of God be our only authority, then Rome with her pretensions to soothe the troubled mind, or clear the guilty conscience, must be rejected.

No false system of religion can stand the searchlight of God’s Holy Word. “Thus saith the Lord,” was the only authority of every prophet that ever truly professed to represent God on earth. The Holy Scriptures are the candle of the Lord in this dark world. They are God’s great searchlight.

Where is there any authority in the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament for the use of holy water, which has no holiness about it, but is only common water, with the pretended blessing of a man who is a self-styled priest? Where is there any authority in Scripture to confess your sins to a priest who is a sinner like yourself? Where is there any divine authority for a mere man like ourselves to pronounce what only Almighty God has the authority to do—the complete and final absolution or forgiveness of all our sins? Only God’s assembly has power to bind or loose the aggravated sin of an offending individual. But no one man has that power.

On the other hand, there is abundant proof that there is no one now specially ordained of God as a priest, having special nearness to Him, that the youngest and weakest believer has not. All believers are spiritual and royal priests, and can draw near

themselves to God, through Christ our Great High Priest, with boldness (see 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, and Heb. x. 17-22).

But not one of those spiritual or royal priests has any special mandate from heaven to hear the sins of another confessed to him, much less to absolve or forgive them. "Thy sins are forgiven thee, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace," was the language of Jesus, who was God manifest in flesh.

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me." "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" These are striking scriptures, which show the utter impossibility of anything human to effect a change in man's condition.

THERE ARE TWO FORMS OF CLEANSING

every son of Adam's race requires, before he can enter God's holy presence and be happy there. These are judicial and moral. Judicial cleansing has reference to our sins, and moral cleansing to our sinful state, from which the sins flowed.

Job's questions take in both. "How should man be just with God?" or "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" These questions go right to the root of the matter. Both these questions are fully answered in the gospel. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" meets the one, and "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" meets the other.

It is by the death of Christ, the Son of God, that

sin is put away, and on the ground of that death we are justified, or made right with God. It is by the operation of the Word of God in the Spirit's power, that the divine nature is implanted in the soul, and moral justification takes place in the life.

Hence our blessed Lord affirmed, “Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” “Ye *must* be born again.” He also said, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

With our sins upon us, we dare not and could not meet a Holy God in judgment, without banishment from His presence for ever. In our sinful state we could not enjoy God's presence.

The death of Christ for our sins has met all the claims of justice upon us, and is therefore the basis of our clearance, or justification from our sins. Faith in the testimony of God, rendered in His Holy Word, is the principle of our justification, or eternal clearance. Three verses make it plain, “Much more, then, being now justified *by his* blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Rom. x. 9). “And by Him

ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS”

(Acts xiii. 39). “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1).

Peace with God is the result of justification—it is

the privilege of every believer to enjoy it; not to enjoy it is to dishonour the finished work of Christ that made it, and the testimony of the Word of God that proclaims it.

When a man loves God, he turns from sin and the world, as the result of a new and divine nature being implanted in his soul. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." It is the same spiritual nature as God Himself. Being begotten in the holy love of God we instinctively love Him through whom we are begotten.

Blood and water flowed from the pierced side of Christ. Blood to put away our sins from the sight of God, without the shedding of which there is NO REMISSION, and water to cleanse us from the impurity of our sinful nature.

Reader, has it ever struck you that there are seventy deaths a minute. Four thousand, two hundred every hour. One hundred thousand, eight hundred every day. Seven hundred and five thousand, six hundred every week. Thirty-six million, six hundred, and ninety-one thousand every year.

Steady yourself for a minute and ask, When will my turn come? Stand still and look over your past. Bring the future into the present. As you do so, ask yourself this question: "If I were amongst this vast procession this day, this week, or this year,

WHERE WOULD MY SOUL BE?"

"To-day thou livest yet,
To-day turn thee to God;
For ere to-morrow comes,
Thou may'st be with the dead." P. W.

ALMOST SAVED!

A MAN is drowned! He fell off the pierhead into the sea, and look! you can see his head just above the waves! There! he has caught hold of the rope those men have thrown to him. Now he has it! No, he has missed it! Ah! that huge wave has carried him farther out. Nothing can save him now! Oh, if he had but caught the rope when he was so near it!

“And he so near being saved,” says one honest fellow, dashing a tear from his eye; “why, the rope fairly touched his hand.” Ah! that made it all the worse. To think of him being drowned after all, when he was almost saved!

Almost saved! Do you not hear that cry from another world? “I was once very near being saved, I had almost made up my mind to accept of Christ, but did not do it, and now it is too late! Lost! lost! and for ever. Oh, if I might go back to earth again, and hear once more of Jesus. Oh, that I had come to Him then, when I might have come!”

Dear reader, are you almost persuaded to be a Christian? Then there is one great difference between you and that poor drowning man. *It was not his fault that he missed the rope.* He did all that he could; he clutched at the rope with all the strength of despair, and who blames him because he missed it?

But ah! it is not so with you. You know that you may be saved at this moment, if you accept salvation so freely offered through Christ Jesus, but, instead of laying hold of Christ at once, you are thinking about it, and wishing, and hesitating, and putting off. “Ye *will* not come unto me, that you might have life,” says Christ. Almost within the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, lingering about the doors catching the echo of its music—and yet shut out! Better, better far, never to have heard of Jesus, than to come so near to Him; and yet, at last, to hear Him say, “Depart, I never knew you!”

ANON.

“CERTAIN STRANGE THINGS.”

A FEW days ago our servant A—— came to my wife in great trouble. She had received a letter from a sister of hers, and this sister, A—— was afraid, had gone quite out of her mind.

On my wife inquiring the reason she had for thinking this, she told her that, in the letter she had received, her sister wrote that she was miserable, because she was a sinner, and that there was no bigger sinner than she was. My wife, who now understood it all, tried to comfort A—— by telling her she was sure it was the Holy Spirit who had convinced her sister of sin. This brought out the fact that there was a second letter, written a day or two later (for out here, in the Australian bush, we only

get our mail once a week), and this letter told A—— that her sister's trouble was over now, and her heart was at rest, for she knew now that her sins were forgiven, and washed away by Jesus' precious blood.

I was much struck by this, for while, down here, the news of her trouble about her sins had caused her sister A—— to think she was mad, I knew that, on the contrary, there had been joy in heaven over that very one repenting of her sins.

And, oh the joy to one who has really known what the burden of sins is, to hear the words of Jesus, "Thy sins are forgiven," and to know that his sins and iniquities God remembers no more.

I have no doubt that some of the readers of this paper often, on their knees, tell the Lord about their sins, and that the burden of them is intolerable; I ask you, dear reader, do you really feel it so? I know if it is so you will be miserable, but the Holy Spirit never convinces of sin without showing the remedy God has provided in His own beloved Son, the Lord Jesus, else it would end in despair.

It is to those who labour and are heavy laden that Jesus gives rest. Some of your friends may think you are mad. I remember when I was converted, and spoke about it to one of my old companions, he thought me so, and told me he would give me a fortnight to get over it. I find that in a professedly Christian country when conversion is spoken about they virtually say even as they did in heathen Athens, "Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears."

EARTH TO EARTH.

APON an old tomb in St Martin's, London, is the following acrostic, now nearly obliterated by age:—

Earth goes to	} Earth	{	As mold to mold.
EArth treads on			Glittering in gold.
EaRth as to			Return ne'er should.
EarTH shall to			Goe ere he would.

Earth upon	} Earth	{	Consider may.
EArth goes to			Naked away.
EaRth though on			Be stout and gay.
EarTH shall from			Passe poore away.

"EARTH GOES TO EARTH"

is not—to say the least—an ecstatic contemplation, but then, truth is not always pleasant, but it has this virtue, not possessed by fiction—IT IS TRUE. It is all very well to live in a fool's paradise, and seek to drown, with the music and din of a world fast growing old, and ripening for judgment, the thoughts that *will* intrude themselves, especially in the privacy of your own closet, that, after all, your time of sojourn here is fast drawing to a close, and that, explain it as you will, and philosophise about it as you may,

DEATH IS HERE.

This is a fact that somehow we never seem to get used to; it is "the skeleton in the cupboard" of every

unregenerate child of Adam, it is ever dogging his footsteps, and can strike a more sure and harder blow than any warrior who has ever put on armour. As the autumn wind strips the trees of their summer glory, leaving them unclothed and exposed to the stinging wintry blast, so the relentless hand of death hurries man out of the scene of all his boasted greatness, leaving him naked and undone to face the awful consequences of unforgiven sin.

“EARTH SHALL TO EARTH GOE ERE HE WOULD”

is certainly a truism, for if you could, doubtless you would stave off that unhappy moment for ever. No man likes to hear his death warrant, but God has numbered your days, as surely as He numbered Belshazzar's kingdom, and the *end* is much nearer than you suppose.

Thank God—

“EARTH UPON EARTH CONSIDER MAY.”

“Consider your ways!” was the word of God to His people of old. Have you considered *yours*? Let the eye of memory look back on the days that are gone; how have they been spent, for God or self? Conscience, that silent and persistent monitor, tells you that your life has not been all that it might have been, there are many things that will not look well in the unsullied light of the presence of the One who will sit upon the GREAT WHITE THRONE OF JUDGMENT, from before whose face everything visible will

pass away. The fact is, my friend, YOU are a sinner, and your sins will track you down, and assuredly damn your soul, unless you sue for pardon. CONSIDER! is it wise to pursue the path you are treading to-day, of utter indifference to God's claims, slighting His love, and neglecting His great salvation? Think what is at stake! You have only *one* soul, and if that be eternally lost, better—far better you had never been born.

“EARTH SHALL FROM EARTH PASSE POORE AWAY”

will certainly be verified in your case, though you be a multi-millionaire, should you die unsaved. Scripture says (1 Tim. vi. 7): “We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” Happy the man whose treasure is—where neither moth can corrupt or thieves break through and steal. Make Christ *your* treasure, beloved reader. Let His atoning death and His glorious resurrection be your boast, then it will be your happy privilege to say with the apostle, “To me to live is Christ, TO DIE GAIN.”

“If asked what of Jesus I think,
 Though still my best thoughts are but poor,
 I say, ‘He’s my meat and my drink,
 My life and my strength, and my store!
 My Shepherd, my trust, and my friend;
 My Saviour from sin and from thrall;
 My hope from beginning to end,
 My portion, my Lord, and my all!”

THE THREE LOOKS.

“The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God.* They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is none that doeth good.* The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and seek God.* They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*”—PSALM xiv. 1-3.

CROSSING the Forth Bridge some time ago, my eye was naturally attracted by the wonderful sight of the Fleet in the Forth, with all its beautiful lights, which burst upon me quite unexpectedly. All in a moment, without any warning, from a huge warship down the channel there came a certain light, that showed up everything—it was *the searchlight.*

Listen! Psalm xiv. is

THE SEARCHER'S LOOK.

Here is God's searchlight. Light makes manifest. Light tells no untruths. Light exposes everything. The sinner does not like God's searchlight. Conscience makes cowards of us all. We have all sinned.

The burglar dreads the policeman's lantern; small wonder if a sinner like you dreads God's searchlight. If you are wise you will let that light play on your conscience now. The devil has been supplying you with shutters, to keep out the light, to keep you at a distance from God. He has brought in infidel shutters, atheistic shutters. The fool is heard to say in his heart, “*There is no God.*” Men have got

bolder in this day, and they do not mind saying it out loud with their lips. Do you know who says it? God pronounces the man who says it *a fool*. Do you think there is no God? The devil says boldly there is no sin, no death as sin's wages, no heaven, no hell, no judgment, Do you believe his lies? These are only joints in the tail of the serpent, and it begins with the lie that God is not.

AN INFIDEL'S DEATHBED.

You know what a poor infidel did once on his deathbed. His little child had gone to Sunday school, and her heart had been opened to receive the truth of the gospel. He did not like this, so one day when the child was out he got hold of a large piece of wood, and with a piece of chalk, in order to impress the child with what was in his foolish mind, he wrote, "*God is nowhere.*" That would suit you, would it not? Stop! He is everywhere. The father waited. By-and-by the child came in and looked up, and read, "*God is now here.*" God here! What is He here for? He is seeking your blessing, you, a sinner of the deepest dye, old or young. I hope you will find out there is a God, and His true character. "*God is love.*" It would be the most wonderful surprise you ever had. When I thought God was about to judge me for my sins, that was the moment He saved me.

The searchlight is on you. You say, "*There is no God.*" Stop a bit: God has got eyes, and He can use them, and what He sees He knows how to write

and has written it. "*They are corrupt.*" You get your character there—yours and mine, the character of unconverted man. What does it mean by being corrupt? "*They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one*" (ver. 3). Plain language! But it is the language of God's Word. Remember this, God has turned His searchlight upon man, and this is what the searchlight reveals. Man does not like exposure, but God knows, He sees, He regards, and here is His verdict of what man is—"they have done abominable works."

However much you have tried to please God, you have failed. "*There is none that doeth good*" (Rom. iii. 12). That cuts the legs from under you and me. There has been nothing but sin in your life. You have taken your own way, that is the will of the creature, and that is sin. The creature should do the will of the Creator.

GOD'S SEARCHLIGHT REVEALS EVERYTHING.

Here is the Lord's look—the Searcher's look. "*The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God*" (ver. 2).

What was God's object in looking? To see man's wickedness, man's sin? No. To see man's folly, and failures? No. He looked "*to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.*" What did He see? Not a solitary being that had done it. That is a very serious statement. There were none

that did understand. The book of Proverbs, written by the wisest of men, speaks often of *understanding*. "Get wisdom, get understanding," Solomon wrote. What did he mean by *understanding*? To get right underneath the power of the truth. The truth to so impress you that you are convinced of it.

I do not say it always distresses, because when I understand the truth of the gospel I am not distressed, but saved. True, when I understand my guilt, I get miserable, and wakened up. You have never been wakened up yet. The day of your awakening is coming—I do not know when. It comes quickly, and it may come just five minutes too late for you to taste God's salvation, or know His grace. You had better come to Him now.

"*They are all gone aside.*" You did not think your case was as bad as that. God does. It is your case and mine. "*They are all together become filthy.*" You say, I do not like that. It humbles your pride; ruins your notions of yourself; makes you feel you are as bad as everyone else. Yes, that is the whole point. Woe betide the man who says to God, You are a liar. First of all, men begin by being such fools as to say, "*There is no God:*" and when He speaks, and speaks plainly, and tells them of their sin and guilt, they say in effect, I will not believe that. They may not put it so bluntly, but it comes to the same thing in the end. Now, who is the liar—God or you? I know you have a good opinion of yourself. You say, I have not done anything very bad, I have paid my way, and been a decent, respectable person;

do you want me to believe I am a character like that?

This is God's word, and when the truth of God and the light of God get into a man's soul, when he comes under conviction, and is led to repentance, he is brought by the Spirit of God to own the truth of this scripture. It is quoted by the Apostle Paul in Romans iii., where

A FULL-LENGTH PORTRAIT

of man is given. I do not believe, if men had really taken in what God has said about them there, they would get themselves up in the garb of folly and fashion they do. God declares there is nothing in man that will suit Him. The searchlight brings frightful revelations into view. The effect upon the soul that wakes up too late to see it must be intolerable.

When a man truly learns his condition before God, what will be his state? Will he be like the Pharisee in Luke xviii., who prayed, in self-complacency, "*God, I thank thee I am not as other men are?*" What was he in reality? A blind sinner on the road to hell, laden with religion. Rather will he be like the publican in the same scripture, a convicted, guilty man, realising his sinful lost estate. The publican "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me the sinner," as if there were not another sinner in the world. He knew himself to be ruined, lost, undone, and the Lord said of him, "*This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.*"

Bless God, the searchlight had shone in, and shown him his heart—a den of iniquity, a cesspool of moral iniquity, “*deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.*” The man was awakened, aroused, convicted, impressed, distressed, and came in for blessing. The other man got nothing; his prayer never went higher than his own head.

THE SAVIOUR'S LOOK.

But God can take more looks than one. I want to show you another look. If the first look has brought distress, this one should give you hope and confidence toward the Lord. “*He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer*” (Ps. cii. 17). The publican was destitute of everything; he had nothing to commend him to God. You ask, Do you tell me to pray? No, but I am very thankful when I find sinners do so. God said about Saul of Tarsus, “Behold, he prayeth,” when He sent Ananias to him. It is a wonderful moment in a man's history when he really prays. It is not saying prayers in a formal way; but praying in real need of soul to God.

“*This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord*” (Ps. cii. 18). God wrote these lines, anxious soul, for you. You say, “I have never told anyone yet, but I have been praying to the Lord.” He may not have answered you yet, but He has not despised your prayer.

Here is another look—a look from the sanctuary,

the place of holiness, the holiest spot in all the universe of God. "*For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary: from heaven did the Lord behold the earth*" (Ps. cii. 19). That is where He dwells, and that is where the searchlight comes from, and where the look of pity and compassion comes from too. God is love. He is bent upon blessing the souls of men.

THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S 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*" (1 John iv. 9). God proposed to give us life in His Son. "*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. 10). You say, That is what has troubled me—*my sins*. Do you know God sent His Son a propitiation for your sins? What is a propitiation? It is brought about by One who can go to God on your account, and offer that which enables Him in righteousness to blot out your sins, and to clear and cleanse you—One who can offer to God a sacrifice by which God is propitiated, atonement effected Godward, and cleansing, peace, and pardon given to man. Do you know what that was the result of? The look of Psalm cii. Do you know who did it? The Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son. Do you know where He did it? On the cross.

For what does God look down from the sanctuary? We are told in Psalm cii. distinctly, "*To hear the*

groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death" (ver. 20). What—the groaning of the prisoner! Have you not been a prisoner all your days? You have been in the bondage of sin up to this very hour. You have been in the prison-house of this world, and the devil is the gaoler. "*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness*" (Rom. vi. 16). You are either the servant of sin or of God. He looked down, and as His eye scanned the earth He sees a poor wretched-looking sinner, and He draws near, and listens, and hears, "*God have mercy on me.*" Thank God, if that is you.

Who is "appointed to death"? You, the sinner. "*But now once in the end of the world [age] 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*" (Heb. ix. 26, 27).

"Death"—solemn appointment. "Judgment"—worse appointment still.

The believer is not appointed to die—Why is that? He has a very bright hope, and that is the Lord's Coming. If the Lord came to-night no believer on the earth would die, they would be caught up to heaven.

The believer can sing:—

*Oh joy! Oh delight! should we go without dying!
No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying!
Caught up through the clouds with our Lord into glory!
When Jesus receives His own."*

But for the unbeliever how sad. "The wages of sin is death." When death comes you pass out of man's sight, you will meet God at the great white throne, and then you have to pass out of His sight to the second death—the lake of fire. That is the appointment of man as a sinner, the man of Psalm xiv.

But Hebrew ix. says, "*As it is appointed unto men once to die . . . so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.*"

What are the consequences of my sins? Death and judgment. But the Lord Jesus Christ, the perfectly sinless One, was made sin on the cross. He bore the wrath of God in respect of the guilt of man. Man was a sinner, but He was sinless. He bore the sins of many. Who are included in the many? Thank God, it means me—no man can speak for his neighbour. It takes in every believer. It will take you in, if you believe. How blessed is God's look in this psalm. He says in effect, "I can see them troubled and distressed," and He looked down to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that were appointed to death. We have the spirit and essence of the gospel here. Is it not a look of love, and pity, and compassion?

You say, I have been very exercised about my state. Yes, but God has been interested, and has thought about your state, and how He can deliver you. Yes, dear anxious soul, He has heard your groaning and has looked down to loose, *i.e.*, to set free those who are appointed to death. He does it

by the atoning death of His blessed Son. You get the benefit of that death by faith. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts xvi. 31).

As the doom of man was death and judgment, so Christ bore the sins of many, and they are blotted out, for He has sustained the judgment, that He might loose the one appointed to death. Our sins must have brought us into death here, and damnation in eternity; so Christ died on the tree, forsaken of God, and that is what brings peace. You say, I should like to be loosed. The Lord would delight to loosen you. You say, What must I do?

Listen! "*Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour: there is none beside Me*" (Isa. xlv. 21). He is God, and there is no other—get that in your heart. What is His character? A just God; He must punish sin. Further, He is a Saviour. He will save the sinner. He hates your sin, but loves you. He must judge your sin: He will justify you. He is a just God, and will condemn the wicked. Has He made light of sin? He has condemned it in the Person of His holy Son, and He can now save the hardest-hearted sinner that the world contains. You may have spent your life in evil and sin, but you are not out of reach of this just God and Saviour. What does He say to you? "*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God,*

and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22). Here you get

THE SINNER'S LOOK.

God has looked down and seen your state, and in mercy has wrought that He may meet your misery and deliver you, and now if you want liberty and salvation He bids you look. "*Look unto Me,*" the Lord says. The Lord has had two looks at us, one to search us, a second to pity us. How many looks must we take at Him for salvation? *Only one.* You say, But I cannot see Him. He does not say, See Me; He says, Look, look, and be saved. Only seven words, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." It is the very simplicity of it that stumbles people. What have you to do to be saved? To pray? No. To work? No, that will never do. To labour and toil? No. When you pray, you are only a praying sinner. You may alter your ways, and you should, but that is not salvation.

You say, I thought He was a Judge. That is what He will be by-and-by. Now He is a Saviour. Do you want salvation? He is the Saviour, Jesus, at God's right hand, and the moment you look to Him you are saved. You say, I did not think salvation could be got so easily as that. Who wrote these words? God. He says, "*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.*" You say, I think that only means the elect. Well, I daresay the elect will be found at the ends of the earth, but God says "Look," any man or woman, "look," with all your religion and respectability. Remember respectability

and religion without Christ are about the two most successful things to sink people in hell.

“*Look unto Me, and be ye saved.*” You ask, How can I get saved? If you are looking to Jesus you are saved. I do not say you will feel it. Here is the water for your thirst; drink it, and get the refreshment of it. The searchlight reveals what you are, and the Saviour’s look brings in all that you want, and you look and are saved—it is all settled.

Remember, you must bow to the Lord some day. “*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*” (ver. 23). This is quoted in connection with Christ as a Man in Philippians ii. What belongs to Him as God is going to be rendered to Him as Man, because He glorified God in going into death for the salvation and blessing of man. What a Saviour is Jesus. Who would not bow to Him?

Beware, if you are set against Christ, the day of your doom will assuredly come. Listen! “*Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed*” (ver. 24).

.

We have had the *Searcher’s* look, the *Saviour’s* look, the *Sinner’s* look, but when you are saved, you will have to look again. Believers have to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and run the race, “*looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith.*” The saint looks to

Christ for all the pathway. If you want happiness, and peace, and joy, do not look in. If you want to be miserable, look *within*. If you want to be troubled and upset, look *around*. If you want to be happy, look *up*. What volumes are in those three words—*“Looking unto Jesus.”* We get trials, perplexities, disappointments. What is the secret of power, peace, and progress? *“Looking unto Jesus.”* You want help, comfort, and support in the pathway, and you get it by looking unto Jesus. Anxious one, longing for salvation, have you looked to the Lord Jesus yet? Delay not. Death is busy. Judgment draws near. *“Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation”* (2 Cor. vi. 2).

W. T. P. W.

FACTS.

THERE lived, many years ago, in the city of Edinburgh, a very worthy Christian man, by the name of M'Kenzie. I forget what his trade or profession was, but this I know that almost nightly M'Kenzie used to sally forth in order to preach at some street corner. This was some time before the days of the “Salvation Army,” when preaching, in that way, was a comparatively unknown and infrequent occurrence. I do not think that M'Kenzie was a specially gifted speaker, or that he gathered crowds to hear what he had to say. He was no George Whitfield; but he

loved the souls of his neighbours, and did his best, in his own way, to help them.

He possessed one talent, and in the exercise of it he displayed remarkable wisdom.

He sang no hymn ; he played on no musical instrument ; he pandered to no religious taste.

He appeared at some suitable spot where he hoped to get a hearing. There he was generally alone, just a man and a Book—neither very much to look at—but somehow he always carried power. There was reality. He preached neither for money nor popularity. He had a message, and its announcement was his one business. A striking personality, you may say, and one who was evidently thoroughly convinced of the importance of his errand.

Quite true, and therefore a good example to all who would follow in his steps—steps very apostolic.

Then, wherein lay his talent ?

Well, it sparkled, as a rule, in his opening sentence ; his first words were, "*I want to tell you some facts !*"

The declaration of *facts* was his talent. He stuck to facts. Stories, illustrations, appeals, and the like, were conspicuous by their absence. He had plenty of facts, solid and sober, to announce, and this was his task.

Now there are some data which may possibly call for alteration. Sciences like geology, astronomy, medicine, and so forth, keep on presenting new features which necessitate modification. They are not fixed sciences. On the other hand, there are certain data which admit of no alteration. For

instance—"two and two make four" is quite as true to-day as ever, and must be so for ever.

I am writing on nearly the shortest day of the year, and am reminded that the winter solstice is a fixture so far as the earth and all our mundane matters are concerned. These things are *facts*.

It would be most interesting to work out all such fixed and settled data. There may be far more than we imagine, just as there are plenty things which we assume to be "assured results" of science, and supposed absolute certainties which are anything but that.

And what were M'Kenzie's facts?

He had three, anyhow, on which he invariably dwelt.

The first was *death*!

The second *judgment*!

The third *eternity*!

The first none can deny; then, admitting the first the two others follow in sequence.

What is the cause of death?

Come, let us be plain in our answer. The cause of death is sin. No other explanation is of any significance. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was said to Adam in innocence. He did eat; he died. His death was caused by sin; and "so," we read, "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," and therefore "it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment."

Now notice, although death is really a judgment, and very terrible too, yet what is called "the judg-

ment" is subsequent to death. This implies eternal punishment.

You may perhaps say that if these were the only facts M'Kenzie had to state, no wonder that his audiences were thin. He had, however, other facts worthy the attention of the largest crowds that could assemble.

If he preached death as our due, he also told how that Christ died for us; if he foretold judgment, he showed how that Christ underwent it for us when on the cross He "was made sin"; if he mentioned eternity, he proclaimed a hope laid up in heaven for the believer, as well as the wrath which awaits the ungodly in those ages which know no end. M'Kenzie seemed to live amid these facts.

Robert Annan of Dundee used to print the word "Eternity" on his doorstep; M'Kenzie had it printed on his soul. Worthy, faithful, honoured servants of Christ, both of them. They had drunk very deeply into the spirit of Luke xii.—a chapter full of eternity, and of issues which rise when time is over. They walked closely in their Master's footsteps.

That man exerts the greatest influence in time who lives most under the powers of eternity.

Time has its fleeting shadows; eternity has its tremendous actualities.

Reader, are you living for time or for eternity? for self or for God?

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). The day of mercy will soon be over. Delay not the question of your soul's salvation, I beseech you. J. W. S.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?

WE sat in the winter garden of a pleasant country place. Far away stretched a long line of purple hills, and in the intervening valley nestled a little grey town, from the adjoining lawns of which sounded the happy laughter of young people, while over our heads the sparrows flew in at one window and out at another, or tame and fearless dropped at our feet to pick up crumbs ; altogether a sweet and peaceful scene, and we stayed on enjoying it and chatting of many things. Presently we spoke of London, which we both knew well, of its busy streets and its thronging crowds, and my friend said, "Isn't it wonderful to see all the people in the trams and omnibuses, and to think where they all came from, what they are all doing, and where they are all going ?"

It is wonderful—it is more, it is overwhelming. The words of my friend have often recurred to me since, as I remember the many folks whose fellow-passenger I have been—here the sturdy British workman, there the city man, engrossed with stocks and shares, and the rise and fall of markets ; here two young people in the early springtide of youth, and love, and beauty, there an aged couple, octogenarians, one would suppose, on whom winter has fallen with its chill snows—all journeying, but whither ? We should like to ask them, though they would doubtless, and rightly, deem the question an impertinence from

strangers, but you and I, gracious reader, may put it to each other without any offence, so now, bear with me, if I say to you in all affection :—

WHERE HAVE YOU COME FROM ?

Is it from the City of Destruction ? as Bunyan hath it, or are you perhaps even yet in this place of danger, of distance from God, and from His Christ, this far country of insatiable longings ? Surely you are tired of such a place, you cannot wish to remain there ; already the cry rises in your heart, “ Whither shall I flee ? ”

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?

Perhaps you are trying to stifle that inner voice ; you are young, you say, and life is sweet, pleasures woo you, “ the world pulls hard,” as a lady once told me, it is all so innocent, so harmless, you do not crave wrong things, nor even foolish things, only to be blithe and gay, and have a good time. Dear young friend, I do not blame you, it is all most natural, I fully sympathise with you, and love to see you have a good time, but you are setting about it the wrong way. You should, nay, you must, flee to Him who has so loved you as to die for you, and who waits to make you really happy with a deep, abiding happiness such as you have never yet known, who bids you now come to Him and drink, that you may never thirst again for ever.

And now, lastly, I am to ask you—

WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?

You start a little at this question; you do not quite know, you hope, of course, that in some way, you cannot now tell how, you will, as people say, go to heaven when you die; but have you any reasonable ground for your hope? Is not the other alternative the only certain one—that you will not go there, that, as you are now, you could not go there, that, on the contrary, tribulation and anguish, the portion of every one that doeth evil, will overtake you? No, I cannot bear the terrible thought, you will be wise in time, you will not rest until you have fled to Jesus, and trusted yourself to Him and to His finished work, until you are assured, on the authority of His Word, that if you die, it is to be “absent from the body, present with the Lord,” and should He come, you are among “those who are Christ’s, at His coming.”

But stay—for one moment only, instead of being young and light-hearted as I have pictured you, I will suppose you to be the old man of whom I spoke just now, and with all the deference due to your grey hairs will venture to ask you—

“Dear sir, where have you come from? What are you doing? Where are you going?”

“Alas,” you answer, “I, too, am of the City of Destruction; it has been to me a place of sorrows and disappointments, of losses and crosses; too late I am mourning a wasted life, sadly am I reaping the wild oats I sowed in a too reckless youth, weary and way-worn, with all my manner of life and habit of thought too firmly fixed to change, for me it is too

late, there is no hope ; full well I know where I am going, already the grave opens to receive me, already the dread judgment beyond terrifies me."

"Oh ! sir, say not so, indeed there is hope still. I have good news for you ; do you not remember the impotent man who had been a *long while* in that case, whom Jesus asked only, 'Wilt thou be made whole?' (John v. 6), nor the man at Lystra, a cripple from his birth, whom Paul perceived to have faith to be healed (Acts xiv. 8, 9)? Would you like to be healed, do you honestly wish to repent, to turn away from yourself and your sad past, and to turn to God? Will you trust yourself just as you are to the Lord Jesus? How simple it is ! just do it now, dear aged fellow-passenger, and you shall yet be as Jacob of old, a happy worshipper, leaning on the top of your staff" (Heb. xi. 21).

Here, then, my reader, whether young or old, we are to change places ; you are to be the questioner, and I am to answer, and in order that I may do so with the utmost frankness (though I trust in all humility, and adoring the wondrous grace of God that could stoop to anything so vile and worthless and design it for a vessel of mercy) I leave this little article unsigned, for if you are a casual and somewhat uninterested reader, it will make no difference to you, and if, as I trust you may be, you are anxious to know more, anxious to be at rest yourself in that wonderful rest He gives to those who come to Him, you can write to me, addressing your letter "Quo Vadis," c/o our kind Editor, whose name and address

you will find on the fly-leaf of this magazine, who will, I know, send it on to me.

First, then, "Where did I come from?"

Like you, I was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity in the City of Destruction. It was not so much its evil things that troubled me, for I was nurtured in a Christian home, and from my earliest childhood surrounded with holy influences, but I found it a place of unsatisfied desire, the eye could not be satisfied with seeing nor the ear filled with hearing, and then God showed me that the One who fills all heaven could fill up my poor little heart, so big and yet so small, and I turned and sought Him and have been satisfied.

Secondly, "What am I doing?"

I am very simply relying on the merits of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and on the eternal efficacy of His precious blood; day by day I am resting in God His Father, who loves me, and has made me "accepted in the Beloved," so that I take account of myself, not as the wretched, worthless thing I am, but as one, loved as Christ is loved, not of my worthlessness but of the value of His work and the infinite and unchanging acceptability of His person. I might heap up words and yet could never make you understand the sweetness of being "accepted in the Beloved." "It is not," as St Francis has somewhere said, "that there is not the full blaze of the glory of that light, but that I have only such a little window through which to let it in;" it will take eternity to apprehend, and still there will be unfathomed deeps

of gladness in which my happy spirit shall lose itself for evermore.

At this point my faithful and ever kindly critic, reading these pages in manuscript, objects that I have said nothing about serving the Lord. It is quite true, for it had seemed to me that anything I had done or ever could do for Him was so small that it was not worth mentioning, but lest you should suppose it has no place in my thoughts, I will add that I most surely believe that the Lord is well pleased to find a response in our hearts to all His great love, and next to learning of and receiving from Him I know of no greater joy in this world than to spend and be spent in His blessed service. May reader and writer alike be ever more truly following and serving Him.

And now for our last question—"Where am I going?"

To be with Christ, and like Him. The failures, inconsistencies, incongruities, which you are so ready to point out to me, and over which I have grieved so long, shall exist no more, one sight of Him shall conform me to His image, "His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads" (Rev. xxii. 3, 4). If it were possible for the joy of that moment to be marred, it would be if you, my reader, were not there also. Do not put this appeal from you. It may be the last that may ever be put in your hand. The Lord grant this may not be, for His name's sake, Amen.

WILL GOD CALL MEN TO ACCOUNT?

SITTING in a court-house the other day I was greatly interested in watching those who were placed in the dock for trial.

How ashamed and confused they were. One person actually fainted, and had to be carried out.

Nothing strikes such terror into the mind of the guilty as the thought of exposure. This must have been evident to all those who witnessed what I witnessed.

As I sat and watched the prisoners in the dock before their fellows, the thought forced itself on me, "What will it be for men who have broken God's laws and lived in rebellion against His righteous government to be brought before His judgment bar?" "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10).

To illustrate what I mean, I said to a young man the other day, "Suppose some gentleman took an interest in you and gave you a situation in his counting-house at double the wages of another of the same age in his employment. When you had finished your apprenticeship suppose he started you at a good salary and advanced you considerably year by year. Suppose at the end of five years the accountant in examining the books finds out that

you have made false entries in the books and embezzled five thousand pounds. The gentleman calls you into his private office before the accountant, and all is brought out in the light of day, what could you say?

“How would you feel after all the favour shown you by such a master? The books would tell the sad tale of your guilt. There would be no escape from the truth.

“If your master had you arrested on a criminal charge, and you were brought before a judge and received five years’ imprisonment, you could not blame your master, nor could you blame the accountant for his rightful exposure of your shameful conduct, nor the judge for inflicting upon you what the law demands.

“In the prison you could only blame yourself. All the favour shown you since you had been kindly taken into your master’s employment, would only add bitterness, self-reproach, and regret.”

FAIR DEALING.

All can see that this is fair dealing between man and man. No country could hold together for five years without such just government. Yet how slow and blind some people seem to be with regard to their individual responsibility to the God that created them and has showered upon them favours innumerable!

Think of God coming down amongst men in the Person of Jesus, to redeem them from the conse-

quences of their guilt. Yet such love is treated by most with cold and sad neglect. If men prefer to live in sin and slight such love when God calls them to account, can He be blamed?

On inviting a workman the other day to attend a gospel service, he told me that he had not gone to a place of worship for two years. I spoke to him in a feeling way for having allowed himself to have fallen into such a careless state.

"Think of God," I said to him, "giving you six days entirely to yourself and you robbing Him of the seventh! How would your master like one of his workmen to treat him like that?" He had to admit that he would soon discharge him. Yet you treat God in a way that one man would not allow his fellow-man to treat him.

Little do most people dream, perhaps, of the constant robbery of God that may be going on in daily exercise by themselves. If this is so, will God not act justly in calling men to account for how they have treated what He has committed to their responsibility?

Reader, if you feel the misery and torments of an awakened conscience, do not treat it lightly or seek to stifle its honest convictions. The very awakening of your conscience shows the love of God to you. If through conscience He makes you tremble under the power of His searching, penetrating eye, it is that He may make you judge yourself and your sinful course, and that you may turn to Him who has no pleasure in your death or everlasting misery. Can

you believe it? Why should you not believe it? Will you not bow under His searching judgment of your sinful state and history?

ALMIGHTY AND INFINITE LOVE

has opened up a way whereby an awakened conscience can be brought in perfect peace with God. Glad news this for the heavy-laden and sin-distressed! "Fear hath torment." But no fear will remain in the mind that is brought into the knowledge of what almighty love has wrought in the death of Jesus.

PEACE IS MADE WITH GOD.

But how? Is it a peace that overlooks or takes no notice of my sins? That were impossible if God were to maintain the justice of His governmental throne. Sin must be righteously dealt with, and thus righteously put away so that God could look all the created intelligences in the universe in the face and say, He acted according to the demands of His throne in blessing me.

Said a doctor to a friend of mine who was not expected to recover from an illness, "You had better prepare for death and make your peace with God." Said my friend in my hearing to the doctor, "If I had that to do now, doctor, it would be too late. The Lord Jesus has made my peace with God, so that I have not got it to make."

Making your own peace means a great deal. Are

you able to undo the past? Blot out all your sins and make yourself right with God? If you feel you cannot, then turn your eye away from self, and trust the One who has finished the work that has been done *for you*.

Scripture says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). Why did He who knew no sin bear our sins? Look at this question straight in the face, and rest not until you have the divine answer to it; was it not to satisfy the claims of divine justice? was it not to make that peace which you were unable to make?

The storm cloud of God's terrible judgment on account of our sins burst on Jesus, God's own beloved Son, the suffering Saviour, and spent itself in all its terrible fury. It is all exhausted now for those who believe. Separation from God was the dreadful result of sin. But now the work has been done, the judgment is all past, and for those who rest alone on Christ's finished work there is no condemnation.

What a rich provision! What a covert from the storm! What an escape from coming wrath! When the fires of divine judgment cleanse this world of all its impurity and corruption, the one who believes is perfectly safe, because saved by the precious blood. "Much more then being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Rom. x. 9). Perfectly secure and perfectly sure is the believer's portion. The Word of God says so, and what want we more?

Rowland Hill used to be heard singing to himself:—

*“I have His word and His oath,
And His blood seals them both
And I know the Almighty can't lie.”*

Before his conversion to God a British officer said, “I used to pray to Christ on the cross.” He found out his mistake. The Saviour is not on the cross, He is not in the grave, but on the throne of heavenly glory. If He were on the cross or in the grave all would be lost for ever. The reason He is now on the throne of the heavens is because He vindicated the claims of God on the cross. When Paul saw Him on heaven's throne he was laid hold of and made His willing captive.

All the love of His heart and all the power put into His blessed hand are ever ready to be exercised on behalf of those who put their trust in Him. If the power of His hand is not exercised in removing the difficulties in our pathway, in all the power of His unchanging love, He will be with us in them to comfort and thus sustain us above them.

No one feels so deeply for us as He. He Himself was tried to the utmost that He might know in a practical way what suffering means. He is touched most tenderly with all that affects His own. Because we are “His own” it could not be otherwise.

*“Most merciful High Priest,
Our Saviour, Shepherd, Friend,
'Tis in Thy love alone we trust
Until the end.”*

“WHERE ARE THEY NOW?”

“Where are those who have passed away in death?”

THIS is the question asked, and answered, in an article in the February number of a parish magazine in the extreme north of England. The answer is that it is?

“Clearly revealed that our beloved dead have passed into a full, vivid, and conscious life.”

So far so good; for the life of the immediate future is certainly no sleep of the soul, nor state of unconsciousness.

But the writer presents this future stage as *probationary*. He says:—

“If we turn to our Bibles we shall find one or two points clearly established. There we find,” he says, “true life is divided into three stages—(1) The earth stage, which is the period of probation, or character-making; (2) The intermediate stage, when the body has been laid aside at death, which is called by various names, such as Hades, or paradise, or Abraham’s bosom, in which stage the soul goes through a further process of purification, and growth, and discipline; (3) The final stage in the end of this age, when, as we learn from our Lord’s teaching, come the general resurrection and the final judgment of men, which immediately precede the great consummation of heaven or hell.”

It is to be regretted that the writer does not give any scriptural proof for his three positions, but he refers us to our Bibles. This is, after all, our only but sufficient court of appeal. Now, let us remember that we live in a day subsequent to the death of our Lord. On that death the new creation will rest. It is the foundation of the glory of God, and the good of man. We "*behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John i. 29). "*Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*" (Heb. ix. 26). So that now, by the gospel, life and immortality are brought to light (see 2 Tim. i. 10). Hence we live in privileged times.

It may startle my readers when I say, in direct opposition to the statements of the writer, that *probation is over*, not only for the second, but for the *first* stage of life. Man is no longer under probationary dealings in view of the future life, though he is under responsibility to God, and that in regard to his actions now, and judgment hereafter. "*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ*" (2 Cor. v. 10).

But we do not get life because we have fulfilled our responsibilities, which none of us have done, but as "*the gift of God*" (Rom. vi. 23) through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. When, by His grace, we believe on the Son of God, we receive divine and eternal life (see John iii. 16-36). Our judgment, as believers, will be for reward according to the deeds done in the body, like the prize day at the end of the session.

If any chapter proves the close of probation it is Romans iii. There the Holy Spirit declares that "*ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" Mark that. The cross of Christ is really the end of probation. There the sin of man reached its climax. There the love of God was most fully displayed; there the blood of Christ was shed whereby sin might be cleansed from the believer; there atonement was effected when "*He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin*" (2 Cor. v. 21). It was then that He cried, "IT IS FINISHED." Life is to be had on a different principle than that of probation.

We receive life now in the present stage, and the life we Christians receive is "eternal life" (see John xvii. 3), and hence we enter the second stage in possession of the nature and life of Christ, so that any further process of purification, then, is as unnecessary as it is impossible. "*He that is holy let him be holy still*" (Rev. xxii. 11). That is his *fixed* condition after death, and he is with the Lord in paradise. These great facts are all settled on this side of death, so that in the divinely-given assurance of salvation we are free to seek the pleasure and glory of God, and find that "His service is perfect freedom." The consummation for such will assuredly be heaven itself in full realisation, body and soul reunited by the power of the God of resurrection.

But the wicked dead! let them read their lesson in that of the "certain rich man" (Luke xvi.) who died, was buried, and in Hades lifted up his eyes in

torment, to learn that the gulf was fixed! Probation none, relief none, hope none.

“Salvation’s day he had sinned away
For a night of endless woe.”

From the torment of Hades he should pass to the greater woes of Gehenna.

Our Bibles tell us that after death is the judgment (*see* Heb. ix. 27). This is no remedial measure, no process of purification, but the appalling fact of everlasting punishment. And so we read—“*He that is unjust let him be unjust still*” (Rev. xxii. 11). The condition of that man is fixed for ever. That condition is, as our author rightly says, the “consummation of hell.”

But, further, we read in the same article:—

“The Bible teaches us that death is only an incident in a continuous life; and as we leave off here, so we begin there. There is a change of environment, not of character. We shall each feel, in the first five minutes after death, that it is ‘I myself,’ with the same tendencies and hopes, and desires as I possessed a few short hours ago on earth. ‘There is no death; what seems so is transition.’”

Weigh these words: “*Death only an incident in a continuous life. . . . There is no death, only transition—it is still ‘I myself!’*”

Most ambiguous; it is, of course, “I myself,” because personal identity never changes, and therefore life, in that sense, is continuous. But that is only one aspect of life.

For example, the same person, who is in a palace to-day may find himself in prison to-morrow; or may, like Joseph in Egypt, be in prison to-day and find himself in the palace to-morrow; but, in this aspect, a drop from palace to prison is anything but a continuous life. We must very carefully say what we mean by the word “life.”

Hence, life on earth and life in paradise; or again, life on earth and life in Hades is not a continuous life, though the person who lives in each is the same person. The man who “fared sumptuously every day” on earth was he who craved a drop of water in Hades, but how different both his life and his environment. His death was an appalling transition!

But how glorious the transition of the “dying thief”! In one and the same day crucified for confessed crimes, repentant, and with Christ in paradise—the same man indeed, but in a life as diverse from the former as heaven from hell!

What made the difference?

I cannot do better than quote the familiar words of Cowper in answer:—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
 Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood
 Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
 That fountain in his day,
 And there may I, though vile as he,
 Wash all my sins away.”

Thank God for the infinite value of that precious

blood! Hence the death of our Lord is the end of probation and the ground of the present assured salvation of all who believe in Him.

Well may we ask, "Where are they now?" and, perhaps, better still, "*What about ourselves?*" *Their* day is over; it is for *us* to enter by Him who alone is "the Door" into salvation, liberty, and satisfaction (*see* John x. 9).

J. W. S.

"IT BREAKS MY HEART TO GO."

LITTLE did those, who wended their way to the Lyceum Theatre in a certain provincial city some nine years ago, in order to enjoy an evening's entertainment, anticipate how suddenly comedy would give place to tragedy, not acted, but real, and that the audience would unexpectedly break up awe-stricken and solemnised.

Possibly many of those theatre-goers never darkened the door of a place of worship, never went voluntarily to hear a gospel address. But

THAT NIGHT GOD SPOKE

to them in loud and unmistakable tones.

Death, unexpected, unwished-for and unasked, suddenly strode upon the stage, hushed in one moment every voice, claimed the anguished attention of every spectator, and with a wave of his icy hand imperiously bade the curtain fall and dismissed

the audience with his brief and unexpected performance written with pen of fire in their memories and consciences.

It came about in this way. A leading actress contributed greatly to the amusement and entertainment of the audience by her pleasing personality. About 9.30 she came on to sing a certain pantomime song which was very popular during that season.

The account of what happened is as follows:—“It was the first occasion on which she had given the song, and a flush of pleasure suffused her face as she returned to the stage in answer to an undeniable wish for an encore. Again the melodious lines were gone through,—again she reached the well-known lines of the chorus—

‘Farewell, Dolly, I must leave you,
 Though it breaks my heart to go ;
 Something tells me I am needed
 At the front to face the foe.’

“There had been a ring of triumph in the opening lines; the excitement of success had lent an additional power to her voice. But the excitement proved too much for her.

“Suddenly the buoyancy seemed gone from her. She tottered, and the verse was never destined to be completed. The dramatic action accompanying the line, ‘*Farewell, Dolly, I must leave you,*’ was only too natural, and with the words, ‘*Though it breaks my heart to go,*’ on her lips, she uttered a frightened scream, and fell prone across the footlights.

“A startled hush fell upon the spectators as they

with one accord rose from their seats and gazed at the white upturned face and the limp form of the singer who, but a moment before, had seemed so full of youthful vigour. Instantly from the wings two colleagues rushed to her side, snatched her up, and carried her from the public view.

“At the back of the stage she lay. Her colleagues gathered round to watch through what proved to be her dying moments. A doctor was called in, but she was beyond human aid.

‘IT BREAKS MY HEART TO GO,’

were her last words, and the police performed their dismal duty, and carried her to the mortuary.

“Meanwhile the curtain had been lowered, and the audience had departed to discuss the fatality which had come so strangely amid such joviality.”

The very telling of this incident solemnises the writer. May it solemnise the reader. Death may not come so suddenly, so tragically to you, unsaved friend, but come it will. You know not when it will come. A small minority reach the age of threescore and ten. The chances that you will ever reach that age are small. Are you ready should death come? There is no reason why you should not be.

God has done all on His side for our blessing. He has shown His love to unworthy sinners such as we. He has given His well-beloved Son to the death of the cross. The work of atonement has been completed. “IT IS FINISHED,” rang in holy triumph, loudly from the Victor’s lips. Love has triumphed.

Love has found a way whereby sinners may be saved, and yet God's righteous claims all upheld and maintained. “*Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Rom. v. 21).

On your side, all that needs to be done to fit you for God's presence, and make you ready should death come, is “*repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Acts xx. 21). So-called good works are worse than useless. The Word of God is plain and emphatic on that point. “*To him that worketh not*” (Rom. iv. 5). “*Not of works, lest any man should boast*” (Eph. ii. 9). “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done*” (Titus iii. 5).

Repentance and faith are the two hinges on which the door of salvation swings open.

Repentance will bring you as a poor hell-deserving sinner without strength to save or help to save yourself in confession of guilt at the Saviour's feet.

Faith will lead you to put all your confidence in Him, and accept Him as your Saviour. Faith will lead you to rely on God's Word, which assures the *believing* sinner of forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

Forgiveness. “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His [Christ's] name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission [forgiveness] of sins” (Acts x. 43).

Salvation. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31).

Eternal Life. “He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life” (John iii. 36).

Will *you* accept God's gracious offer? No, not yet! Why, if you kicked up a halfpenny in the streets, you would certainly stoop down and pick it up. Would you treat a halfpenny with more respect than God's so great salvation? Multitudes do. How blind! How careless! How indifferent! What madness!

May God wake you up, and give you no rest or peace till you are ready for God's presence, and ready should death come.

A. J. P.

THE RANSOMED PRISONER.

A FEW years ago, there stepped into a railway carriage at Durston station a policeman having a man in custody. The poor handcuffed prisoner looked very unhappy, as you may suppose. But his face was so open and honest that the passengers, who looked at him, felt convinced that he was not a man who was familiar with crime.

One of the passengers, a horse-dealer, said to him, "Well, my good fellow, have you been kicking over the traces?" by which he meant, "Have you been transgressing the laws of the land?"

This question, followed by one or two more, brought out the following facts as to the prisoner:— He was a labouring man in the employ of a farmer in Somerset. On the previous night the farmer's men had had their harvest supper, after which they

had all drunk as much cider as they liked. This poor man took too much, grew quarrelsome, and, said he, "They tell me I struck somebody; but I did not know it, for I must have been too drunk. I was brought before the magistrate, fined 5s. and costs 28s., making 33s. I was unable to pay it, and asked to be allowed to pay it by instalments; but they said unless I could pay 25s. at once, and the rest in so many days, I must go to gaol for six weeks, and to Taunton gaol I am now going. I have left a wife and several children at home, and I suppose they must go to the workhouse."

Every passenger in the carriage seemed to feel for the poor man. They talked together about it, and at last the kind-hearted horse-dealer said, "We are only a mile or two from Taunton; if anything is to be done, it must be done at once. Policeman, can you set this man at liberty, if his fine and costs are paid?"

"Yes," said the policeman.

"Well, then," continued the generous horse-dealer, "here's a sovereign towards it, if my fellow-passengers will make up the rest."

The prisoner, on seeing there was a chance of being set at liberty, began to melt. Over his bronzed cheeks the tears stole, one after another, while he tried to wipe them away with his chained hands. Each passenger contributed a part, and when all was put together, it was found to be enough to meet the demands of the law upon the prisoner. *His ransom was paid down; the policeman took*

out his key, and set him at liberty; and the poor man, as the fetters fell from his hands, burst into tears, and sobbed like a child. The handcuffs were but just removed when the train reached Taunton; but instead of walking out a criminal and a captive, to suffer the penalties of the law he had broken, he stepped on to the platform a *free man*, and doubtless within a few hours returned home to his gladdened and astonished wife and children.

But does not this narrative teach us something? Does not the position this poor prisoner was in faintly resemble that of every sinner, of every son and daughter of Adam? Are we not all by nature sinners, and therefore all our lifetime subject to bondage? Satan, like the policeman, has men in his power, while they are bound hand and foot under the dominion of sin, and have no strength to deliver themselves. Time, like the railway train, is hurrying on with all. "*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*" (Heb. ix. 27).

What a solemn thing it is to reach the end of this life's journey, only to be shut up for ever in that dreadful prison where the rich man in the parable cried in vain for one drop of water to cool his tongue, tormented in the flame! Would you not pity any one in such a condition? Yet if you have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, *you* are in fearful danger of experiencing this very condition.

The Word of God declares you are a sinner. A sinner is under the dominion of sin, and in

the power of Satan. But ah! there is deliverance for you. Yes, the ever-blessed Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, has *paid down the ransom in His own blood*. We are all transgressors—all under deserved sentence of condemnation; all, but for Him, must have come at last to be shut up under everlasting darkness. But the language of faith is, "*He bare our sins in His own body on the tree*" (1 Pet. ii. 24). "*The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin*" (1 John i. 7). God has said so, and "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*" (John iii. 16). *The ransom has been paid down in blood, even the precious blood of God's dear Son.*

Suppose, when the passengers in the carriage had paid the ransom money to the policeman, the prisoner had *refused to believe* that he was free, had insisted on keeping the chains on his hands, and on going to the dreary prison, would you not have said that he was mad? Listen! God Himself declares that the ransom is paid down, that all "IS FINISHED," and that "*all that believe are justified from all things*" (Acts xiii. 39). But He has also declared that, "*He that believeth NOT is CONDEMNED ALREADY*" (John iii. 18). How solemn, to be condemned, after all, for making God a liar! (*See 1 John v. 10.*)

"We are only a mile or two from Taunton," said the generous horse-dealer; "if anything is to be done, *it must be done at once.*" And you, how near may you be to the end of your life's journey! "If anything is to be done, it must be done at once."

Be in earnest. Be prompt. God says, "*Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"No anger fills His heart,
No frown is on His brow,
His mien is perfect grace,
He bids thee trust Him now.
Come! Come! Come!"

ANON.

"I AM THE WAY."

THERE may be ten thousand ways to Christ, but I assure you there is but *one* way to heaven, where you all hope to arrive at last; and *that* way is Christ Himself, for He says, "*I am THE WAY, . . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me*" (John xiv. 6); so that, if you are not believing on or in Christ, you have not yet taken the *first* step heavenward, notwithstanding all the religion you may have.

Strictly speaking, there is but one way to Christ, and that is by faith in Him; but what I mean is this—there is no end to the various ways poor sinners take to come up to that point when they enter upon Him as *The Way* for lost souls, and are saved. They come to Him from the one extreme to the other, as the facts of the case show.

1st. *As to time of life.*—Some seem to be saved when very young, while others are reached when aged, and life is almost done,

2nd. *As to comparative goodness or badness, religion or irreligion previously.*—I have seen a most virtuous lady, who had hitherto been a great professor, sitting side by side at an inquiry meeting, with one of quite the opposite class, and both professed to be saved about the same time.

3rd. *As to duration of convictions and anxiety.*—Some come through months, aye, years of wretched plodding, law work (their own fault, I grant), while others are suddenly arrested in the midst of their worldliness, or it may be even of open ungodliness, and saved on the spot. A gentleman told me not long ago that he did not hear an evangelist he named speak for five minutes till he was saved.

4th. *As to instrumentalities and means and other circumstances.*—Souls are brought to Christ and saved through believing parents (most frequently through the mother)—the ordinary preaching on the Sunday at evangelistic meetings, or by a stray word in passing from the lips of a despised street preacher, going home to the conscience while shot at a venture betwixt the joints of the harness—by reading the Word itself, or by reading a tract or little gospel book or periodical—through reading or singing a hymn—while praying, or while others were doing any of these things. In short, the various ways and means whereby the believing point is reached are legion. But one thing is certain, oh, reader! mark it well: come to *that* point you *must*, or perish!

I was at a tea-meeting of Christians once, when

each one told how he had been led to Christ. Not two of us had been brought in precisely the same way, although some points were common nearly to all of us. One was brought by reading a book entitled, "The Blood of Jesus," and another greatly helped by it. But the grand thing was this, *we were all believers in the Lord Jesus, and safe and happy, aye, really happy!* We had all got every prop of self-righteousness knocked out from under us; and a *fearful hammering it had taken in the case of most of us*, by the Word and through the providence of God, to get us that length—the length of the kindly bosom and loving embrace of Jesus!

There lies an emigrant ship in a certain harbour. She is to sail shortly with several hundreds of passengers, who are already on their way to her from all parts of the country, and of all occupations; and they are all going to the ship by all manner of ways, and by different conveyances—some walking, some riding, some driving, some sailing, some by train; but no matter how they get there, they must all board her by the narrow gangway on foot. But observe, when once on board they are all carried by the same ship, over the same tract of sea, to the same destination.

That destination, no matter where it may be, you may compare to heaven, the ship to Christ, the gangway to faith, and the passengers, coming from all parts in various ways to the gangway, to poor sinners coming in all sorts of ways, at all sorts of times, and by all sorts of means, to this saving point

—*believing or trusting Christ alone*; and oh, if once in that ship, how sure is heaven! That ship will “weather the storm” indeed. It won’t go down. It won’t be wrecked. The ark was a type of it. How safe was Noah! Oh, soul! if we only had you the length of Christ, we should be happy about you. We should certainly meet on “yonder side.” “*I am the Way,*” —not a way, or a good way, or the best way, but **THE Way**—the only Way!

Don’t, I beseech you, as too many do, confound Christ with heaven; don’t think, when we say, “Come to Christ,” that we mean merely, turn good and get to heaven. There is no road to heaven in that direction. There is a board up, so to speak, to that effect. The flames of Sinai will scorch to death every soul who attempts to get to heaven by that way.

The road is by Calvary—“*I am the Way,*” says Christ. So when we say, “Come to Christ,” we mean what we say; come to Christ and have dealings with Him, *in order to get* to heaven. I don’t want you to go to heaven *now*. I am not going myself, I expect, for a long time yet, unless the Lord comes for me at His second coming. I don’t want to go by dying at all; I want Him to come for me—for all His people. No dying, no partings then.

In conclusion, let me say, *Christ* is not only **THE Way**, but the *whole Way*. He is the first step and the last to heaven, the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and the Omega. In many instances, the railway station is a mile or two, aye, ten miles from places I go to. In other cases it is in the very centre

of the town. When it is at a distance, of course I must walk, or ride, or drive to it. Now, Christ is not like these stations.

No, unsaved one! you don't need to walk or take a cab or 'bus to carry you over or through a certain distance of repentance, reformation, and the like, to reach Christ. No; step out to Him as you are.

"Oh!" exclaimed a Scotchwoman to me once, when very anxious, in a lamentable voice, "whaur's Christ? He's shurely faur awa'; I canna see 'im ava'."

"No, my good woman," said I; "He is not far away; He is here," and, turning to Romans x., I read from verse 6 to verse 10, throwing in a word as I went on, and dwelling chiefly on the fact that the word that would unite her for ever to the Saviour was already in her mouth and in her heart, if she would but allow herself to believe it, and allow it to come from her lips in the way of confession or admission. Oh, how eagerly she grasped the Bible and gazed through her tears, till at last she saw it and found herself in "THE Way" where she sat. So may it be with you this moment. *"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).

J. G.

FRAGMENT.

CHRIST *yesterday* was the accomplishment of redemption,—His *to-morrow* is the having His Church with Himself in glory. But He is a living Christ for *to-day*.

G. V. W.

WHAT LOVE PROVIDES AND FAITH RECEIVES.

NO subject is so far beyond the human mind to grasp as God's great love to sinful man. It is eternal in its source, infinite in its aspect, and unchanging in its character.

It baffles all description and defies all language to set it forth. Types and illustrations are utterly inadequate to portray it. God commends it to us, and it is well worthy of His commendation.

There are three things the love of God has effected for all who believe in Christ—

1. It has met all our responsibility.
2. It has provided righteousness for us.
3. It has broken the power of death.
4. It has given us eternal life.

IT HAS MET ALL OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

When conscience is awakened the sense of our responsibility has been brought before us. We are made to feel our utter failure to meet it, which is sure to bring us into distress of soul. Distress of soul is the result of the conviction pressed home upon us that we are unable to meet what we are justly liable for.

The past is thus made to live in reality in our own minds as if we were standing in the presence of the judgment-seat of Christ, there to render our account. Every effort on our part breaks down entirely, so that

we are made to realise how utterly weak and helpless we are in ourselves and how dependent we are on the mercy of God (who is rich in mercy) as the result of His love. *Our very sins and utter weakness drew forth the wonderful love of God to us and put His rich mercy into operation.*

What a contrast this is to human love! When we need our friends most they sometimes fail and forsake us. It is in our deep need we often find how unwilling people are to help us. But that was not so with God. *Our very necessity only gave Him the occasion to do what His love delighted to do for us.*

Think of the cost to Him! "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." "Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." "He gave himself for our sins." What mind could ever conceive much less fathom or understand such love as that? How could human language describe it in any way worthily?

His own Son He delivered up to the death of the cross that He might meet all we were justly liable for. It was the delight of the Son to come and thus display the love of the heart of God the Father in all its might before the whole universe of created intelligences. God thus meeting His own claims on us is very wonderful!

The Son became man to do it. He suffered and died. In that suffering and death all the love of God was told out most fully. As a consequence He has gained the highest renown, having been exalted above all principality and power. Who would dare

to rob Him of such God-given glory? He earned it in the depths of suffering, and is well worthy of it. It is the result of what He accomplished for the Father's pleasure and our eternal blessing.

It is of all importance for those in distress because of the feeling of inability to meet their responsibility to God to know that God Himself has met it in the death of Christ His own Son. If all that was justly due to the throne of God in righteousness by me has been met in the death of Christ, that clears me for ever of all responsibility on that score. If that is so we are surely released from all claim upon us, and released, be it said, by God Himself, the One whose claims we felt ourselves so unable to meet.

It would be a great relief for a bankrupt to find himself entirely released from the claims of an earthly creditor. If that is so, how much more with God. The deliverance of God's Son to death, who was infinite in Person, was surely equal and more than equal to all those offences. Those who in simplicity of faith take their stand unhesitatingly on such firm, unshakable ground get all their fears removed and doubts banished. Because of the finished work of Christ, God says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." If my iniquities and sins are obliterated from the memory of God I may well walk under the happy sunshine of His smile.

IT HAS PROVIDED RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR US.

The meeting of our responsibility is only negative; but nevertheless it was a great thing done for us on

the part of God. Still that would never make us righteous. A righteous person is one against whom no charge can be brought. In ourselves we are unrighteous. In the flesh we could not be made righteous. We must be made righteous in another Person. To be made righteous in another Person we must stand in that Person representatively. He must represent us before Him who is righteous. Christ as the righteous One has thus been made righteousness to us.

At the risk of repetition we must insist upon this statement that *we are not justified in ourselves*. It is a huge blunder to look at self to find this out. Justification in a risen Christ is the complete setting aside of self. His death was not only the judgment of our offences but of what we are in the flesh. The risen Christ has displaced us in the eye of God. If we are to enjoy peace from the inward trouble of self we must accept what God says of what has taken place on the cross, of all that we are in the flesh, and look at Christ risen as the absolute displacement of ourselves.

When we do so we see how God has brought in righteousness for us in another man, "*Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*" He is perfect; no flaw can be found in the One who is our righteousness. The knowledge of this gives us absolute boldness before God's throne.

Think of the marvellous fact set forth in this statement: "He who knew no sin was made sin for us

that we might be made the *righteousness of God in Him.*" If believers are made the righteousness of God in Christ they stand in a new life absolutely without charge. Our justification is thus so complete that God Himself sends out the defiant challenge—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Why can He thus throw out such a bold challenge? The answer is that "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God."

IT HAS BROKEN THE POWER OF DEATH.

Death is a terrible thing to the human mind. It is like a great blight or dark shadow on all that man is and all that he builds up for himself in this world. Men dread it whether it comes into the solemn stillness of the bedchamber or on the battlefield amid the roar of cannon or the rattle of musketry. Let a plague or pestilence come to our shores and just see how every available precaution is taken to keep it away. It ends man's life of enjoyment here and brings him into the great beyond. If he is unprepared for that, he must be horrified at its approach.

While this is so true that to deny it is the utmost folly, yet in the death of Christ death was slain completely, and thus its power broken entirely *for those who believe.* As David slew Goliath who kept Israel in terror, so a greater than David (because though David's Son He was David's root and David's Lord)

has met death and broken its power. He has taken the sting completely out of it, because He was made sin. "The sting of death is sin." So true is this that Paul can say, "Death is ours," and "To die is gain."

The death of Christ has opened the way into life, a life that death cannot invade or ever touch. If death comes to the believer now it comes as a trusted servant to conduct his soul into a far brighter sphere—into the presence and immediate company of Christ. That is "far better" than being in a life of conflict and constant struggle with what we are called to face in an enemy's country. It was even far better in the mind of Paul than to remain here in the service of his Lord and Master.

How very triumphant Paul was even though he had the terrible death of a martyr before him. There was no "shivering on the brink of Jordan's cold waves" with him. He says in effect, "If I live Christ shall be made much of in my body, and if I die it shall be all the same." He was so sweetly and simply in the power of the life of Christ that he was able to leave himself absolutely at the disposal of Christ. If he were called upon to stay here for the good of the saints, which might be needful, he was content; if he were called upon to go it was very far better.

Paul triumphed in the triumph and victory of Christ, which was the everlasting defeat of death—Satan's stronghold to keep us in fear until Christ broke its awful power. We see in Paul, and also in

Stephen, how completely the works of the devil were undone in them. "For this cause the Son of God was manifested that He might undo the works of the devil. For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part in the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death—that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

IT BRINGS US INTO ETERNAL LIFE.

It is in the power of eternal life that the believer is delivered from the fear of death. Life and incorruptibility have been brought to light in Christ. He came that we might have life, and have it *more abundantly*. In Him was life. He was "that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." He says, "This is life eternal that they might know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Eternal life for us lies in the knowledge of the Father and the Son, His sent One. He could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." As man on earth He was the perfect expression of all that the Father is morally in light and love.

Though all this be true, we could not enter into eternal life until Christ had died. He Himself said, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life." Eating means the appropriating of that death and the love expressed in it to ourselves. His death is the end of what we are before God, and

as we enter into the power of His love expressed in death we enjoy eternal life. In resurrection He became a quickening, or life-giving, Spirit. As last Adam, He causes us to live in His own life as Man before the Father, and thus we are brought into His own relationship as Man with the Father.

Hence the importance of the message from His lips to Mary when He had risen, which was the plain evidence that the bands of death were broken—"Go to My brethren, and say unto them: I ascend unto My Father and your Father; to My God and your God." Such language was impossible until Christ had died and risen. Such language no godly Jew in the past dispensation ever heard or understood. Even those to whom it was uttered could not enter into its blessed fulness until the Spirit was given to them. "At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me and I in you." It is the Spirit's day the Lord refers to in this passage, and, He says that "the Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified." This is the characteristic relationship of Christianity, and herein is enjoyed the blessing of eternal life.

What a wonderful place of favour to be set in! What a wonderful relationship it is for us to be brought into! To know the Father as Christ knows the Father is our blessed privilege, and hence to enjoy the same love in measure that He enjoys. "That the love wherewith thou hast loved Me might be in them and I in them," is still the desire of the heart of the blessed Lord for all His own.

The Father's love has opened out, and hence brought into our present view, another world, of which Christ is the centre, light, and attraction, and where death shall never enter or sin to bring in a cloud or distance between our souls and Him. Hallelujah !

P. W.

“WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD.”

(Exodus xii. 13.)

“WHEN I see the blood, I will pass over you ;”
 How welcome was that message ! so simple yet so true ;
 Which God sent to Israel, when judgment loomed in view—

“When I see THE BLOOD—I will pass over you.”

Chorus.

“When I see the blood ”—so simple yet so true !

“When I see the blood ”—and not what you can do.

“When I see THE BLOOD ”—you must not add thereto—

“When I see THE BLOOD—I will pass over you.”

But 'twas the blood of JESUS that God looked forward to—

The Lamb which He provided to meet the sinner's due.

Hence He could send that message to Israel's chosen few—

“When I see THE BLOOD—I will pass over you.”

And now the blood of JESUS has paid the sinner's
due,

That message God is sending—yea, all the wide
world through.

Not only now to Israel—but every sinner too—
“When I see THE BLOOD—I will pass over *you*.”

Then trust the blood of JESUS, God's Word you'll
find is true;

Your sins may be as scarlet, or crimson's deeper
hue;

But *all* will be forgiven—Praise God! forgotten
too—

When God sees THE BLOOD—He will pass over YOU.

T. C. M.

FRAGMENT.

JESUS cried out, “It is finished.” What was finished? By His death He met all the claims of God in righteousness, and consequently can meet all the claims of our consciences. “Christ . . . hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Pet. iii. 18). As a Man He went into the grave, and God has taken Him out of the grave; and He is now at the right hand of God, and the Holy Ghost has come down to tell us that He will quickly come again.

W. T. P. W.

MY LIFE'S STORY.

MY past life fills me only with shame, and in speaking of it my desire is alone to magnify the grace of God to one who had wandered so far away, and to show that salvation and forgiveness may be known to the vilest.

Though my father was a slave to intoxicants, yet he sent me to religious service on Sundays, but the home life nullified any good result he might have hoped from such attendances.

My brothers followed in my father's steps, and were not only addicted to drink, but fond of betting and gambling. It is little wonder that when

I COMMENCED LIFE'S JOURNEY

for myself, and started to earn my living, my tastes were similar to theirs, and I naturally copied the example they set me.

I learned to swear and smoke, frequented music halls and theatres, and other low places of amusement, played cards, betted and gambled. Horse-betting was a very favourite occupation.

All this time I was gradually being ensnared in the most cursed bondage a man can know. I became a slave to strong drink. It began with pots of beer fetched in on Sundays, and step by step the monster insidiously enslaved me. Oh! what a curse this strong drink is! How many homes ruined, children starved, wives broken-hearted, lives blighted by the

victims of intemperance! Hospitals, workhouses, asylums, prisons are filled through strong drink. For myself I cannot give it a name bad enough, no language can exaggerate the desperate evil of strong drink, as I know well from sad, sorrowful experience.

Just as I was growing up into manhood, a milk business provided me with good money, but, as I had only to work a few hours a day, the remainder of my time was spent in public-houses, drinking, playing bagatelle, billiards, and dominoes. Satan had got hold of me through these things. How true I found these words: First he *finds* you, then he *blinds* you, and then he *binds* you. Nothing less than the almighty power of God can break such chains.

I ruined two milk businesses, forfeited situation after situation. I was once trying to jump on a car when my foot slipped, and hanging on to the chain, was dragged up Lewisham Hill, but met with no serious injury. I had many warnings, but nothing affected me. I went

FROM BAD TO WORSE,

and found in my own experience the truth of Solomon's words, "*The way of transgressors is hard*" (Prov. xiii. 15). Sin has its so-called joys, but they are few indeed compared to the misery, wretchedness, shame, and sorrow it brings. "*Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction*" (Prov. xiii. 18). How true I found these words.

I changed my business, and went to carry bread

round for a baker, thinking I should be so fully occupied that I should have no time to spend in public-houses, nor waste so much of my money. I was, in a way, desirous of reforming, but I soon found myself betting with the bakers, and frequenting a public-house where I spent hours, when I should have been on my rounds. My master was a drunkard and yet was particular to attend church on Sundays. Do you wonder that such professors are stumbling-blocks to the unsaved ?

Drinking and gambling led to stealing, and matters assumed such a shape that I felt compelled to leave the neighbourhood of Lewisham. Through the influence of one of my brothers, I got a situation in another part of London at higher wages.

I now made vows of reformation, but, alas ! in my own strength, and I found like many others that change of occupation, companions, and locality is useless to break off sinful habits. There must be

AN INWARD AND SPIRITUAL CHANGE,

which God's Spirit alone can work, and to this I was an utter stranger. The result was I was soon travelling faster than ever on the downward road, cheating my master, cheating his customers, and spending the proceeds in addition to my wages in sin of all kinds.

Let me tell you another bit of my life's story. The next page shall recount God's gracious way of reaching me. Carrying my milk cans in Rotherhithe New Road one day I noticed a gentleman standing in the

middle of the road speaking to some workmen. He wore a silk hat with a text of Scripture fixed round the crown. I stopped and read,

“PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.”

Astonished, I read those words again and again, wondering what could induce a gentleman to walk about with such words on his hat. It was a sight I had never before witnessed. I thought I would speak to him, and ask what the words meant, but he stopped so long talking to the workmen that off I went on my rounds. I repeated the words to myself again and again, and they so preyed on my mind that I could not get rid of them. I tried to drown the recollection of them with intoxicants, but in vain. I told my customers what a strange sight I had witnessed, but they only laughed. I did not realise then that

THE MESSAGE WAS FOR ME,

nor did I know that it was God's voice speaking to me through His Word. I grew more and more serious and uneasy.

A few evenings afterwards I was sitting indoors when this wonderful message again came to me. Taking up a Bible I opened at Matt. xxv. 29, and read, “*Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.*” I asked my mother, who was sitting in the room, what this verse meant, but her explanation did not satisfy me.

I cannot explain how it was, but that verse seemed to suit my case. I was in a desperate condition financially. I had cheated my master's customers, appropriated my master's money, my books were all wrong, and I was daily expecting imprisonment.

I now earnestly wanted to be a Christian, but knew not how to reach the happiness I desired. Mountains of difficulty seemed to stand in the way ; I was deeply in debt, and if I left off my evil practices I feared I should never be able to pay. A tremendous struggle went on in my mind. I closed the Bible, went to my bedroom, knelt down and asked God to be merciful to me—a sinner. I implored Him to forgive my evil ways and wrong-doings.

He heard my cry, and, all praise be to His holy name, He pardoned a rebel like me ; made me His child, and has enabled me to live a new life.

Swearing, stealing, gambling were given up, also smoking and intoxicants, which had been such a curse to me. He not only forgave all my sins, but gave me

AN ENTIRELY NEW LIFE.

Christ had become my life, and my desire was to glorify Him in my ways.

But, not knowing what it was to stand on divine righteousness, I soon became a prey to doubts and fears. The enemy of souls suggested my feelings were all fancy, and there was nothing, after all, in them ; for how could a rebel like me expect to be forgiven, and all my past sin and wickedness be blotted out ?

I was just beginning to despair when a letter reached me in which the writer quoted that lovely verse, 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.”

“Whosoever” must take me in, so I just rested there. My doubts fled, my happiness returned. Having believed with the heart, I now confessed with the mouth, and I went to the men in the milkyard where I was working and told them that Christ was now my Saviour, and from henceforth I intended to give up wrong ways, and shady practices, and lead an upright, Christian life. One man said he knew all about religion, and I should not stick to it for five minutes. The foreman said there was no need to be a Christian, it would be quite enough if I led a steady life. One of the men said he was sure I only meant to try and get a living out of it, whilst all the others mocked, laughed, and jeered.

But nothing shook me, I now knew I had a Saviour, and was happy in the knowledge of God’s love to me. I was a

NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST JESUS,

so all the sneers and jeers only made me cling closer to Him. All this was a mystery to them, they did not understand me, and very soon all my old friends forsook me; but that did not trouble me, for I had found a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother,

and now, after eleven years of experience, I can truly say—

“The best Friend to have is Jesus.”

He not only died to redeem me, and put away my sins, but has kept me up to the present moment. He is a living Saviour, saving to the uttermost all who come to God by Him. He never has lost one soul yet who trusted Him—and never will.

I used to laugh at Christians, but since I have become wiser, I see that the laugh should be against the man who is foolish enough to take the devil as a master, and reject Christ as a Saviour. The one, who is on the laughing side, is he whose soul is right for time and eternity: the man whose sins are forgiven, who has peace with God, and is accepted in Christ.

To God be all the glory, He hath done great things for my soul, and He will do great things for yours, if you will only trust Him, my reader!

• THERE IS NONE LIKE JESUS.

He saved me by His grace, has kept me by His power, and will soon take me to the glory where He now is.

My one desire in writing this black account of myself, and this bright account of my Saviour, is that it may be an encouragement to others, who have sunk as low, and wandered as far away as I did, to come and cast themselves at the feet of a Saviour-God, crying, *“God be merciful to me a sinner.”* He will not spurn you but will save you, bless you, keep you.

A. H.

A PROPHECY THAT SERIOUSLY AFFECTS YOU.

A FEW months ago the reappearance of Halley's Comet was the subject of much comment and no little speculation. Man has been able to *investigate* the phenomena of much that happens in the world of nature, but he has not been able to *control* them. What this comet may do some day in the future has been the cause of disquietude. Man stands powerless in the presence of such forces. With all his skill and cunning he is but a powerless dwarf—a speck of dust—an atom, and not mighty at that.

Sir Isaac Newton was walking in his garden with his nephew. The latter was full of questions, whilst the former, who had passed his eightieth year, was full of thought.

“What are these comets, uncle?”

“Comets are compact, solid, fixed, and durable; in one word a kind of planet,” Newton answered, “which move in very oblique orbits every way with the greatest freedom, persevering in their motions even against the course and direction of the planets; and their tail is a very thin, slender vapour, emitted by the nucleus, or head, ignited or heated by the sun.”

Unpleasant ideas suggested themselves to the old scientist. He was thinking of the great comet of 1680, which had passed so near to the sun that the

nucleus was computed to have been distant no more than 144,000 miles from its surface, and he reasoned that at each successive revolution it would be brought still nearer.

Mentioning this fear to his nephew, he was asked —“When will this comet fall into the sun?”

Sir Isaac's answer came: “I cannot say when the comet of 1680 will fall into the sun. *Perhaps it will make five or six more revolutions*, but whatever will be the instant at which this will occur, the comet will increase the solar heat to such an extent that our globe will be burned, and all animal life perish.”

The comet has appeared *three* times since Sir Isaac Newton's day. Whether his prophecy will ever come true or not we cannot say, but this we can say on the authority of God's Holy Word that—

“The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. iii. 10).

“And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them” (Rev. xx. 11).

One thing is certain. Not only do men and women leave this world one by one by the narrow gate of

death, but this world is going to be burned up. The ordinary man of the world will not sneer at Sir Isaac Newton's opinion. Alas! how many sneer at the prophecies of the Bible. But so many prophecies of the Bible *have* come true that it ought to make people careful as to paying no heed to those that are as yet unfulfilled.

King Frederic the Great of Prussia, the friend of Voltaire, the dissolute infidel,—King Frederic, who was accustomed to go into battle with one waistcoat pocket full of bad poetry, the other with a phial of poison ready for use if he should be hopelessly defeated—once asked one of his generals, known to be an earnest Christian, to defend his Christianity in one word. "*The Jews, sire,*" replied the aged soldier, and his testimony was unanswerable.

To mention no other prophecy than this, that the Jews were to be scattered abroad over the face of the earth, unabsorbed by the nations, distinct in character and features, is to bear very striking testimony to the truth of the Bible. I have met coloured Jews in Jamaica, Portuguese Jews in Portugal, Spanish Jews in Gibraltar, Moorish Jews in Morocco—indeed, wherever you go you will find them scattered over the whole earth.

And further, Scripture prophesies that the Jews will return in unbelief to their own land. This is being fulfilled under our very eyes. Fifty years ago a Jew was not allowed to dwell inside the walls of Jerusalem. There were less than fifty thousand Jews living in all Palestine. At the moment of

writing there are more than fifty thousand Jews living in Jerusalem alone, and it is estimated that over 150,000 Jews are in the country. Every week steamer loads of Jews are being landed. So great is the influx that fresh ports are being made to cope with the immigration.

All this affords strong presumptive ground that other Bible prophecies, as yet unfulfilled, will be fulfilled. If a man is known as having uniformly spoken the truth in the past, it affords a strong likelihood that he will speak it in the future. In a far stronger way if prophecies, uttered hundreds of years before their fulfilment, have come true, it is very strong presumptive proof that prophecies yet unfulfilled will be fulfilled. It is easy for a man to speak the truth. He has simply to confine himself to the exact assertion of facts. But prophecy is different. It requires prescience, foreknowledge, *divine* inspiration. The Bible is the only book that can stand this test. It is absolutely unique and unrivalled.

Lawyers will tell you that *indirect* testimony, *circumstantial* evidence, is stronger and affords more reliable ground on which to build a case than *direct* testimony. *Indirect* testimony is far removed from any chance of collusion. This is what renders it so valuable.

Psalm xxii. 16 affords a very convincing instance of this. The whole Psalm is a prophecy of the death of the Messiah, beginning with the words uttered by Christ on the cross, "*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*" But in verse 16 we

get the expression, "*They pierced My hands and My feet.*" The writer of the Psalm could not have understood what his words implied. They referred to crucifixion, and that form of death was not known till the time of the Romans. What a flood of light such a simple remark throws upon the Word of God as to its foreknowledge and inspiration.

But to come to our point. The Bible plainly warns the sinner that "*the soul that sinneth it shall die*" (Ezek. xviii. 4). Here is a prophecy. And just because the prophecy has come true in every one of the millions of bygone generations, and is being fulfilled every day before our eyes, the stoutest infidel will not deny but that the prophecy is sure to come true in his own case. So much is this so that the expression, "There is nothing so sure as death," has passed into a proverb.

Now when this prophecy comes true in your case, reader, if you die in your sins, you will discover another prophecy will come equally true—"After this [death] the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). And further, whether you live to behold it or not, you will discover this further prophecy will also come true, viz.: that the world is to be burned up, and all its unbelieving inhabitants summoned to God's judgment-seat to be judged for their sins.

Whether Sir Isaac Newton's prophecy will ever come true or not is a small question beside this sure and certain fulfilment of the prophecies of Scripture concerning YOU. Will you accept the warning? Will you be wise in time?

For the Gospel brings its own glorious, blessed good news, that through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus forgiveness of sins, and full and free salvation, are to be had through faith in His name. For a believer there is no death in the full sense of the word. The Saviour said, "*Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?*" (John xi. 26). The believer, if called to pass through death, "falls asleep in Jesus."

For a believer there is no judgment. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]: but is passed from death unto life*" (John v. 24).

For a believer there is no great white throne. There the *wicked* dead will stand. The believer will have been associated with the Lord Jesus in His glorious millennial reign. They form part of the *first* resurrection prior to the millennium, a resurrection of blessedness only. The resurrection for judgment will take place at the end of the world's history (see Rev. xx. 5, 6, and 11-15).

Your only hope lies in the Gospel. Get acquainted with it. It is God's power unto salvation. It is concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In Him alone is your hope. There is no Gospel to be heard the other side of the grave—no hope for those who die without Christ. Here and now lies your opportunity, seize it, as you have a care for your soul.

HOW I WAS CONVERTED.

IT is with much joy that I write to you on the fourth anniversary of the day when through God's grace I became the happy possessor of eternal life and peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. My only desire in doing so is to tell you of the blessed Saviour whom I have found, for it is written in the Roman Catholic Bible (John xvii. 3)—

“Now this is eternal life; that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”

I was born in September 1886, and baptized according to the rites of the Church of Rome. I was educated at the National School in Clonmult—a small village near Midleton, Co. Cork, and about one mile from where I first saw the light of day. At school I was taught that when the priest baptized me I was made a Christian, and that no person outside the Roman Church could be saved (see Maynooth Catechism, p. 20). When confirmed at Mogeely, I was led to believe that I had then received the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost (Maynooth Catechism, p. 49).

I was, therefore, fully instructed and equipped for the battle of life in accordance with the tenets of my Church, and well do I remember how, as an altar boy, I zealously attended to all my religious duties. Most regularly did I go to Confession and

Holy Communion, and with fervour I performed the penance received at Confession.

After a short apprenticeship at business in Middleton, I came to Cork—the capital of Catholic Ireland—and it was in this city that events happened which affected the whole course of my life up to this day, and please God, shall as long as He gives me breath.

Naturally, as a stranger in the city, I soon heard of the street preachers—these men whom I was told received good payment for their services, and who were alleged to offer the sum of £5 to any Roman Catholic who would join them and promise to curse the Blessed Virgin Mary. Of course as a devout Catholic I determined to shun such wicked people, but, one Sunday, when passing along the Grand Parade on my way to the South Mall, I observed for the first time a band of preachers.

My curiosity at once led me to approach the crowd that had gathered around them, and, quite unconsciously, I soon found myself among those who listened. As I stood, and heard one after another of the preachers come forward, and declare how they had found peace with God, my first impression was that all the lunatics were not yet confined in asylums. I left the scene disgusted, and with the firm resolve in my heart never to listen to such “blasphemers” again.

However, a few Sundays afterwards, as I passed along at the other end of the Grand Parade I came across a different band of preachers. Once more something compelled me to draw near and hear

what these men had to say. I soon found that they spoke in the same manner, and of the same theme as the other preachers I had previously met, but, on this occasion, I was much struck with the action of one speaker in approaching the people, and holding a Catholic New Testament before their gaze, at the same time shouting with a powerful voice that grand verse,

“A faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief” (R. C. Bible, 1 Tim. i. 15).

This declaration went home to my inmost soul, and I think I shall never forget it, as well as the solemn words I heard at a subsequent open-air meeting, viz.—

“Search the Scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting; but the same are they that gave testimony of Me” (R. C. Bible, John v. 39).

Many a time I cursed the street preachers, and wished that I had never heard or seen them, but still the blessed words above quoted did not leave me.

Now for the sake of any reader of this simple story, who may not be a Roman Catholic perhaps, I should state that up to the time of my life of which I write, I sincerely believed with my co-religionists, that the Word of God could not be interpreted unless with the unanimous consent of the Fathers. I was taught that if any person attempted to interpret the Scriptures he would be

forthwith denounced by his priest (Council of Trent, Sess. 4), and, as the logical outcome of such teaching, I regarded the Roman Catholic Bible as a book for the priest and not for the people. Despite this, however, something told me that I should get a copy of the Scriptures in order to verify, if possible, the statements made by the preachers. I thought that if what those men said was not in accordance with the Roman Catholic Bible I should be happy indeed to have such an assurance in my mind, but if the contrary were the case, I should look further into the matter, and consult my spiritual advisers.

After considerable difficulty I procured a Douay Bible in a pawnshop, and my delight was indeed great when I observed the imprimatur of Pope Pius VII. on the first page of the book. Immediately I commenced to search the Scriptures, but although I read most carefully, I was astonished beyond measure to find that no mention was made of many of the principal dogmas of my Church. For instance, the doctrine of the Infallibility of the Pope, which was made an article of faith in 1870, and also that great doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, propagated in 1854, could nowhere be found within the covers of the Holy Book.

The rude awakening of my belief was terrible; and, in fact, the more I read the more I began to see that the dogmas of the Church, in which I had been born and reared, were not of God but of man. The Spirit of God did not leave me to grope in the darkness which came over my soul at this time, but

He led me to see that I was indeed a sinner (see Rom. iii. 23, R.C. Bible), that unless I was born again I could not see the Kingdom of God (see John iii. 3), and that there was no salvation in any name given under heaven among men whereby I could be saved, except the name of the Lord Jesus (see Acts iv. 12). Then my eyes were opened to see the Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world (see John i. 29), and as I realised that as my Divine Substitute He bore away the judgment of God on my behalf, peace and joy entered my weary soul, and I was eternally saved. Blessed be His name! Since that day four years ago my life has been completely changed, and where was once darkness and despair now reigns light and liberty through the ever glorious Gospel. Praise the Lord!

Shortly after my conversion to God—not, dear reader, to the Protestant Church or any other religious system, which can never save the soul of man—I felt anxious that my relatives should know the good news of free salvation through the Redeemer's finished work on the cross. I therefore communicated with my parents, who, needless to say, were much grieved at the step I had taken. They in turn told the parish priest—Father B——, and every effort was subsequently made to induce me to go back to the old faith.

At first I was treated kindly, and gentle moral suasion was used, but when this did not avail, I was persecuted in every way. So fierce indeed did the persecution become, that my employer was called

upon to dismiss me, but he refused. I was then closely watched by spies, and ultimately I was compelled to leave Cork.

After my departure I continued to correspond with my parents and the priest. I told them that if they would show me a single passage in their own Bible where the faithful are enjoined to pray to the Virgin or any of the Saints I should again join the Church of Rome. No satisfactory replies have up to this been received from them, and Father B—— has contented himself with telling me to pray to the Saints, in accordance with the wishes of my “pious mother.”

But, dear friends, this is not God’s way of salvation, as you will see by reference to the Holy Scriptures of Truth. Oh! how my heart yearns for my fellow-countrymen that they should experience the peace I have found, and that they should trust alone in the Blessed Saviour, who died for them on the cross.

I cannot conclude without a loving and earnest appeal to all into whose hands this may happen to fall. I ask you, in God’s name, to consider your position in the light of a fast-approaching eternity. Too long, beloved countrymen, have you allowed the priests to interpret for you the Sacred Scriptures which are God’s given right and heritage to the fallen sons of men. Too long, I say, has the tradition of centuries buried from view the glorious truths of God’s simple plan of salvation!

Will you, therefore, my friends whom I love, but

the errors of whose Church I hate, will you get the Catholic Bible and read it for yourselves? If you do so, and believe what you read, the truth will break into your weary souls, and dispel all the mists and shadows cast by the false teaching you have so long endured.

How blessedly simple is God's way of free salvation in comparison with the way pointed out by the Roman Catholic religion! Instead of the prayers, penances, confessions, and works of a lifetime, the poor sinner has nothing to do but to bow to God's testimony regarding his lost condition, and to look *alone* to the Holy Redeemer who, on Calvary's cross, eternally satisfied Divine Justice regarding the sin question, and established a righteous basis upon which God can freely forgive the sinner, and at the same time maintain and vindicate the inexorable holiness of His throne.

"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 27, 28).

"He saves because He will :
Delighting thus to bless ;
He loves to clothe the soul
In God's own righteousness—
A righteousness which God can own,
Wrought out by His beloved Son."

That the Lord, who often uses weak things to confound the mighty, may bless the reading of this appeal to every reader for His own glory, is my earnest prayer.

J. O'K.

PEACE WITH GOD, AND THE PEACE OF GOD.

NOT all the good works of all the saints could possibly make my peace with God. The labour of my hands or the toil of my body cannot cleanse the stains that sin has left on my soul.

Sin has caused all the disturbance in the moral universe, and broken the peace in which man once lived with his Creator. Unless sin had been atoned for, God could not justly clear me from my sins and maintain the justice of His throne.

PEACE WITH GOD

must have a righteous basis. God must clear His character with regard to sin. I must suffer, or another great enough to meet the claims of God and glorify Him with respect to my sins must be found.

“*The peace of God*” is a wonderful expression and it is a very wonderful thing to live daily in the enjoyment of it. It is different to “*peace with God.*” The latter is for the need of my guilty troubled conscience, the former is to guard my mind and heart from troublous care.

When I believe the testimony of God with regard to the death of Christ for my offences, and in His resurrection for my justification, I enter into the enjoyment of “*peace with God.*” If I live in childlike

confidence and trust in the care of God for me, I enjoy "the peace of God."

No one can possibly be in the enjoyment of the peace of God until peace with God is known. Peace with God is the result of what was done for me by another, before I entered this world at all. I had no part or hand in it whatever. If the faith of the soul is really established in it, doubts and fears never disturb that soul.

It is "with God," not with us, that the peace was made. It is not even made in us by the Spirit, though it is important to know that the Spirit works in us. The Spirit's work is not the basis of my peace with God. The Spirit did not make my peace. Jesus did that by His work of suffering on the cross. The Spirit has come from Jesus in heaven to enlighten us as to what Jesus did in meeting our responsibilities and glorifying God about sin. Hence

I SHOULD NEVER LOOK INSIDE FOR PEACE.

It is the *outward* look of faith that brings peace to the soul. The Spirit never directs the sin-distressed soul to look inside for any kind of result. Many sincere souls make a great mistake in this direction. Hence so many are kept longer in doubt and misery than they need be.

The Spirit of God, though unseen, has wonderful power. But all His power is felt in connection with the lifting up of Christ before the minds of others. Jesus said truly of the Spirit, "*He shall glorify Me.*" If the Spirit of God opens the eyes of those who are

blinded to the simplicity of the Gospel, He immediately fixes the eyes He opens on the risen Christ.

When the eyes of such are opened to see the risen Christ, they are brought into the enjoyment of the results of Christ's victory over death and judgment, He broke the power of death by bearing the judgment of God that lay upon us on account of our sins.

The risen Saviour then fills the eye instead of sins afflicting the conscience. He then becomes our peace. Scripture says, "HE IS OUR PEACE." After the victory over Goliath, David filled the eyes of Jonathan, Saul's son, if not the eyes of all Israel. Because of what David had accomplished for the salvation of Jonathan he displaced Jonathan in his own eyes. His eyes were filled with David, and he showed it by stripping himself of his garments, girdle, and sword, and putting all on the youthful conqueror.

Scripture never supposes that any believer has not peace with God. It always supposes that he has got it. "Being justified by faith, WE HAVE peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." There is nothing but the ring of certainty about these simple words.

The Lord Jesus was the first to proclaim peace after He had made it. He came and preached peace to those "which were afar off, and to them which were nigh." His presence, as a living man, gave all the weight that was needed to His simple, soul-

establishing message. Peace gave place to fear with them. Their hearts were not only brought into peace, but gladness and fulness of joy. They had the realisation of Paul's prayer for the saints at Rome, "The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

FEAR AND DOUBT ARE THE RESULTS OF SELF-OCCUPATION.

Self-occupation arises from the sincere desire to be right with God. The more sincere we are in our efforts in this direction the more we are made to learn our own unrighteousness and utter unfitness.

This often drives weak minds to despair. Many are to-day not only perplexed, but in real despair of deliverance through looking within themselves. Nothing but corruption is found there, and our utter weakness and folly are exposed by trying to correct it in our own strength. To root the flesh out of us is an impossible task, but victory over it may be obtained.

It is a great comfort to know that there is nothing which the light of God's perfect holiness reveals to me, either in myself or in my past life, which the perfect love of our Saviour-God has not effectually dealt with in judgment, and removed from before Him. My sins and my sinful self were all dealt with in the death of Christ—were buried in His grave. Hence my sins, past, present, or future, or my old sinful self, can never appear again before the eye of God.

Christ appears in the presence of God FOR US. In the mind of God, He now displaces all that I have done, however bad, as well as all that I am in myself, in the flesh. He appears FOR US. What a comfort! In that sense

HE IS OUR PEACE.

Peace with God is that which entirely depends on what Christ has done, and what He is, as Man, in all His blessed acceptance before God. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." He made peace by the blood of His cross, and after His resurrection He, with His own lips, made known the good news. In the declaration of the good news His own were brought into the enjoyment of what He had accomplished for them.

HIS OWN PEACE AND THE PEACE OF GOD

seem to be much the same. The peace of God He ever walked in as a man in communion with His God and Father. In the midst of all the rage and fury of men He was ever calm and peaceful as the waters of a deep lake hidden and protected by high mountains from the howling tempest.

See Him in the boat asleep on His pillow when that boat was in jeopardy, and the disciples, most hardy fishermen, who had weathered many a storm, were terrified. See Him when the band of soldiers came to take Him; in His disinterested care for His own He says, "If, therefore, ye seek Me, let these go their way." At the same time He heals the ear

of the high priest's servant, which Peter had cut off. How very admirable and how peaceful all this showed Him to be!

If we live in the confidence of little children in a Father's love and care, the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds, as a garrison keeps a fort. Anxious care disturbs the mind, and hinders communion with God Himself. The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are classed together by the Lord as hindering fruitfulness. God loves our society, and if we walk with Him He undertakes to carry our cares. "Casting all your care upon Him, FOR HE CARETH FOR YOU." "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

"He guards the angels' flight and takes notice of the fall of a sparrow." He loves us so much that He has numbered the very hairs of our head. Nothing is too great for His power, and nothing too small for His care—nothing so small that we may not unburden our hearts to Him about it, and get in exchange His own peace.

*"If thou art not a king almighty to compel,
Thy God rules everything, and He can rule them well,
In His great strength arise, cast all your cares away,
Leave doubts and fears and cares for those who cannot
pray."*

In contrast with peace with God, which nothing can disturb, and which we can never lose, we may easily lose the enjoyment of the peace of God if we, through want of faith, allow care to get in upon us;

it irritates and depresses us, and hinders our enjoyment of God's unchanging love which is the true secret of walking in God's own peace.

We may become like Martha, to whom the Lord said, "Thou art careful and troubled about many things." Care hindered her communion with the Lord. Even over-anxiety in the Lord's service might hinder our communion. Sad that it should be so. Mary enjoyed His company because she prized it above all else. She sat at His feet and heard His word. She was so at rest in His presence that she could be taught by Him.

SERVICE RENDERED TO THE LORD IN A RESTLESS SPIRIT CANNOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO HIM. Nor indeed to any one else. If you called upon a person and saw that your presence made him restless, even though it were to serve you, you would want to leave his presence. You would feel sorry you had called.

It is the privilege of every believer to have his mind and heart as free from anxious, corroding care as his conscience is from guilt. But this involves constant trustfulness on the Father's care. It involves *submissiveness of spirit* to all His governmental ways with us.

If we do not submit to His way, even though it should (as it often does) cross ours, we shall get disturbed and restless, and lose our enjoyment of His peace. Our will, if insubject, will cause us, and perhaps others, great trouble.

Hence Jesus said, "Take My yoke upon you, and

learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls." Walking in submissiveness of spirit to God's will, is the yoke of Christ. That is what delivers us from our own will, and that is the secret of perfect peace and rest in the circumstances of our wilderness pathway.

But all this supposes us to be in the enjoyment of peace with God. The difference must never be confounded. The need of my conscience must be set right first, before I could walk with God, or bear the yoke of Christ.

Any attempt to walk in the path of Christ, in the way of imitating His life, where the need of the conscience is not met, and hence perfect peace with God not enjoyed, must be legal, and hence forced.

Living by rule, as Thomas à Kempis did, may seem very holy or pious, but it is not what God accepts. It is the bondage of a slave, and not the liberty of a son. A son is free. We are sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Hence we are at liberty. As sons of God we delight in God and He delights in us. This is the power for all acceptable service.

P. W.

FRAGMENT.

WHO is the wise man to-day? The man of faith or the sceptic? The man of faith, for the preaching of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. Let me urge you to at once believe in the Lord. W. T. P. W.

A LIVING BIBLE AND A DYING TRIUMPH.

IT was a tumble-down, one-roomed cottage close to the water of the bay. The owner of it, a rough godless man, plied the uncertain calling of a boatman. His wife was a Christian woman. Near them lived an earnest servant of Christ. One day as he was going to see some of the poor people he was interested in, the big, bloated, unshaven boatman, dressed in ragged canvas trousers, a torn, coloured shirt, accosted him with a rough "Ahoy! heave to."

What followed is perhaps better narrated in the different speakers' words.

"Do you wish to speak to me?" I replied.

"Well, not particularly," he answered, "but the old girl inside wants to say a word to you. She's bound on a voyage, and wants to know if her papers are all right."

"Do you speak of your wife?" I asked.

"Yes, if you like it better, She's about done for. She wanted me to go after you, but it's too hot for a Christian to put his head out, but seeing you coming I hailed you."

"A Christian! are you a Christian?" I exclaimed.

"All a set of impostors. Don't care to be suspected of being one. Used the word as a saying. The fewer preachers in the world the better it would be."

As I passed into the only room, there lay the in-

valid stretched on a mattress supported by a sea-vessel's berth against the wall. She extended her thin hand, turned her eyes to me, and smiled a welcome.

"God be blessed, ever blessed, for this favour, sir," she said in a low, weak voice. "I wished to see you before I died. God has heard my prayer and sent you to me. Oh! sir, pray for my husband."

"Mag, if you wanted to see the parson to ask him to pray for me, you might have saved yourself the trouble. If there are any prayers put up for me, doctor, it must be to the devil."

The dying woman closed her eyes, and her lips moved in prayer. There was an air of patience impressed upon her face, telling of long years of endurance.

"I want none of your religion," the man broke in with an oath.

"Sir," I said turning to him, "are you a man?"

"Well," he said, "I reckon I am not a dog?"

"If, then, you are a man, you do need the Christian religion. A dog needs no Saviour, man needs Christ, needs a Saviour. If you do not need a Saviour you are below a man, you are a brute."

With an angry look he advanced a step into the room.

"This is strong language, parson, to put to a man," he said with an air and tone of intimidation.

"You acknowledge, then, that you are a man?" I answered, steadfastly meeting the gaze of his grey eyes. "*God commandeth all men everywhere to repent.*" The strong language I made use of is the Word of God."

He clenched his fist.

“James,” said his wife—“James, do not strike.”

“No, no, don’t fear, I’ll not knock a man down for quoting Scripture, but people ought to be a little delicate, Mag, in how they throw bricks at a man. It ain’t pleasant to be called a brute.”

“Pardon me, sir, I did not call you a brute. I simply said man needs Christ, brutes can do without Him.”

The boatman made no reply. He turned away, evidently in deep thought. I saw his wife’s eyes follow him, and with a look of gratitude she said, “God bless you, sir, for speaking to him so simply. Intemperance and bad company have made him what he is. Oh! sir, when I am gone, think of him, pray for him, call and see him, and talk with him. He has a soul to save. Christ died for him. The atoning sacrifice is sufficient to save even a sinner like him. Oh! sir, he was gentle, but the cup—the cup, sir, it has changed him.”

“I promise not to forget,” I replied.

“Thanks, sir, thanks! I——”

Here her emotion prevented her from saying more. I saw the death-dew was on her brow. This interview had kindled her dying energies, but now she sank back exhausted. I knelt down and committed her to the care of her Redeemer. As I closed she opened her eyes; a glorious radiance was in her features, as she said, “I know that my Redeemer liveth,—and though—worms—destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”

“James, husband, come near me; I am going away from you, let me say farewell.”

The boatman came near her bed. “James,” she said, “let me take your hand.” With ill grace he put his heavy, clumsy hand in her dying grasp. I could see, however, that he was moved. The dying look of his wife had reached his hard heart. He said nothing, stood still, and gazed upon her. There was a holy radiance in her face, as she said: “James, farewell; I die. I am now going to that heaven the hope of which has filled and cheered me in my sorrow. I am going to see the face of Jesus. I am going where there is no more sin—no tears—no pain—no death. The happiness of that blessed world will be eternal, the life without an end. I bear testimony in dying I am sustained by the hope of that Bible which you have so often been angry with me for reading. Forgive me, I meant no reproach. Kiss me, my husband.”

To my surprise he dropped on one knee, bent over her pillow, and kissed her forehead.

She smiled, and placing her hand on his forehead, prayed: “*Father, glorify Thy grace in making my husband a Christian man. Nothing is impossible with Thee.*”

The boatman’s face betrayed no emotion, but I could see it was only with a great effort he restrained himself. He remained spellbound by her side. She was now sinking fast.

“Sir,” she said, “farewell. I thank you for your consolation, and for your presence here.” She

pressed my hand with her cold fingers. Turning to her husband, she said, "Good-bye, dear James; I cannot return to you, but you can come to me. Farewell! oh! let it not be for ever."

His chest heaved, there was a sudden outburst of tears, and loud groans of anguish. The strong man was utterly broken down. He leaned his head upon her pillow and sobbed like a child. No pen could describe the expression on the face of his dying wife. Holy joy beamed in every feature as she gently drew his forehead near and kissed him. "James," she said, "those tears are my joy. Oh! that God may give you grace to come where I am going. Will you promise me to come?"

"Maggie, I promise; so help me God!" he replied in a strong, firm voice, whilst his eyes were blinded with tears.

"Then I die in peace. Saviour, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Thou hast made my cup to run over."

For a few moments she lay silent and motionless. He gazed upon her, watching the last sign of life. He bent over her and kissed her lips. I could hear him mutter, "I am a villain, I am a brute, I am not worthy to be near to one who is so near to God. This is as near heaven as a wretch like me ought to approach. God forgive me, I am not worthy to live. I hate myself; I loathe myself."

Suddenly she opened her eyes and said with an animation that surprised me: "Hark, hear that music. Oh! it can't be of earth. Listen! Such

a strain reached my ears from the heavenly chorus."

She paused, and then said—

"Who are these in bright array?
This innumerable throng
Around the throne."

Her voice ceased. I resumed where she had stopped. She then added—

"Amidst the throne
Shall to the living fountain lead."

"Oh! yes, blessed Lamb of God, Jesus, my Saviour, my Hope, there I shall follow Thee."

Here she seemed lost in rapture. Her face was transfigured. Her eyes were closed. Softly, plaintively she began to sing:—

"Oh, there shall rest be found,
Rest for the weary soul,
Beyond this vale of tears,
There is a life above
And all that life is love."

"Is love—is *love*—is *love*. Come, Lord Jesus, come."

Her voice ceased, her spirit had gone to be with her Saviour.

Her husband knelt by her pillow with a look of intense sorrowing love. After kissing his dead wife, he raised himself up.

"You have seen, my friend, how a Christian can die," I said very gently.

"Yes," he answered, from a bursting heart, "and I have known how a Christian can live. That woman

was an angel from God's heaven to me. I see it all. I feel it all now, sir, I am a brute, and yet she never gave me an unkind word. Those lips, now closed for ever, only uttered words of love, gentleness, and truth. I hated her, because she was God's. Her holy life was always a sermon to me. She was a *living Bible* against me and my evil life. God forgive me." He then abruptly left the room, and paced up and down the backyard.

The day of the funeral arrived. His old associates could not understand the change which had come over their old chum; as they saw his massive frame torn with grief, they could not understand how the wickedest man in that locality was so deeply affected.

Ah! they had not witnessed that scene by the bedside of the dying saint. They were not in the secret of the way he had been "won by the conversation of his wife," or of the effect of a "*living Bible*" upon the conscience of such a deep-dyed sinner.

May this touching account of her life, sorrows, and dying joys not only encourage all wives similarly situated to emulate her example, but be a voice to all who profess to be Christians. May we be more truly "a living Bible," so that others may be attracted to that same blessed Saviour whom we own.

Above all, may the reality of this death-bed scene speak to all, who read these lines, who are unconverted.

H. N.

GOD'S TRUTH, OR THE DEVIL'S LIE: WHICH?

SOMEHOW, somewhere, and at some time it will be all well with him."

Such were the words that fell from the lips of an aged minister at the funeral of a young man in America. Were these words God's truth or the devil's lie? We shall see.

The young man over whose body these words were spoken had been suddenly cut off. He had lived without God, without Christ, and only for his own selfish ends. His parents might well grieve over his untimely end, for he left no evidence behind that he had turned to God, no testimony that might give the slightest hope.

If a man dies thus, is there a chance of his salvation in the next world? Will the fires of hell purify the soul until heaven is gained? Is there a vague hope that it can be said of the sinner, who has died in his sins, "*Somehow, somewhere, and at some time, it will be all well with him?*" Is this God's truth or the devil's lie: which?

The Scriptures leave us in no doubt whatever on the subject. The aged minister lied at that graveside. Alas! he was the devil's agent. It is solemnly true,

*"As the tree falls, so shall it be
All through the years of eternity."*

But you want proof. You shall have it. Read the following passages from God's inspired page. They are quoted for *your* warning, lest you should presume on the devil's lie. Here and now is the place and time of blessing:

"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).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, *unto the resurrection of life*; and they that have done evil, *unto the resurrection of damnation*" (John v. 28, 29).

"The rich man also died and was buried; and *in hell* he lift up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke xvi. 22, 23).

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15).

"But the fearful and unbelieving . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. xxi. 8).

"And these shall go away into *everlasting punishment*; but the righteous into *life eternal*" (Matt. xxv. 46).

Now, in the light of these scriptures, was the aged minister right in his utterance at the graveside of that young man? Nay, it was *wilful* ignorance, for he

had the Bible in his hand, and as a minister ought to have been acquainted with its plain, unvarnished statements as to the future of those who die in their sins. Trace the falsehood to its source. It comes from Satan, "the father of lies." A liar, deceiver, and murderer he is, and his object is to ruin your soul for ever.

It is a day when we must speak plainly. We must choose between God's truth and Satan's lie. On which are you going to rest your soul?

There are two gates—the wide and the strait; there are two roads—the broad and the narrow; there are two destinations—heaven for ever or hell for ever, which is it to be?

Get into the clear light of God's gospel, and shun the vague promises of Satan. "*Somehow!*" "*Some-where!*" "*At some time.*" How vague! How different is God's word! "*Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

E. A.

FRAGMENT.

"BY" faith and "through" faith, but not "for" faith. We read frequently of being justified *by* faith, or *through* faith, but never *for* faith. It is important to note the phraseology. It forbids the idea that it is in consideration of our faith, that justification or salvation is conferred. There is no such merit. The merit is in the great object of faith. It is *Christ Himself*.

A. A. B.

“CONFIRMED, BUT NOT CONVERTED.”

AN interesting gospel meeting in the outskirts of London had concluded, and an “after-meeting” for prayer, designed to help anxious souls seeking God’s salvation, was in progress.

During its course my attention was drawn to a stylishly-dressed young lady sitting by herself at the bottom of the hall. She was evidently deeply affected by what she had heard, and was weeping bitterly as, with head low bent, she heard fervent petitions going up to God to bless His preached Word, and to grant decision of heart for Christ to those as yet undecided.

Drawing near to her I quietly said, “What is the matter? Why are you so distressed?”

“Because my eyes have been opened to-night, and I see that I am all wrong,” was her reply.

“How are you all wrong? Are you not yet saved?”

“No, indeed, I am not. I thought I was all right, but to-night I see that I am all wrong,” was her emphatic rejoinder, accompanied by a fresh burst of tears.

“What made you think you were all right?”

“Oh! I have been baptized, confirmed, and become a communicant, and therefore thought I was all right, but I see to-night that I have never been converted. I have been *confirmed*, but not *converted*.”

Conversion is what I need," and her tears flowed faster than ever.

"That is indeed a very solemn discovery to make, and you may well thank God that you have made it before it is too late. But you may be converted and saved this very hour, and I would urge you to receive the Saviour just where you sit."

"I would if I knew how. How can I become converted?" was her earnest reply.

"That is very simple. Conversion means being turned right about face—right round to the Lord Jesus. Not going through rites and ceremonies, which are merely external, and leave the soul unaffected. Are you really anxious to be saved?"

"I am deeply anxious. Tell me how I can be."

"Scripture makes that very plain," I replied. "Listen to these words of the Holy Ghost—

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation' (Rom. x. 8-10).

What could be simpler than that? Are you prepared to confess Jesus as your Lord?"

"Indeed, I am," was her fervent response.

"But, further, do you believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead?"

"Oh! yes, I believe that with all my heart."

"For whom did He die?"

“The Bible says He died for sinners.”

“Tell me one sinner for whom you believe He died.”

She paused a moment and then firmly said, “I believe He died for me.”

“Very good; and if He died for you, and you believe on Him, how many of your sins did He then bear and blot out from before God?”

“All of them, surely.”

“Quite true. But would God have raised Him from the dead, if He had not perfectly atoned for and put away your sins?”

“Most certainly not.”

“That is so, and the fact that God has raised Him from the dead is the witness that the sins, for which He died, are blotted out for ever. If they were not gone God could not have raised Him.”

“I see that,” she now remarked.

“There is something else you should now see, and it is this. To the sinner who believes in a risen Christ, and is prepared to confess His name, God says,

‘THOU SHALT BE SAVED.’

That is what He says to you. Do you think He will keep His word?”

“Most surely He will.”

“Quite so, and if He say, ‘Thou *shalt* be saved,’ is not that equal to saying, ‘Thou art saved?’”

“Yes, that’s exactly it. Thank God, I see it clearly. I believe in the Lord Jesus, and I am saved,”

she quietly said, as a fresh flow of tears relieved her pent-up feelings at the wonderful discovery she had made. Thus she entered into peace. A week later I saw her in another part of London, her face beaming with joy, and her heart filled with joy and peace in believing. She was *converted* by the grace of God, and knew it.

How many souls to-day are like her—*confirmed*, but *not converted*, i. e., resting on a form and not yet in the vital knowledge of Christ. All such I would, in all affection, remind of our Lord's words, "*Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. xviii. 3). Those are indeed solemn words, and they are universal in their application. New birth and conversion are indispensable necessities to every soul of man.

Reader, may I inquire—Have you yet been *converted*? I know the term is not popular. Often have I been told, "I do not like the word conversion." Why is this? The answer is simple. To admit the necessity of conversion is to confess that man, in nature, is away from God, and needs to be turned to Him. This the human heart is slow to admit, and the enemy of man determined to prevent, if he possibly can, as John xii. 40, 41, affirms.

This scripture demands profound attention. Let us ponder the Holy Ghost's solemn asseveration:

"Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor under-

stand with their heart, and be *converted*, and I should *heal* them. These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory and spake of Him."

Rest assured of this, my reader, your *conversion* is of vital import. It alone puts you in touch with Christ. All else is but the shell as compared with the kernel. It matters little whether you have been baptized, confirmed, and taken the communion. Your eternal destiny depends on your conversion. Has it yet taken place? It took place in the thief's case, and he is with Christ for eternity. Follow his example. Turn to the Lord. W. T. P. W.

WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT ME THEN?

WHAT shall it profit me by and by?

Oh! what shall it profit me then?

Whether my pathway on earth was bright,

Whether it led me through dark or light,

Under a grey or a golden sky,

When I look back on it by and by,

What shall it profit me then?

What shall it profit me by and by?

Oh! what shall it profit me then?

If I have answered the gospel's call,

Trusted in Christ as my "all in all,"

I shall be welcomed to dwell on high—

Dwell with the ransomed ones by and by

That shall it profit me then!

UNSELFISH DEVOTION.

“**A** POOR girl threw herself off the top of one of the highest London bridges, Putney, in order to put an end to herself. There was a great crowd on the bridge at the time, but the river was flowing, the height was great, and no wonder there was nobody ready to risk his life. At this moment, after she had been some minutes in the water, a young fellow came along and asked what the crowd was about. He was told, and without a moment’s hesitation he threw off his jacket and jumped into the water from the great height, and, in the middle of a choppy stream and a high wind, travelled for a hundred yards against the river, and eventually saved the life of the poor girl. There are brave men in all conditions of life, thank God, in this country. Among the more popular classes there are soldiers and sailors, and firemen and lifeboatmen, and policemen, and many others—but this young man happened to be none of these. There was great difficulty in getting him to give his name, but it was got under pressure from the police. He belonged to the idle rich. Ah! but his condition was worse than that. No wonder he hesitated to give his name. He was the son of a Duke. He was the great-grandson of the Iron Duke.”

This touching incident told, in language so simple, in a speech delivered to an audience of five thousand

people by perhaps the greatest living orator of our day, elicited cheers from every person present. It depicted an act of unselfish heroism, and undaunted courage, which could only call forth universal admiration.

The hero sought self-concealment. He had no desire for the publication of his noble name, even though it attached to so noble a deed. Yet he could not be hid; he received the reward which such acts of prowess obtain. He deserved it richly.

It is not often we hear of the "son of a Duke" rescuing, from a watery grave, at all risk to himself, one who was a total stranger to him, and from whom he could look for no return. This was an act of purest charity. "Not often," yet there may be some such record.

Without detracting from the moral splendour of this very extraordinary incident, but the rather fixing its own dignity upon it, I would show how, in the fullest way, it has been eclipsed.

Only this morning, before my eye fell on this intensely interesting story, I happened to read these remarkable words—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). And though I had often read them before, yet I must say that their living force and reality and sweetness struck my mind more than ever. Nay, more, Christ died for *His enemies*.

This Man was truly man, but infinitely more than man—He was the Son of God, ever "in the Father's bosom," Creator, Upholder of the vast universe,

Object of angelic adoration, and—"being in the form of God"—He it was who did not merely risk, but laid down His life for His friends. The stoop was infinite. He came from the highest glory to the manger of Bethlehem, where His infant form was laid; and thence He descended to "the death of the cross." There, under the judgment due to our sins, there rolled over Him all the waves and billows of the wrath of God. Measure this who can! Well may we pause as we contemplate such a stoop! Never was such charity!

He knew beforehand what He had to do. He came saying, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God," and, albeit, that meant the manger and the cross—the bearing in Him of all that we should have borne in eternal woe, yet voluntarily, He underwent it all.

"He saw us ruined in the Fall,
Yet loved us notwithstanding all;"

and, in order to extricate and to make us His friends, He laid down His life for us.

This act stands alone and unparalleled! Let every act of heroism receive its own proper meed—its own just reward. Let every hero enjoy his distinction; but this act, whereby myriads of undone sinners shall be taken from the dunghill and placed among God's princes, shall redound to the everlasting glory of Him who, "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9).

Oh! it is a lovely story! It bears repeating o'er

and o'er again. The ear of the rescued, blood-bought, pardoned sinner never wearies of it.

The name of the Saviour carries its charm to the heart! The very sound of that saving name—our Lord Jesus Christ—thrills the memory. No other name is given for salvation.

Saved from a watery grave at the risk of the life of the son of a Duke! What feelings must have awakened in the mind of that poor, foolish young person when, in restored life and animation, she realised all that had occurred.

Who can tell!

But, dear reader, while myriads can speak and write of the knowledge of salvation from wrath, and sin, and judgment by the gracious substitution of the Son of God—can *you*? To us it is more than a beautiful theory or an act of heroism. We see in it the love of Christ, deep, divine, personal, infinite, effective and eternal, and all undeserved!

It makes all the difference when one can say—
“He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*.”

Well for you if you can sing—

“Now my soul's long night is over,
Sins are gone ;
Rest and peace my heart are filling,
Joy is come ;
Full assurance ever finding
In His Word,
Praise, eternal praise be given
To the Lord.”

TRUE RICHES.

THE quaint Andrew Fuller went one day into a bullion merchant's place of business, and was shown a mass of gold. Taking it in his hand, he said, "How much better it is to have it in the hand than to have it in your heart. Goods in the hand will not hurt you, but the goods in the heart will destroy you."

The book from which Fuller got his wisdom says,

"THE LOVE OF MONEY

is the root of all evil," and that the man whose life is governed by it is pierced through "*with many sorrows.*" It warns those who will be rich that they will fall into temptation, "*into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition*" (1 Tim. vi. 9).

How true this is! How short-lived is the power of money! How limited are its resources! It cannot buy heaven in the next world, nor true happiness in this. To *get* it means toil and sorrow: to *keep* it, anxious planning and apprehension lest it take wings to itself and flies away: to *lose* it, pain and sorrow. We need enough to pay our way through this world, but it is when gold becomes your god that it is so serious.

How gravely mistaken are our American cousins when they speak of "the *almighty* dollar."

A miser lay dying. His right hand was tightly grasped, and he resisted every effort to open it. When dead the tightly drawn fingers were forced open, and the key of his safe fell out. How foolish to neglect the true riches and die thus.

Few are as blunt in expressing themselves as the Lancashire millowner who said, "I would willingly be damned if God Almighty will give me £200,000." Yet "*what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mark viii. 36, 37).

The love that places such beacon lights across your path should be heeded surely. What folly for the pointsman to disregard the signals, or the engine-driver to pay no attention to the flashing of

THE RED DANGER SIGNAL.

But their folly, terrible indeed if they acted so wickedly, is mild compared to the folly of men and women who disregard God's warnings. Oh! the awful and eternal consequences of so doing.

Not long ago a burglar, escaping from a policeman, leaped into the Regent's Canal, London, and was drowned—drowned by the weight of the silver he had plundered.

We all unite in condemning this wretched man, but how many there are who allow gold to drown them in destruction and perdition, as the Bible puts it, to sink them into a lost eternity.

Dear reader, will you not seek the *true* riches?

Are you merely laying up treasure for yourself, or are you rich towards God?

Be not like the rich farmer, who only thought of himself, made plans as if he were going to live for ever. His plans were never realised. The very night his fevered brain was seething with his schemes,

GOD SPOKE TO HIM :

“Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee! then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided?”

And the Scriptures add, and this is a warning to you, if unsaved, *“So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, to know Him as your personal Saviour, to know God as your Father, and heaven as your home, is indeed to be “rich toward God.” These are, indeed, riches which death cannot rob you of, riches which moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor men rob you of, and these riches are to be had for the asking. “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk *without money, and without price*” (Isa. lv. 1). Did ye ever hear such terms? Come with your empty purse. Come with your life bankrupt of all merit. Come, just because you are in need. Come just as you are. God is a giving God. “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. vi. 23).

THE MORASTHITE'S QUESTIONS.

(MICAH vi. 6, 7.)

I. "WHEREWITH SHALL I COME BEFORE THE LORD?"

IS it necessary, then, to come before the Lord? Is this an appointment which every man must keep? Yes. We are neither animals nor machines, but responsible beings, and the Word of God says, "*Every one of us shall give account of himself to God*" (Rom. xiv. 12).

What does this involve? Does it mean wrath and destruction? One would naturally think so, seeing that God is holy, and we are the very opposite. But God is also merciful. Can it be that He will overlook our many sins, and bless us in spite of all?

Everything depends on the "wherewith." If we approach God, relying upon our own fancied goodness, pleading our right desires, our sincere motives, our respectable lives, our religious inclinations, the meeting between God and us will mean disaster and everlasting confusion of face. On that ground He cannot look upon us with favour. Justice forbids.

But what if we come before Him with nothing of this sort as our plea? What if our "wherewith" is *Christ*, and the merits of His atoning blood? What if we utterly repudiate all claim to a righteousness of our own, and build all our hopes upon the Saviour and His finished work? In such a case, the meeting

between God and us will mean blessing. Nor need it be put off till the remote future. It may take place at once. You have but to "come before the Lord," and "bow yourself before the high God" as a self-condemned sinner, staking your entire confidence on what Christ has done. The result will be *Salvation*.

II. WILL THE LORD BE PLEASED WITH THOUSANDS OF RAMS?

Suppose you could bring them. Suppose you could restore the Jewish altars of bygone days, and could offer thousands of rams as burnt sacrifices to God. The murky clouds of smoke ascending to the skies from the slaughtered victims might be dense enough to blot out the light of day, but could they blot out a single sin from your soul? Not one!

A greater sacrifice than that is needed.

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away its stain."

The "greater sacrifice" has, thank God, been offered. "*Christ* was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28). With this offering God is well pleased. No other is needed to secure His favour. His righteous claims have been met. His holy nature glorified, His love set free to act on the sinners' behalf and to save every one who puts his faith in Christ.

III. OR WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF RIVERS OF OIL?

If such were at our command, and if we had the necessary appliances for turning so vast a supply of oil to practical account, we might pour those rivers upon the surface of the sea, and the wild Biscay waves would be hushed into stillness. But the tumults that rage within the breast of the conscience-stricken sinner cannot thus be quelled. Rivers of oil, even if there be thousands of them, are here of no avail.

What is needed is the operation of the Holy Ghost, turning the eye to *Christ*, fixing it in faith upon that once-crucified, but now glorified Saviour. The *outward* look brings the *inward* peace. *Peace with God* is the result of believing that Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our clearance, or "justification."

IV. SHALL I GIVE MY FIRST-BORN FOR MY TRANSGRESSION?

Would any one be really willing to do such a thing? One might gladly sacrifice *himself* to gain some greatly desired end, but would a man deliberately devote his own son to death, if by so doing he could atone for his own misdeeds?

Thank God the necessity does not arise. In inexplicable love He has done that very thing. He has given His Son—His only begotten Son—that through Him we might be saved from perishing, and have everlasting life. Shall such a gift be treated with

indifference? Shall such love be passed by as of no account?

May we appeal to you, reader, to give earnest heed to these things, that you may gain an acceptable passport to the holy presence of Him with whom, whether you like it or not, you *have* to do?

H. P. B.

HOW A PARTICLE OF SAWDUST BECAME GOD'S INSTRUMENT.

I WAS brought up in a godly home. At fourteen I went to sea, and served five years' apprenticeship, during which I tasted sin in all its awfulness. After my apprenticeship expired I went to Montreal, and then for six years lived in America.

Though apparently outwardly moral, going to a place of worship regularly, I was in reality going on in sin, and laughing at friends, who were devoted children of God, and who, I found out afterwards, were praying for me.

One winter's day handling a box packed with sawdust, a particle of sawdust stuck on my lip. Putting up my mitted hand to brush' it off, it got into my mouth, where it went into my tongue, and entered into the soft tissues. Some days after it began to irritate. I consulted a doctor, a Christian man, who probed for it, but without success. It then worked

into the principal gland of the neck, and soon I could hardly swallow. My head was drawn down on my chest. For about a week I dared not sleep.

One evening the abscess broke. When the doctor called next day he told me it broke just in time to save my life. Another abscess began, and lockjaw ensued, but happily lancing gave relief.

When well and going on in sin I had

NO TIME TO THINK.

But God in tender compassion used that particle of sawdust as His chosen instrument to give me time to think. I thought of my guilty past, and how God was dealing with me. I cried to God for mercy and He heard me, and gave me His peace. He forgave me my sins for Christ's sake. "*I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.*" (John ii. 12).

Joy in my soul gave strength to my body. My Christian doctor was delighted at my conversion, and often told me I should be in bed for weakness, if God's grace had not kept me up.

When strong enough I wrote to my father and mother to tell them how God had answered their prayers.

It is over twenty years ago since I had this sad but blessed experience, and I can testify humbly and joyfully to the Lord's grace in keeping. May He use this incident of how a particle of sawdust became His instrument, is my earnest prayer.

“I WANT NO ONE BUT JESUS.”

IN a well-known favourite seaside resort, a lady and her husband came to live. They were Roman Catholics. Shortly after settling down, the wife took a severe chill, which resulted in an acute attack of pneumonia. When the doctor told her that she could not recover, her husband was very anxious that she should see a priest, and get absolution for the repose of her soul. She answered, “No, no! *no one* but Jesus can do me any good: I want nothing else now. Only Jesus! He only can do me good now.” And a few hours later she passed away with a look of rest and peace.

Her poor husband was greatly distressed, and her remains were removed to the R. C. church, where prayers and lighted candles were in requisition until the body was laid in its final resting-place. Of no avail was all this. She was beyond it all—at rest, for ever with the Lord.

Perhaps you may not have a death-bed. Then do not delay, if unsaved, to get this most important of all questions settled. Turn at once to the Lord Jesus as the “only One who can do you any good.” Yes: He can and is willing to save you for time and eternity! “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke xix. 10). By this printed page He is seeking you. Oh, then! let Him save you *now*.

FROM INFIDELITY TO CHRIST.

SOME years ago a tall, smartly-dressed, intelligent-looking young 'fellow might have been seen, for several evenings in succession, sitting amongst several hundred men in a restaurant beneath the shadow of St Paul's Cathedral in London.

A fortnight's gospel mission was in progress. It was my happy work to conduct the services, and one evening he followed the preaching with more than ordinary earnestness.

At the close of the meeting he came forward to me and said, "I should like to have a little talk with you to-night, sir, if I may?"

Thereupon followed a most interesting conversation. It was very evident that this young man had become the subject of the Spirit's gracious work.

"I am anxious, sir," said he, "to get a few questions cleared up to-night if you can help me!" There was a ring of earnestness and sincerity about him which at once struck me.

"I might as well tell you, sir," he continued, "I am an infidel! I have learnt all my infidelity from the Hyde Park preachers,—indeed, I may say I am now one of them myself; but I have come to the conclusion that we are all of us pure theorists, and I don't think any of us get any real satisfaction out of our theories—at least I don't, *that's certain*.

"How I came into these meetings at all I can

hardly say, beyond this," said he, producing a card of invitation to the meetings. "In an aimless, indifferent sort of way I strolled in the other night, but I at once found myself in an atmosphere to which I was altogether unaccustomed.

"I became interested as the meeting proceeded, and began to feel that there was considerable force in what was said, and I came to the conclusion that you at any rate seemed to possess what I desired, but knew nothing about—satisfaction!"

Continuing his remarks, he said, "Well, I am afraid I am pretty much in the same place to-night where that young man was of whom you spoke this evening, who could not see the necessity for Christ or His death.

"*I have begun to realise somewhat of my responsibility to God, but I don't seem to see what actual necessity there is for Christ to die for me. Would you mind repeating what you said to him?*"

I replied, "My object was to show him that apart from Christ and His atoning death his case was hopeless. Let me put it to *you* now. Suppose, by way of illustration, I owe your firm £5,000, and I am totally unable to meet even a fraction of it! Now if they cannot afford to relieve me from my liabilities, and I cannot meet their righteous demands, what is to save me from bankruptcy and ruin?"

"Nothing," said he, "absolutely nothing, unless *someone* comes forward——"

"Excuse my interruption," I said, "but you must please not introduce any third party into this

business—the question is altogether between your firm and me.”

“Well, but,” said he, “if you are to be saved from ‘going down,’ someone must come to the rescue!”

“No,” I repeated, “you *must not* introduce *any-one*.”

“Then in that case,” said he, “your case is hopeless!”

“That is identically your own position before God to-night!” I remarked. “As a sinner, God has passed upon you the solemn sentence of death, as being His righteous judgment against sin (*see* Rom. v. 12): ‘So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.’

“This sentence has never been revoked, has no equivalent, and knows no commutation.

“Nothing can substitute death! Neither repentance, reformation, tears, nor prayers, nor all put together could be accepted by God in lieu of death.

“*Behind you lies a history that you cannot alter, upon you lies a sentence you cannot evade*; therefore, if some one is not found to step in between you and your sentence, *your case is hopeless* too!

“Who could be found to do this? If a substitute is to be found, it must be one upon whom death has no claim! The whole of Adam’s fallen race could not furnish such an one.

“Listen to the Heaven-sent message! Oh, what music to a sinner’s ears! ‘Deliver him from going down to the pit: *I have found a ransom*’ (Job xxxiii. 24).

“Who is this that has been found to stand in the breach? Hearken! There is ‘one Mediator between God and men—the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all.’

“Thus it was in love divine Jesus—the sinless Son of God—left the throne of glory for the shameful cross, that He might die for sinners.

“What a hum of satisfaction would fill the court if a judge, after imposing the heaviest fine the law would permit upon some guilty offender, should thereupon step down from the bench and fill in a cheque for the full amount, thus at his own expense meeting the claims of the law he had just administered.

“Would he not thereby at once put the delinquent as righteously beyond the claims of justice as if he had never been guilty at all?

“What would you have to say of the God who could righteously pass the sentence of death upon us as sinners—and did—and then in the person of His own Son—*God* manifest in flesh—leave His throne, and at His own infinite personal cost meet that sentence in laying down His life for us? Is not He to be trusted? Would you not say, What a blessed combination of love and justice!”

“Yes, indeed,” said he, “that helps me a good deal; but somehow I do not seem to be able to get the benefit of it for myself! Ought I now to ask Jesus to intercede for me?”

“No,” I said, “that is not the way! Let us return to the old illustration. Suppose you had stepped in between your firm and me, and charging

yourself with my liability, had offered to your firm that which they had accepted as a full settlement of all their claims on me. Should I need to go to you after that, and ask you to use your good offices, and intercede with your firm for me?"

"Oh! no," replied he. "I can see there is no need for that; if the thing is *settled, it is settled*, and there is an end of it."

"Well now," I said, "that is exactly the position of things. The offering needed to make an atonement for sin has been made to God in the death of Christ—and better still, it has been accepted and witnessed to in the resurrection, and as a result God sends the joyous message of salvation and peace into this world."

Turning to my Bible, I pointed out to him those golden words, "Be it known unto you, therefore . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). I shall never forget the effect of those words upon him!

"Oh! do let me look at that," said he, taking out his pocket-book to make a note of the place. "I've never seen anything so clear as that!" and as he looked the fountains broke up, and the tears fell hot and fast on the back of my hand as I held the Bible for him to read.

Oh, those were grateful drops, dear reader, more refreshing to Heaven even than to me! I did not wipe them off, I assure you!

"Oh, that's fine!" said he.

Just to test him, I said, "What is fine?"

"Why, look there," he said. "'All that believe are justified!'"

"But what has that to do with you?" I asked.

"Do with me?" he said in joyful surprise, "Why *I am there!*" and overcome by emotion, he pointed out the words, "*All that believe are justified!*"

The thirsty ground never more readily drank in the welcome shower than that thirsty soul drank in the Water of Life that night.

He took his place there and then in the happy circle of "*All that believe,*" and went home with the God-given assurance that he was *cleared from all things!*

I have put the substance of this conversation on record in the hope that, if it should fall into the hands of any similarly troubled, they may by its means, through God's grace, be similarly helped.

But if my dear reader is still unconverted, and perhaps, worse still, unconcerned, let me say there is another case that should more deeply interest you than even that of this young infidel. *It is your own!* With life so uncertain, death so busy, and eternity so near, you have no time to lose. "*Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"*Get right with God, no longer be rebellious
Against the love that seeks thy soul to win:
Bow down at last, and as thy Lord confess Him,
Whose blood alone can cleanse away thy sin.*"

A STRANGE CREED.

A VERY celebrated woman of the world says :
 “ *My belief is that one should determine to live one’s life without fear of death.*”

This belief is either the greatest folly or the greatest wisdom.

THE GREATEST FOLLY! If it means to forget that death is God’s judgment upon sin ; if it means to forget that “ *after this [death] the judgment;*” if it means to forget that God has plainly declared that this judgment will be *eternal punishment* in hell ; then this determination is *the greatest folly*. Such folly is never seen in any other connection. Alas ! alas ! it is common enough. These lines will be read by many who are perpetrating it. Are you one of them ?

THE GREATEST WISDOM! If it means to have faced the question of sin and its consequences ; if it means that you have fled to the Saviour, that knowing God’s forgiveness and love, the fear of death has been taken from you by the One who passed the sentence upon the sinner—God Himself—then this determination is *the greatest wisdom*. One object of the death of Christ among others is that He might “ *deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*” (Heb. ii. 15). How beautifully this is witnessed to by the Apostle Paul, who could say triumphantly that he had “ *a desire to depart and to be with Christ ; which is FAR BETTER*” (Phil. i. 23).

Writing to some believers he could say, "*Life, or DEATH, or things present or things to come; all are yours*" (1 Cor. iii. 22).

Again this lady speaks. She says, "*Every minute brings its joy; every hour brings its sorrow. One must make the most of the former and wage war against the latter.*"

What are the joys she speaks of? Alas! the pleasures of the world. The Bible calls them "*the pleasures of sin for a season.*" How short-lived they are! they go not into eternity, though their *penalty* does. Why make the most of them? Moses was wiser than she. He deliberately turned his back upon such pleasures, and chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. Wise man! Foolish woman!

She wages war, she says, against sorrow. She forgets there is such a thing as "godly sorrow"—"*godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death*" (2 Cor. vii. 10). She may spurn sorrow, but sorrow will come. She may drive off the birds of prey by her laugh, but they will come to roost for ever when the shadows of eternity fall, and death silences the laugh for ever. What of you? What of you, reader? Are you wiser?

Again the woman of the world speaks. She says: "*I have fought with Time and been stronger than Time. I have striven with illness and conquered it. I have battled with death and repulsed it—requesting*

it to come back later. That is the secret of my youth." Can the lady be serious? Is she after *all* stronger than Time? Time will show, and she knows, and we know, what the result will be. Is the prolongation of her life her victory over Time, or is it not rather God's mercy extended to her?

And why request death to come later? It is a foolish request, the request of fear of the inevitable at the bottom. Will death come at her request? If she could have requested death never to come at all, she would have done so. She knows she is only holding things at bay for a little at best.

What will she say when death does come? Death will brush aside every attempt at parleying. Death will chill the frame, and set loose the full powers of corruption upon the cold clay. What of the soul then? What of the soul? What of yours? What of yours?

Oh! the childish folly and pity of such talk. Reader, be wise and courageous, and face the future in your soul before God. Face the question of your sins in His presence. Nothing but blessing can be the result. You need have no fear. "*God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved*" (John iii. 16, 17).

How foolish not to face matters, when God invites you to receive nothing but blessing at His gracious hands.

IS IT REAL ?

A YOUNG lad was taken to school in Switzerland. He had crossed France in dull, showery weather, and arrived so late at night in Lausanne that he could see nothing of its surroundings. His bedroom was at the back of the hotel, and was so shut in that nothing but houses could be seen. When he was brought to the front of the building, and from a high storey looked out upon the Lake of Geneva, in all the beauty of a bright spring morning, with the snow-clad mountains beyond, he gazed in silent astonishment for a while, and then exclaimed, "*Is it real ?*" The marvellous beauty and grandeur of the scene, combined with a total contrast to anything he had seen in England, had such an awe-inspiring effect upon him that for a time he could not credit the evidence of his senses.

A thorough man of the world—a man whose very profession necessitated his being capable of forming rapid judgment—was recently heard to say that some cleverly written novels had such an effect upon him, and so worked upon his feelings that he had to pull himself up and speak severely to himself, saying, "This is not true, it is only a book. Don't be silly." Is it possible to imagine a much greater contrast than is shown by these two experiences of real life ?

Yes, there is something stranger than even these

two pictures. You have only to think a moment, and you will possibly come to the conclusion that you are personally guilty of a greater mistake.

You see the world with its pleasures and its vanities, and its pomps; and shows, and you think how real! how nice, how attractive! You have perhaps heard otherwise. You have been warned it is a hollow sham. You have heard its apples are only painted, and that when bitten the mouth is filled with the dry dust of disappointment.

But you do not credit the description. You think you must taste even if you are undeceived. You would rather believe that the world can make you happy than think the contrary, and so you indulge the delusion, and lend yourself to what all experience proves to be a delusion. Is this wise? Is it reasonable?

Now look at the other side. You are presented with realities in the gospel, and you disbelieve them. This highest of all authorities tells you that you are a sinner. You don't want to hear it, and so you ignore the fact. He tells you that there is only one way of salvation, but this, too, is a fact you ignore, because you don't want to believe it. He tells you that if you will listen to His Word, and turn to Him with all your heart you shall be saved, because He has provided One, who has died that sinners may be delivered from eternal death, if they turn from their sins and believe in Him, and you content yourself with saying, "*Is it really so?*"

The love of God is so great, and it is so unlike

anything else you know, that you treat it as unreal. But mark you, this is not all. Your sin in doubting God's Word, God's warnings, and God's threatened judgment is a great and terrible reality, and unless you repent and believe in the Lord Jesus you will eternally perish.

P. I. B.

A SUDDEN AWAKENING.

IN a large town in the south of Ireland about eighty years ago two young ladies of good social position lived.

One night during a great storm a chimney fell, breaking the roof, and part of the wall in the room where they lay in bed. A beam fell across them which providentially preserved them from death. There they lay enveloped in the ruins, quite unable to move, and in total darkness.

Some hours passed before it was possible to extricate them. During these terrible hours God's Spirit spoke to them of death and their unpreparedness for it. There and then as they lay in this strange condition they turned to the Lord Jesus, and believed on Him to the saving of their souls. When they were released from their strange prison, it was to live henceforth for God's glory and in His service.

How happy it is to know that "*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*" (Rom. x. 11).

Reader, have you done so yet? If not, why not?

J. H.

MAY WE KNOW?

VISITING in the village of D——, I entered a cottage, and found it apparently empty. The noise I made, however, attracted attention, and a voice from above said, "Come upstairs." On going up I found a man ill in bed.

On making my errand known he replied, "I don't believe in them people that go about saying they are saved."

I replied, "Neither do I, but I suppose you believe the Word of God."

"Every word of it," was the sick man's response.

"Well then," said I, "we shall get on. I have three scriptures to read to you and then I must go. The first scripture is 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."

I said, "Do you believe that?"

"Yes," he said, "of course I do."

The second scripture is John v. 24—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

I said, "Do you believe that?"

“Well,” he replied, “I must, it is the Word of God, but I never saw it like that before. Read it again.”

So I read it again.

“Well,” he ejaculated, “I have read that scores of times, but I’ve never seen it like that before. To think, too, I’ve been clerk at the parish church for forty years.”

“Now,” I said, “I have one more scripture for you, and then I must go.” So turning to 1 John v. 13, I read—

“‘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.’”

“Well, well,” he said, “I have read that many times, but I never saw it like that before.”

I replied, “The first scripture tells us that if you believe on the Lord you *shall have* eternal life; the second says that those who have believed *have* it, and the third tells us that believers may *know* it.”

The sick man burst out again, “I never saw it like that before. Read that last verse again.” He kept on saying, “Well! well!!”

My visit was timely, an arrangement of Heaven’s making I am persuaded. The next time I passed that way I found the old man had died.

Reader, have you seen these things? They are there for you as much as for anyone else. “Faith appropriates what love provides,” is a true saying. J. B.

"ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL."

(Read Romans i. 16 ; 1 Corinthians i. 17-31, xv. 1-11.)

IN triumphant mood, with heart aflame, the great apostle of the Gentiles wrote to the weak, despised handful of Christians in the then proudest city on earth—the imperial city of Rome—"I am not ashamed of the gospel." Nor had he need to be. Pagan Rome had the elements of decay and death in her, and has passed into history; the gospel with the vigour of eternal youth is still winning its peaceful conquests. You may be surprised and think it a strange statement, but there are some people ashamed of the gospel. They evidently do not know it. If they did they could not be ashamed of it. Here is a man who says distinctly, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel,*" and he gives his reason—"for

IT IS THE POWER OF GOD
unto salvation."

I am not aware that Saul of Tarsus ever heard the glad tidings, but he saw the One who is the embodiment of the gospel. He tells us so in 1 Corinthians xv. 8, "*Last of all He was seen of me also.*" There is no mistake about it, no fable, no ambiguity, no myth. He could say, I have seen the One I preach unto you. If eleven other individuals or companies saw the Lord *on earth* after He rose from the dead, says Paul, I am the twelfth witness. I have seen Him *in heaven*. There we have com-

pleteness of witness, because twelve has that significance in Scripture. "*Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.*"

Doubtless you know the story of his conversion—and that he got a commission from the Lord on the day of his conversion. You will find it recorded in Acts xxvi. The gospel-commission which he received from the Lord Jesus, a risen, glorious Saviour, was to 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 forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me" (Acts xxvi. 18). We get distinctly from his own lips how he responded to this commission as he says, "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (vers. 19, 20).

The glad tidings find their source in God. They are all about the Lord Jesus Christ—His life, death, and resurrection. Their first effect is not to make man happy. They lead him to repent, that is, to judge himself. Now I ask you, Have you repented and *turned* to God? I want you to seriously ponder and answer that question. "No," you say. Well, the day will come when you will have to face matters. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps. ix. 17).

"*Repent and turn to God,*" is the word I have for you. Repentance has a large place all through Scripture. The lost in hell are convinced that if blessing on earth is to come to any, repentance is an absolute necessity, though they know full well that for themselves the day of such opportunity is for ever gone. (See Luke xvi. 30.) I do not know what your life has been, but I know that if you have sinned and slighted the gospel until this hour, unless you repent and turn to God there is an awful eternity before you. "Go to the Gentiles," said the blessed Lord to Saul of Tarsus on the day of his conversion, and "open their eyes." That is the first thing. Until a blind man gets his eyes opened he does not know what is round about him, he does not know the way he is going. Have you ever had your eyes opened yet? If you are going along with the world, your eyes have never yet been opened, you are like a blind man on the edge of a precipice. If your eyes were now opened you would recoil from yourself, and your future, and you would turn to God in deep self-loathing, and then, I believe, from your lips would come the cry we hear in Acts xvi., "*What must I do to be saved?*" God's response is—"*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*"

Dear unsaved reader, you will get your eyes opened some day. Is it to be only in the moment of your death and damnation? God save you now. "Turn them from darkness to light," is the next word, "and from the power of Satan unto God." I know what has

held you from coming to Christ—the power of Satan. Thank God I know another power—the power of God. What is the power of God? Hear Paul on the subject—“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Thank God for the gospel. If you are not yet saved the reason is that you have never really believed. The gospel Paul preached contained the blessed assurance to men that they were to receive forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ. If you were to turn to Him now the first thing you would receive would be forgiveness.

You say, “Must I not do something, or bring something?” No. All you have to do is to turn, and you will find that the power of God delivers you from the power of the devil, breaks off your shackles, frees you from your bonds, washes you, sanctifies you, and sets you apart unto God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul went to that godless place Corinth, and preached Christ *crucified*. Not that he did not know Christ *in glory*, and could eventually lead them on to Christ in glory. His death on the cross was the most ignominious death that a man could die, and he had to tell them there was no possibility of the power of Satan being broken, there was no salvation for them, apart from Christ, and Christ dying on that cross of shame.

Beloved reader, think of the cross. Think of Jesus dying there, crowned with thorns, and dying between two malefactors. What do many now say it was?

Foolishness! How many refuse altogether the truth of atonement, and that the atoning sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ procure salvation. It does not appeal to man's reason, but then, remember above all things that

IT IS GOD'S WAY

of salvation. What a blessed thing it is to see with God's eyes, and to get hold of things according to God's mind.

Of these Corinthians, Paul could later say, You are my children, because “I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Cor. iv. 15). But he hears of bad doctrine getting in among them. Some were denying the resurrection, so Paul writes to show that if there was no resurrection, Christ was not risen. He says, “I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain” (1 Cor. xv. 1, 2). What does he mean by that? He does not mean that they had not the right kind of faith—he means unless they had believed a fable. If there were no resurrection then Christ had not risen. They had at first believed this glorious truth. If it were false, they had believed a fable. Mark his words: “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ *died* for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was *buried*, and that He *rose again* the third day, according to the Scriptures.” He had received

these foundation truths from the Lord in glory, I have no doubt. There are

THREE GREAT FACTS

presented in his gospel—Christ died, was buried, and rose again, hence he was able to tell them of a living Saviour. It was that living Saviour who spoke to Paul on the way to Damascus.

How did Paul get into the company of God's saints? Through faith that is in Jesus. So must you. What will deliver you from darkness and bring you into light? Faith in your soul, which lays hold on that Saviour in glory. What is faith? I do not doubt it is the soul's reception of a divine testimony—God speaks, and you hear and believe what He says. That is faith. The definition of it is this—"He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (John iii. 33).

But God does not always speak in the same way. Look at Nineveh, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed." There was no gospel in that, and yet the solemn testimony was mingled with mercy. Mercy granted them forty days that they might repent. The Ninevites believed God, and said in effect, "He has given us respite for forty days; we will use it," and they repented. They were not told to repent, but we read that when the people heard *they believed God*. It does not say, they believed Jonah. No, "they believed God"; then they "repented," and I don't think they took forty days to do it. That same day two millions of people were bowed before God, and they did "works meet for repentance" too.

I cannot promise you forty days of respite ere judgment will fall on you. I can tell you that Christ died for our sins, rose again, and has passed into glory, and the one who now turns to Him receives forgiveness. Whether God's testimony be of judgment or mercy, if that testimony be received by the soul, that is faith, and it will lead to repentance—self-judgment.

"Christ died for our sins"—thank God, that is no myth; it is a wonderful, blessed reality. "He was buried," the end of man, in that way, comes before God's eye. Man must die. Sin has ruined him. There is nothing in him that will suit God. The wisest, the most learned—what is their end? Death; and an awful thing is death, as God's judgment of sin. Every man naturally is under sentence of death. You may seek to put it off; you may send for the cleverest doctor in the town, and you may pay a big fee; what for? Satan truly says, "All that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job ii. 4). All is in vain, for "the wages of sin is death." Paul informs us—There has come in One, on whom death had no claim, and yet He has gone down under death, in order that He might bear the sins of others.

Man's history, as man, is thus closed, and what now? Christ rose again, according to the Scriptures. We have Scripture fulfilled, and the love of God made known. The whole question of sin was settled before God when Christ died on the cross. Paul says He was once offered "to bear the sins of *many*" (Heb. ix. 28). Another scripture says, "He died for *all*"

(2 Cor. v. 15). "Many" takes in all who will believe. God's righteousness now is "*unto all and upon all them that believe*" (Rom. iii. 22). I can go to the world and say, Christ died for all. He went into death—the death which lay upon you and me—that He might annul it.

But the death of the body is not all. After death comes the judgment, and that means the lake of fire, as we see in Revelation xxi. But Christ, when on the cross, not only bore sins, but also the consequence of these sins, judgment and death, and now He is risen, and at the right hand of God. When He was on the cross He was the Victim for sin, but now He is the Victor over death. He has met its claim on man, has accomplished the will of God, and has broken all the power of the enemy. Paul says, I have seen Him, and I am told to go to the Gentiles—to heedless sinners in their sins—and tell them that there is forgiveness for them. Glorious tidings!

Let us look at the character of Paul's preaching. He says it was "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (1 Cor. i. 17). Needy sinners do not want brilliant sermons—what they want is the truth, and that is Christ. I can understand, therefore, the apostle's care to make everything as simple as possible. There is only one thing in this world which can meet man in his sins, and that is the cross, by which God lifts a man out of his sins, out of the power of Satan, and brings that man to Himself, through the resurrection of His sinless Son. We have all sinned, but after

that, and before the day of judgment, He, who will then be the Judge, has Himself stepped in and taken the very place of the criminal, and sustained the judgment passed on the criminal. Well wrote Anne Steele:—

“He took the guilty culprit’s place,
He suffered in his stead ;
For man—oh, miracle of grace—
For man the Saviour bled.”

Paul did not use enticing words of man’s wisdom. No, “the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” The preaching of the cross is looked upon to-day as great folly. By whom? By them that perish, but it is wisdom to those who believe. The dying thief found the cross to be the power of God, and so did Saul of Tarsus. Let it be God’s power unto salvation to you also, my reader. Remember that “it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.” The patience of God will one day become exhausted, and He will do with this poor world what He did in the days of Noah—He will visit it with unsparing judgment. Where will the wisdom of the wise be then? “The world by wisdom knew not God.”

The learned wiseacres of to-day are telling us that science is going to lead man to God. No, it is not reason that will lead men to God—it is faith. What a pity to waste your life reasoning, instead of being a simple believer. Forget not, “It pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.” You say, how shall I be saved? By

believing in Jesus, once dead and now alive again. All the blessings of the gospel belong to "them that believe."

Do not seek for signs. They will not profit you. We read, "The Jews require a sign"—they had two given to them for which they were none the better. What were they? A babe in a manger. Surely there could be nothing weaker than that, save the other—a dead man in the grave. We read in Luke ii., "This shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." If you want to know God you will have to learn Him by the Incarnation, and then by the death of His Son. Then by simply believing in Him, you will become a child of God and an heir of glory.

Says Paul, "We preach *Christ crucified*; unto the Jews a stumbling-block"—why? Because they looked for Christ to come in glory, and He came in weakness. The Greeks heard of this blessed Man dying on the tree, and they said, Folly! What does faith discover in Him? But unto them "which are called, . . . Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Both God's power and God's wisdom are seen in the death and resurrection of that blessed One, who is seated now at God's right hand in glory. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." When man gets near death how weak he is, and when he has died you say, "It is all over."

Stop a bit. Let God come in, and then we see

Jesus come up out of death. “God raised Him from the dead.” What is the end of death when God steps in? Resurrection. A risen Christ is now the evidence of God’s claims being met and Satan’s power being broken. He was crucified in weakness, but what has the weakness of Christ done? Broken the bars of the tomb, annulled death, destroyed the power of Satan, taken sinners from his grasp, and brought them to God.

I can understand the apostle then saying, “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh . . . are called.” What a wonderful thing to be among those whom God has called. “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.” Others may say, “What a fool you are to believe these things and follow a rejected Christ.” Never mind—you will turn up among the wise in the day of the Lord. Further, you will find that a simple Christian, walking in the power of the Spirit of God, with the Word of God in his heart and on his lips, will be able to overcome the greatest Goliath in the world. Man always wants what is great, but God seeks the lowly. He lays hold of poor sinners like you and me. True, we are among the “things which are despised.” Christ was despised. If, for His sake, you are despised by the world, you are in Christ’s company.

Let us not then be “ashamed of the gospel,” but believe it simply and boast in Him who has saved us by His own loss and shame.

FAITH'S AMEN.

IT was our usual Sunday afternoon Bible-class, and we were reading the first chapter of the Revelation. I had felt that we should go through the book, for, though we might not understand it well, we might yet receive the blessing promised to him that readeth. I recall that afternoon so well, they drew round me—those dear bright girls, so keen, so eager to learn; alas, I knew so little, but to try and teach them even that little was an unvarying joy. Years have passed away, but my heart must ever go out to them in a deep affection.

We read on until we came to verse 5, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." And here we lingered awhile, seeking to drink in something of the meaning, the wondrous sweetness, of these words, and I asked was there one among the girls who, never having done so before, could *to-day* add her Amen to the verse? I did not know it then, but some time after, one of them told me she had found the Lord that afternoon. "I thought," she said, "I might put my Amen to the verse, and I just did it." Was it not simple? She just received Him, and rested in His finished work, and the testimony of His written Word. Since then the Lord has taken her to be with Him, but these words were her stay and comfort on her dying bed.

Does the Lord love you, who have taken this little paper in your hand? and have you said your Amen to His love? Perhaps you are like King Solomon; we read of him that the Lord loved him, and sent and called his name Jédidiah (beloved of Jehovah), but he seems to have preferred his own name Solomon (peaceable). As far as we can learn, he very little appropriated the Lord's love. It may be he was content to believe it as a matter of testimony, just as people do now. "Of course I believe," they say, "I believe every word in the Bible," and there it ends; but, as I once heard a preacher say, "Credence is not faith."

How different was the Apostle John! He speaks of himself repeatedly as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He appropriated that love and rejoiced in it; he it was who lay on Jesus' breast. Did he not love the Lord? It is not this he is thinking of, what fills his heart is—he is loved by Jesus, though in his epistle he tells us, "We love Him, because He first loved us." Or do you think it was easier for John? He could hear the words of Jesus, he could see with his eyes His gracious acts, his hands could handle; but no, he needed faith just as you do—even more, for then the Holy Spirit had not come, as He afterwards did, at Pentecost; but if you think this, let the words of the Apostle Paul drop into your heart.

He was not with the Lord in His earthly path, though it is quite true He spoke to him from heaven, yet he says, "The Son of God loved me." This surely was the keynote, the secret spring of his

wonderful life and ministry. The SON OF GOD loved me, and in simple faith, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, he had appropriated this love, and could triumph over all that men count grief—infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses.

The Lord grant that it may be thus, in measure, with both writer and reader, for His name's sake.

B.

THE SWEETEST NAME.

SOME time ago the editor of a daily paper in America offered a prize to anyone who would send him the sweetest name in the English language. Within a few days he received some hundreds of answers. A beggar had selected the word "gold." A young man, full of ambition, with fair prospects opening before him, had chosen the word "glory." A sailor, who had just returned from a voyage, suggested the word "home." A fourth proposed "mother," and the jury hesitated some time over this, wondering if it could be surpassed. At length, however, they came upon a piece of paper with the word "Jesus" written on it, and at once they unanimously decided to award the prize to the person who had sent in this answer.

Reader, do you agree with their decision? The matter is of vital importance, "for there is none other *name* under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12).

ANON.

AN INFIDEL'S INTERRUPTION AND
ITS SEQUEL.

A BOLD infidel once interrupted a gospel preacher, as he was addressing a large open-air meeting, with the impious and startling assertion—

“I will prove to you, that Jesus Christ, whom you preach, told a lie.”

Alas, what will the temerity of the alienated mind and heart of man not dare to utter! A dead silence pervaded the audience, and all seemed riveted to the spot where they stood.

The modest but confident reply was, “If you can prove it, I will believe it.”

The suspense was extreme. Every ear was on the stretch. No one moved.

“Well,” rejoined the atheist, “Jesus said, ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’ Is it not greater love for a man to lay down his life for his enemies?”

The crowd held their breath and perfect stillness reigned. All eyes were turned to the preacher.

“Ah! yes,” calmly answered the Lord's servant, “but it does not say, Greater love hath no *God* than this. It says, Greater love hath no *man*. Man's love never went further, and it never will; but I am authorised to proclaim to you, and to all who hear me, that ‘God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us’

(Rom. v. 8)—nay more, *enemies*, for the believer can say, 'When we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.' From what you have said, my friend, it is evident you are God's enemy; still He commends His love even to you, and, if you only knew it, the very breath you spend in blaspheming Him, you owe to that love. How base your ingratitude."

A sigh of relief passed over the company, and not a whisper more was heard from the poor, crestfallen infidel. One would fain hope that the telling utterances from the speaker's lips made him ashamed, and led him to the feet of the Lord Jesus; but anyhow they went home to many hearts in the crowd.

One was heard to say to his neighbour, "It cuts deep." Another, "Does God really love me?" A third, "That is surely *good* news"! Tears were seen to roll down many a cheek. It was a solemn time. Not a few had reason to praise God for that day's open-air preaching. That striking episode the Lord used for blessing, and graciously overruled it to render the word spoken exceptionally effective, and once more to demonstrate that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Whose love does God commend? His own surely. "For God commendeth *His* love." Not *our* love to God; but *God's* love to us. And what is that? You could not put into words even your mother's love, how much less can any human language tell the infinite love of God? It baffles description. It

defies definition. Where was a fitting expression of that love to be found? All the angels in heaven could not have furnished it. No archangel could have been a sufficient representative of God's love. His Son, His only begotten and well-beloved Son, alone was adequate to reveal it. He alone knew it, and He alone could tell it.

God spared not His own Son. It was a new kind of dealing altogether. It was no longer demanding, but giving. It was not investigating your heart, but making known the thoughts of His own. This is not requiring goodness from you, but when you were nothing but badness, bringing goodness to you, and finding a way to put the evil away without putting you away. Love such as this was never heard of till it was manifested in Christ. Loving those that loved you was understood. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth was recognised. But such a thing as God loving His enemies never entered man's mind.

God's love is peculiar to Himself, and has its source and cause wholly in Himself, never reasoning from what we are to what He will be for us, but always from what God is and His work on our behalf, for God's love exceeds all human thought. Thus there is no question as to the love. It is God's, vast, unspeakable, and unfathomable.

Towards whom is God's love expressed? The good? Then none of us should be blessed. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 12). The righteous? Then none of us should be saved.

“There is none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. iii. 10). “God commendeth His love towards us, . . . while we were yet *sinner*s,” ungodly enemies, and without strength. It is to such the love applies. A change in a man, and then God will love him, is not the gospel, since the gospel is that God loves the sinner.

This wondrous love, wherewith God so loved the world that He gave His Son, adapts itself to the sinner in all his varied experiences. If it is towards a poor needy sinner, this love takes the form of *pity*. If towards a sorrowing, suffering sinner, it takes the form of *compassion*. If towards a miserable sinner, it takes the form of *mercy*. If towards an obstinate rebellious sinner, it takes the form of *long-suffering*. In all these ways God commends His love to sinners, yea to His very enemies.

It is indeed a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and sinners, too, like Saul of Tarsus, who called himself the *chief*. Hence no matter who or what you may have been, dear reader, if you only take your true place as lost, undone, and good-for-nothing, all the blessed consequences of what that love of God has provided are made good to you on believing. Why not now?

Just a third question as to this love.

How is God's love shown? The answer is, “Christ died for us.” But why has it to be demonstrated thus? Because God's love is a holy love. It is a righteous love. “The wages of sin is death.” “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” Hence “Christ died

for us." How simple and yet how profound! Perfect love to the sinner; unmeasured judgment against the sin. God is glorified in all that He is in His nature as to it.

We must be before God according to the truth of what He is, and according to the truth of what we are. Christ's death is the divine answer to this in all its length and breadth. It is impossible to exhaust what is included in the familiar expression, "Christ died for us." It means not only that He bore our sins in His body on the tree, but that He perfectly glorified God in all that He is, and that believers consequently have full and free access to Him, all being the fruits of His own love, for "hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us."

What a gospel! God revealed in love, His claims fully met, sins completely borne, salvation to the vilest offered, perfect access procured, the conscience purged and acceptance given according to all the value of the death of Christ.

Are you, my readers, going to miss all this vast blessing? Surely not. We affectionately urge you to possess it, while now within your reach. God is beseeching you by us. Delay not, we implore you, a moment longer. Be ye reconciled to God, He waits to be gracious. He is ready to receive you. He longs to welcome you to His heart. Take Him at His word. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," saved at once, saved for ever.

“DUST TO DUST.”

HOW startling! In this morning's daily paper it is advertised that “*The Great Lafayette*” will perform on Saturday next in the Empire Theatre, Edinburgh. His subject is announced as

“DUST TO DUST;

OR

THE LION'S BRIDE.”

The *same* paper also contains the appalling announcement of the total destruction by fire of the “*Empire Theatre*,” and the death by burning of the great actor, his lion, and several members of his company. The *same* day in the evening the intimation is made that next Saturday * the burial will take place.

What a voice to the giddy throng of pleasure-seekers! What a voice to all!

Here was this man catering for the amusement of his fellows in a play dealing with the solemn question of death and the dissolution of the body, when he is suddenly called to

FACE THE REALITY

of these things.

Have these solemn facts, dear unsaved reader, no warning voice for you? You may be in the midst of all the worldly mirth and enjoyment that wealth can provide, or you may be drowning an aching heart in

* Since altered to Sunday.

the pleasures of the music-hall, theatre, card-table, or ball-room, but God may at any moment bring you face to face with the realities of eternity in all their deep solemnity.

If unprepared, where will you spend your eternity? If suddenly called out of time into eternity, will it be to dwell with the Lord in glory, or with the demons in the place of torment? Push not aside these solemn questions, which relate to your everlasting happiness or woe. Face them seriously. You cannot guarantee your own natural life many days, hours, or moments, and if summoned from earth in your present state how are you going to face them?

These are not matters to be relegated to a sick bed or a dying hour. Your faculties may then be so weakened by suffering and pain that you will not be able to consider these questions relating to your soul's destiny. Why then run the terrible risk of destroying your eternal prospects by pushing aside these solemn realities, and for a little temporary self-gratification rendering yourself liable to be lost for ever?

We cannot pass from these solemn and soul-stirring realities without presenting to you the way of salvation and God's way of escape from coming judgment.

If you know your need of salvation and feel the weight of the judgment of your sins, He has prepared a way of relief for every sin-stricken soul. We read, "*Christ . . . gave Himself a ransom for all*" (1 Tim. ii. 6). Yes, the weight of a world's

woe was laid upon Him when there upon that cross He bore God's judgment upon sin. Oh! miracle of grace, He not only bore that weight of judgment and sin, and went down under its heavy load, but He rose triumphant over it all. Death could not hold Him, the grave could not bind Him. He rose again to free every *believing* sinner from the burden and weight of their sins. Such can say, He "*was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*" (Rom. iv. 25).

In the same epistle we read, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 8-10). God calls on you not only to acknowledge your sin and need of salvation, but to accept His offer, and simply to confess with your lips Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, and a present and eternal salvation is yours.

Dear unsaved reader, will you not accept His offered salvation, and thus find "joy and peace in believing"? "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Delay no longer, to-morrow may be too late. Life is very uncertain. You cannot be sure of another hour.

A LETTER TO NAPOLEON.

AFTER Napoleon's overthrow by the allied armies he was banished to the little island of Elba in the Mediterranean. He exercised sovereignty over it, but was all the time planning to regain his former position. The field of Waterloo and the lonely rock of St Helena once and for ever made the realisation of his dreams an impossibility. His residence in Elba extended from May 1814 to February 1815.

When there Dr Carson, LL.D., addressed a long letter to him, which was reprinted in a volume of his writings, published in Dublin, 1847.

It will not be without interest if a few extracts from his letter are placed before the reader. They possess a *passing* interest as having been addressed to the great Napoleon, and a *perennial* interest as containing so clearly and simply the gospel of God, without which none of us can be blessed.

* * * * *

“Now, sire, the substance of the Scriptures is contained in any one of those many declarations that proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ. The atonement by His death is the centre of revelation, in which all its numerous lines meet.

THE WAY TO HEAVEN

is through faith in the efficacy of His blood. All men are declared guilty before God, and obnoxious

to divine vengeance. The good news contained in the gospel is, that God sent His Son into the world, that in human nature, He might make atonement for the sins of men ; and that all, who shall believe in Jesus as thus sent, shall be saved from all their sins.

“This plan of salvation secures the justice of God from all imputation ; for sin is punished to its utmost desert in the Substitute of the sinner. It glorifies the mercy of God ; it announces pardon, through faith in the blood of Christ, to the chief of sinners. It proclaims the sovereignty of God, and His free favour to guilty men. *‘By grace are ye saved,’* says the apostle, *‘through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God’* (Eph. ii. 8).”

“Sire, read the Scriptures, and I will appeal to your majesty’s candour whether there can be any doubt that salvation is promised to all who believe in Jesus, or who believe the gospel. *‘Go ye,’* says Christ, *‘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).”

“Do not fly, then, sire, to any of the vain refuges of superstition in order to procure an interest in the atonement of Christ. Faith in that atonement is the only way of being interested in it, and every other way imports a rejection of the gospel. *‘Be-*

neve on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved' (Acts xvi. 31). '*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ'* (Rom. v. 1)."

“ Were you to retain

A THOUSAND CHAPLAINS,

who should incessantly perform religious rites for you, it would profit you nothing. Nay, in addition to this, were you yourself to make your knees like horn, by the frequency of prayer; were you to make your body a skeleton by fasting; were you to employ your whole time, till the close of life, with devotional exercises, it would profit you nothing.

“ God's plan of salvation is effected and published; whoever rejects it must be condemned. All the austerities practised by devotees, usually termed superstition, instead of appeasing the divine wrath rather inflame it, as manifesting enmity to God's truth.”

“ Sire, had your majesty continued for half a century to sway the sceptre of France, and to awe the world by its power, that half-century would soon have worn away, and in the end of it you would have lost all your earthly glory; you would then have been in the earth undistinguished from the beggar; you were then for ever separated from the dear objects of your ambition.

“ And if you had died ignorant of the plan of salvation, you would have entered into everlasting

misery. Listen to the voice of Scripture on this head, for I pretend to know nothing about this matter but what I have learned from it. *'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ : who shall be*

PUNISHED WITH EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION

from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power' (2 Thess. i. 7-9).

"You see, sire, that all who know not God, and obey not the gospel, shall be punished with everlasting destruction. Dives was not distinguished for wickedness, yet after death he lifted up his eyes being in torment in the midst of flames, from which he was assured there was no deliverance. What, then, as our Lord has feelingly said, 'what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'

"If then, sire, your loss of power would be the means of calling your attention to the gospel, you would not only patiently acquiesce in the sovereign will of God in excluding you from power, but bless Him for the exchange."

"I declare most solemnly to your majesty, that when I have been contemplating you in all the height of your power, and glory, and fame, I would have been filled with horror at the thought of exchanging places with you. No, sire, the meanest

Christian on earth has greater riches, and honour, and glory, and a more excellent kingdom than ever you possessed. It is to this glorious, and stable, and everlasting kingdom I call your attention. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall reign with Him for ever. The crowns of the victors of the Olympic games were fading, the crowns of France and Italy you have lost; I point out a crown to you, infinitely more glorious than they, but shall never fade, that shall never be torn from your head."

* * * * *

Reader, have you received the gospel? No man can be truly happy without it. In this life there are wide divergencies. Mankind has been dazzled and attracted by the personality and life story of the great Napoleon. You may be a very ordinary individual, scarcely known beyond your own street, yet you need the gospel as much as he did, and if he died without it and you die without it, there will be nothing to choose between you in eternity, so pitiable will be your condition; or if he accepted the Saviour, and you accept the Saviour, again there will be nothing to choose between you, so glorious is the salvation bestowed on those who put their faith in Christ.

But whether Napoleon believed or not,

MAKE SURE THAT YOU DO.

Delay not. "*Flee from the wrath to come.*" "*Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

A. J. P.

THE UNCHANGING NATURE OF THE GOSPEL.

IF, by some chance, the Apostle Paul appeared in our midst to-day, and presented himself, let us say, at the beginning of service in St Paul's Cathedral, London, as was his habit of old, when, for instance, he and his fellow-labourer, Barnabas, went into the synagogue of Antioch on a certain Sabbath day and sat down. When their presence was known to the dignitaries of this synagogue, they were told that if they had anything to say to the people they were at perfect liberty to say on (*see* Acts xiii. 15). This gracious permission enabled the apostle to preach a sermon which has been admired and utilised by thousands of subsequent preachers of the pure and blessed gospel. This Antiochan exposition is a model for the imitation of all who would essay to make known the eternal elements of the gospel of the grace of God.

Well then, suppose that Paul appeared at the great London Cathedral as the dignitaries were about to commence the usual service, and that these, in like manner, having got to hear of the presence of the apostle of the Gentiles, sent him a similar message, telling him that if he had anything to say to the people, he was to "say on."

Assuming first that such liberty were granted him in the huge edifice in which his name is called, and

second, that he did "say on," the question is—what would he say?

A most interesting question! Of course he would preach the gospel, what else could he do?

Quite so, no doubt he would, if we are to judge of his ways when he went hither and thither in his great life-work. He would certainly preach the gospel on this occasion, but would he, in these fashionable surroundings, and confronted by all the light and learning of the centuries which have come and gone since his day, preach exactly the same gospel as he then did?

Would he not modify some of his bolder statements, as he heard of the treatment which these had received at the hands of the critics and scholars of later times?

That is the question! and mark—higher criticism, if it has not spared Moses nor Isaiah, neither has it spared Paul. No sacred writer, though inspired of God for his work, is exempt from the damning criticism of the semi-infidels of the day.

Would Paul then yield to the clamour? Other men have done so. Why not he?

He himself supposes the possibility. Let me quote his own words in Galatians i. 8—

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

Could language be stronger? He invokes a curse on, not only an angel from heaven, but on himself

also, if he preached a different gospel to that which he had preached already.

This indicates clearly that, as a man, he might fail; he might modify or change or alter the gospel he had preached, but, in the event of doing so, he had incurred the curse!

Solemn thought for the critics of Paul, whether they be scholars or the opposite!

The gospel admits of no modification!

The Word of God will endure for ever.

Man, the best of men, may fail; *that* can never fail.

Let us see, very briefly, what Paul did preach, and let us remember that if he preached otherwise, on his supposed visit to St Paul's Cathedral, he would, according to his own declaration, bring down the curse of God upon himself.

Let us take a few of his statements from his well-known, but highly criticised, Epistle to the Romans. He says:—

1. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (chap. i. 18).
-
2. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (chap. ii. 16).
-
3. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (chap. iii. 10).
-

4. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested . . . even the righteousness of God, by faith of Christ Jesus, unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood" (chap. iii. 21-25).
5. "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness . . . for us also if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 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" (chap. iv. 3, 24, 25).
6. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (chap. v. 5).
7. "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (chap. v. 11).
8. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (chap. v. 12).
9. "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (chap. v. 21).

10. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (chap. vi. 23).

.

11. "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (chap. vii. 18).

.

12. "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" (chap. viii. 33, 34).

.

Here we have twelve cullings from the teaching of Paul as given us in only one of his epistles. These are all too brief to present his gospel even in its elements; but I would beg the reader, for his own good, to read them thoughtfully. They place before us God's wrath, God's righteousness, God's grace, God's love, and show Him as the Justifier. They speak to us of the blood of Christ and the redemption that is in Him. They declare to us how sin entered, and its effects in us, how that not only all of us have sinned, but that also in our flesh dwells no good thing. They confront us, therefore, with a day of judgment in which our secrets, as well as our crimes, shall be exposed, but they point out the divine way of escape through faith in the blood of Christ, so that as Abraham believed God, and was justified, so, on that principle, we are justified too, and have peace with God.

What a glorious settlement of the most absolutely complex question ever raised! It is God's settlement, and therefore perfect.

What a wonderful thing that I, a guilty and sinful child of Adam, can cross the awful chasm that separates me from God by a structure of His own creating—the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and find myself, carried from a position of certain judgment, to one of present acquittal; from the wrath of God deserved, to peace with God enjoyed! “It is God that justifieth,” and so “we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” These, my reader, are a few of the barest outlines of Paul’s gospel—beside which there is no other, unless it is a rank perversion of it, which can be no gospel at all, but an imposition of Satan.

Prize therefore the one gospel, and cling to it as a drowning man to a rope; believe it in your inmost soul, and seek to apprehend increasingly its peculiar, intrinsic, and divine suitability and worth.

J. W. S.

FRAGMENT.

So long as we are ruled by a spirit of self-vindication or self-complacency, we must be total strangers to the deep blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works. The greatest folly that any one can be guilty of is to justify himself, inasmuch as God must then impute sin. But the truest wisdom is to condemn oneself utterly; for in that case God becomes the Justifier.

C. H. M.

PERSUADED: NEVER, ALMOST, OR FULLY.

(Read Acts xxviii. 23-29.)

THERE are some who are "*never* persuaded" to accept Christ, many are "*almost* persuaded," and a third class, thank God, are composed of those who are "*fully* persuaded."

Here in Rome the curtain drops upon the history of the beloved Apostle Paul. As far as we know, he never preached the gospel again outside of prison, whatever he may have said to those who came to hear, or were perhaps chained to him. When there, a day is appointed for the Jews to meet him in his lodging (*see* ver. 23). He opens up to them the truth as to the fact that

MAN HAS TO DO WITH GOD.

Whether you believe it or not, the day is coming when every one of us must give account of himself to God. Man is, as God's creature, in relationship to Him. You may not *know* God. Knowing *about* Christ will not do. You will have to *know* HIM, to receive Him as your Saviour, if you are ever to be happy with God, for man is a sinner, and needs to approach God through Christ, or blessing will never be his.

The devil has plenty of apostles going through the country to-day, telling men that when they die there is an end of them, but depend upon this,

YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD

—you have to do with Him. If you do not know Him, I beseech you listen, and I will try to explain the gospel.

The Bible tells us of 'God, but it also tells us what man is. God describes men as they are. That is the difference between the Bible and every other book. Take a biography of some very good man. You read it, and lay the book down disheartened, and say, "I could never be like that man." But the biographer only describes his good side. He has more or less flung the mantle of charity over his faults.

When I come to Scripture,

GOD DESCRIBES MAN EXACTLY AS HE IS.

Take the history of David. He is described as "*a man after God's own heart,*" because, at the bottom, David really loved the Lord. Could it be said of you that you love the Lord? "But," you say, "look how he sinned." Yes, and look how you have sinned. You would not like that made public, but when God tells the tale of His grace, and how it can meet a man and save him, it describes exactly the kind of man He can save.

Look at the great apostle at Rome, "persuading them concerning Jesus." Notice his way of persuading them. It says, "Out of the law of Moses, and out of the Prophets." He unfolded the Old Testament. Paul had no doubt as to the inspiration of the Old Testament. But men don't like Scripture. I think

the old workman was quite right, who said, "About that 'ere Book, I have observed in my life that all good men love it, and bad men hate it." Do you hate it? Well, you know your company. You say, "I don't think I am a bad man." You may not think it, but you love your sin, your lust, and possibly your drink. You go on in your sins, and try to convince yourself that there is no heaven, no hell, and no God. You are going to have

AN AWFUL AWAKENING ONE DAY.

May God wake you up now.

What made Paul so earnest? He was persuaded himself, hence his twelve hours' sermon was full of Jesus. How would you like to be boxed up in a room for twelve hours in the company of a dozen red-hot Christians, with their hearts full of Christ? You say, "I don't think I should enjoy that." Well, I love to think that I am going to spend eternity with red-hot Christians, and Jesus, my Lord, in the midst. That is a better eternity, my unsaved reader, than you are going in for, with all your cold criticisms. You have yet to face God. I should like to persuade you to come to Him now.

You will find another reason in 2 Corinthians v. 10 why the apostle was so very keen and earnest. He says, "*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.*" Where? At the judgment seat of Christ. How many? All. Who will be the Judge? Christ.

"ALL" TAKES YOU AND ME IN.

You say, I would be very much afraid to stand before

the judgment seat of Christ. Well, thank God, I am not, because when I stand there the first person I shall see will be my Saviour—the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved me, saved me, and brought me to glory. If you have “done good,” there will be credit for you. But what if you have done “bad”? Ah! it is because I had done bad that Christ died for me, and for my badness too. There is the revelation of the gospel.

Man has sinned, but before the day when God judges the sinner, what has taken place? His Son has stepped in, and taken the sin and the consequences of sin—death and judgment. It will be in the glory that the Christian will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive reward for his service. On the other hand, it will be at the great white throne, after the thousand year reign of Christ, the millennium, that the sinner, who has died in his sins, will stand.

The point is that we are *all* going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. There is no fear, however, for the believer. We know that there is “no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. viii. 1). The Lord says, “He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me . . . shall not come into condemnation [or judgment]; but is passed from death unto life” (John v. 24), and that stands good.

“Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men,” wrote the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. v. 11). No wonder he was so dead in earnest. He deeply

felt what an awful thing it will be for men in their sins to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. You must stand before Christ by-and-by in your sins, or else as one saved by grace, and viewed as one who is "in Christ" and clear of judgment. The apostle has before his mind only the unsaved when he says, "knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." What is the terror of the Lord? Eternal judgment, the second death, the lake of fire. God does not think little of sin as you do. If God did not take cognisance of sin, He would be no better than man. The very social order of the day could not go on, if men were allowed to sin with impunity. Of necessity sin must be judged.

Do you think you are going to do your will, and sin as you like without having any account to give to God? Many men are so deluded, are you? Listen!

**"KNOWING, THEREFORE, THE TERROR OF
THE LORD."**

Many say, "The man, who is sincere and thinks he is right, is sure to be right in the end. In the day of judgment God will be very merciful." Is that so? No! No! God is merciful now. "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Hence, "we persuade men."

Reader, you may laugh, you may turn up your lip contemptuously at the tale now, but you will not do that in the day when God judges men "in righteous-

ness," as He is going to do by Jesus. He has fixed the day, and I believe we are very near to it. Oh! beloved friend, let me entreat you—pause, ponder, and “be persuaded” ere it be too late. It is a terrible thing for men to put off.

Did anybody suggest to God that He should give His Son to die for a ruined world? He saw that sin must be punished and judgment must take place, and what did He do? He sacrificed His Son that He might righteously offer salvation to a world of lost sinners. Has He saved you yet? No? Well, you had better get saved now, you may never have another opportunity. What moved the Apostle Paul was the sense of the awfulness of the judgment to come. He looked into eternity, and he knew that, if God forsook His Son on the cross, there was no possibility of a man being saved, who made light of such a sacrifice, and, therefore, he sought to “persuade men.”

But there was also something else. “The love of Christ constraineth us.” Sweet tidings are these for sinners. “He died *for ALL*.” Then will all be saved? No! How is that? God would like all to be saved; Christ died that all might be saved. Why are they not? Unsaved reader, you are a witness to that. *You have never been persuaded.* Alas! some men are *never persuaded.*

Our Lord draws the veil aside, showing us what is the portion of those who are never persuaded. Look at the condition of that rich man, we read of in Luke xvi. 19-31. In the lap of luxury yesterday, to-day

his body in the grave, his soul in Hades, lifting up his eyes tormented in the flame. What a contrast is the believer—Paul Gerhardt—who could sing, “The torment and the flame mine eyes shall never see.” The only One who can save you is Jesus. Come to Him now. He bore the sorrow and the torment.

*“He took the guilty sinner’s place,
He suffered in his stead,
For man, oh! miracle of grace,
For man the Saviour bled.”*

Why was this man in Luke xvi. never persuaded? Why had he not prayed that prayer—“Have mercy on me,” when he was a sinner alive on earth? There was never a man on earth, who prayed that prayer, and was spurned by God. The rich man’s petition was a miserable prayer. How could a drop of water cool his parched tongue? And more, he never got it. We find all

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL

summed up in two words—“Comforted,” “Tormented.”

“Don’t you think you will be tormented throughout eternity when you remember all your missed opportunities, and the many warnings which you have rejected? You will take your memory with you. It will be the worm that never dies. Your mother’s prayers, you despised them. Your father’s entreaties, you laughed at them. The preacher’s expostulations, you flung them aside. The wooings

of the gospel, they touched not your heart. The nether millstone is soft compared with that sinful heart of yours, but in that day you will remember the times when you might have been saved, but you would not have God's salvation.

If I could turn you to God to-day, I would do it, but I cannot. I know what your eternal condition will be if you die unconverted—"tormented." One word describes it. How awful! God be thanked, I shall never endure it. Don't you. When men get into hell, they will be very anxious to get out of it. I have not a shadow of a doubt that, at the most moderate computation, there are ten thousand roads into hell, but there is

NOT ONE ROAD OUT OF HELL.

You may help your companions into it. A little bit of a sneer will do it. There is a friend of yours getting a little bit moved, and you say, "We shall have you among the salvationists presently," and thus you may stifle the convictions of your friend. Listen! You may help that friend into hell; you will never help him out of it. Get on to the heavenly side yourself, and then put out your hand, and seek to draw your friend to Jesus.

Don't you be among those who are never persuaded. Hell believes in repentance. The rich man thought that one going from the dead to his brethren on earth would lead them to repentance. Not so. If they turned a deaf ear to the Scriptures, nothing would persuade them, not even if one rose from the

dead. And *you* won't be persuaded if you don't bow to what the Scriptures say. This is the class who are never persuaded—those who refuse to believe the testimony of Scripture.

“ALMOST PERSUADED.”

In Acts xxvi. the Apostle Paul is speaking to King Agrippa. He says, I know you believe the Scriptures. “Then,” says Agrippa, “*almost* thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” Are you *almost* a Christian? The *never persuaded* are those who will not believe the Scriptures. The *almost persuaded* are those who would not deny the truth of the Scriptures, but who have not *decided* for Christ. Let me persuade you quit that company now, and be

FULLY PERSUADED.

Paul says, I know *whom I have believed*, and *am persuaded* that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day” (2 Tim. i. 12). Paul was fully persuaded. Happy man! Honoured servant of Christ, persuaded himself, persuading others. The believer can say, “Neither death, nor life . . . 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). That is a good persuasion. I should like you to join that persuasion this very day. God grant it. Amen.

Which company, my reader, are you of, the “never,” the “almost,” or the “fully persuaded”?

"THAT MEANS ME."

HE was dying. I took his hand in mine. I believe that involuntary act of sympathy spoke more loudly to Harry L——'s soul than any words of mine could have done.

But if my action spoke loudly to Harry, his action spoke louder still, I believe, to me. He gripped my hand with the fervour of a dying man, who wanted salvation.

"Well, Harry," I said, "what about *eternity*?"

"Ah!" he replied, as he shook his head in evident distress; "that is the most important question of all. That is what troubles me most. I have been thinking a lot about it lately."

"You are not ready to meet God, then?"

"No, I wish I were."

"Will you tell me what you think you have to do to be ready to meet God?"

"Well," he replied, as he rolled restlessly in bed from one side to the other, his action seeming to indicate the restless state of soul within, "I suppose I shall have to read the Bible a lot; give my mind to it, and think it out well. And pray a lot, and do all the good I can in future. Then perhaps some good preacher might come, and give me some sudden inspiration. And then—and then, I should think I'd be all right."

As I heard this amazing creed from one born in a so-called Christian country, brought up by Christian

parents, living with a Christian wife, and with a Bible close to his bedside, I dropped his hand, and walking to the foot of his bed looked him straight in the face in silence for a few moments.

Poor Harry sat up at once, evidently afraid that he had made some awful blunder that had nearly driven me away. Little did he know that my heart was more drawn to him than ever. At last I broke the silence by saying—

“Will you tell me what *time* you think you have left for doing all this?”

“Not much, I am afraid,” was his sorrowful reply.

“Not much, I am *sure*,” was my emphatic response.

As I uttered my last remark his head dropped, as though bowing to what he felt was the truth; and again we both remained silent for a few moments. When he raised his head again, I broke the silence by saying—

“Harry! you have not long to live. You will soon have to meet God!”

“I know it, I know it,” was his reply.

“And if what you say is correct as to what you have to do to be ready to meet God, it is all up with you. As to reading the Bible a lot—why, you could hardly read a verse through in your present condition. And as to giving your mind to what you read—why, you cannot concentrate your thoughts on anything for even a few moments. And as to praying a lot—well, the shorter the prayer the better it would suit you. And there is no probability of any good preacher coming up here to give you a ‘sudden in-

piration' and so put you right. No, Harry, if your being ready to meet God depends on anything *you* have to do, it is all up with you.”

“Ah!” he replied with a heavy sigh, “I have been too *big* a sinner, and there's too *little* time.”

“But,” I replied, “I know of a man, who was a bigger sinner than you, and had less time to live than you, and God saved *him*.”

“Who was that?” he eagerly asked.

“The thief on the cross,” was my reply. “He was a *bigger* sinner than you, Harry, and he had less time to be saved in than you. Now, Harry, do you think God could save such a *big* sinner as that in such *little* time as that?”

“No, I don't think so.”

“But I tell you He *did*; and God is able and willing to save *you* in the same way, and in the same time as He saved *him*.”

“What way is that?”

“Well, in the first place he owned that he deserved to *die* because of his sins. Do you own that?”

“Indeed I do.”

“Then he said, ‘*But THIS MAN [Jesus] hath done nothing amiss.*’ Can you say this of Jesus?”

“I can. I believe He never did anything wrong. He couldn't.”

“Just so. He was God's Lamb, without *blemish* and without *spot*, and His precious blood was being shed for sinners such as that thief. In effect that dying thief owned himself to be a *sinner*, and Christ, the *Saviour*. Can you own that?”

“I can. I know that I’m a sinner, and I know that Christ is the only Saviour.”

“Very well. Now for the last thing he did—he cast himself as a sinner upon Jesus. He said, ‘Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.’ The Lord replied, ‘Verily I say unto thee, TO-DAY shalt thou be WITH ME in PARADISE.’ That man was SAVED, and he *knew* it. He had the word of Christ that THAT DAY he would be with Him in Paradise. You may ask what about his awful sins? They were *gone!* The ‘precious blood of Christ,’ which flowed from the side of his crucified Saviour, cleansed him ‘from *all* sin’ (1 John i. 7). He was ‘clean EVERY whit’ (John xiii. 10), and hence, as fit (through the precious blood of Christ) for that Paradise as Christ Himself was.”

Feeling that he could not stand much more talking, I thought it wise to leave him, so said:—

“Now, Harry, I want to give you one short prayer before I go. It is the *shortest* prayer in Scripture, and I believe the most *effectual*. I have never known it to remain unanswered, and I never will. It is just three short words of one syllable each. Listen!

‘LORD, SAVE ME.’

Do you think you can remember that?”

“Indeed I can. It is so short, and yet so beautiful. Why, it just seems to suit *me!*”

“Yes, and you pray it; and you will find that the *answer* will suit you too. Remember,” I said, as I was going out of the door, “the prayer is,

LORD—SAVE—ME.’”

Never shall I forget the earnestness with which he leaned forward, and said—

“And the *sooner* the better.”

When I called the next evening I saw that his end was fast approaching; while the anxious look on his face indicated that his soul-distress was very great indeed.

“Well, Harry,” I began, “have you prayed that short prayer I gave you?”

“Indeed I have,” he replied, “many a time—especially during the night, have I cried—

‘LORD, SAVE ME.’”

“Then you may know that you are saved.”

“What!”

“You may know that you are saved.”

“Ah, *you* may think so; but *I* don’t.”

“I don’t *think* so. I am *sure* you may. I *know* you may.”

“How do you know that?”

“Because the Word of God tells me so.”

“The Word of God tells you! Where do you find that?” he asked.

“Here,” I replied, “in Romans x. 13. Listen—

‘WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL UPON THE NAME OF
THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.’”

“But,” he said, in a tone of deep disappointment, “that doesn’t mean *me*. It doesn’t say that *I* am saved.”

"Doesn't it? Well, who *does* it mean?"

"I am sure I can't say."

"Well, I *can*; for the Word of God is very clear, very emphatic about it. It says, 'WHOSOEVER.' Who does *that* mean?"

"Well, it means anybody—EVERYBODY."

"Quite so, then it means YOU!"

"Well—yes," he assented hesitatingly. "Yes, it *must* mean me." Then getting bolder still he said, "Yes, it *does* mean me."

"Well," I continued, "it says, 'Whosoever shall CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD'—Does *that* mean YOU?"

"Yes," he replied, without any hesitation this time, "*that* means *me*. I have called on the name of the Lord. I have called out from the bottom of my heart, 'LORD, SAVE ME.' Yes, *that* means *me*."

"Now for it, Harry," I said, as I once more stood at the foot of his bed, while he sat up, no longer rolling restlessly from one side to the other in despair, but in intensest expectation. "Now for it, Harry—God puts these three things together; see if *you* can.

"WHOSOEVER."

"*That* means *me*," he replied at once.

"SHALL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD."

"*That* means *me*," he burst out, as if to hurry me on.

"SHALL BE SAVED."

Almost before the last word got out of my mouth, he lifted his hands above his head, and shouted—

“THAT MEANS ME,”

and then he kept on exclaiming, “I’m saved! I’m saved! That means *me!* That means *me!* I’m saved! I’m saved! Thank God! Thank God!”

At length, getting quite exhausted, he lay back in bed, and kept on saying quietly—

“IT’S GRAND! IT’S GRAND!! IT’S GRAND!!!”

Harry was **SAVED** and **KNEW** it. That look of deep distress vanished from his face; and he was “*filled with joy and peace in believing*” (Rom. xv. 13).

From that moment he never lost the assurance of salvation. As his body grew weaker his faith grew stronger, and he testified to his sorrowing relatives during the three short days he lived that he was *saved* and *knew* it.

His end was *peace*. It was feared that he would go off in one of his violent fits of coughing. Just before he passed away he tried to say something to his wife; but seeing she could not quite catch what he said, he leaned his head back gently on the pillow saying—

“THY WILL BE DONE,”

and “fell asleep in Jesus.”

Even in death his face bore the impress of that “*joy and peace*” which he found in *believing*, forming a strong contrast to that deep look of distress, which overspread his face when I asked him the question,

“WHAT ABOUT ETERNITY?”

The thought of eternity troubles him no more. Harry is “WITH CHRIST, *which is far better.*”

“WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.”

You may stand aghast at the *number* and *nature* of your sins; but if you are the *biggest* and the *vilest* sinner on the face of the earth that word “WHOSOEVER” takes YOU in. That word “whosoever” *excludes none* and *includes ALL*. Therefore “WHOSOEVER” means YOU.

And note—the *only* condition that God imposes on you for salvation is that you shall

“CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD.”

It is not a question of *how* you call, but upon *whom* you call. God does not insist upon any *form* of works, however correct they may be. The thief on the cross said, “Lord, *remember me,*” and he was SAVED. Why? Because he called upon THE NAME OF THE LORD. God *does* insist upon your calling on the right *Person*.

And mark how *emphatic* the Word of God is, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord SHALL BE SAVED.”

Moreover, God says, “Shall BE saved.” Not, “Shall *feel* saved,” but “Shall BE saved.” One last question, *When* are we saved? *When* we “call upon the name of the Lord.” How simple! How blessed!

AN INNKEEPER'S CONVERSION.

ONE lovely summer's evening two or three friends, who were staying in one of the principal watering-places on the east coast of England, visited a village about three miles distant, with the object of having a gospel meeting, and thus making known to the people the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. They arranged for a preaching of the gospel that evening on the village green.

Great numbers came together. They heard of the love of God to poor guilty sinners, for

IT IS A SOLEMN FACT

that "*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*" (Rom. iii. 22), and if not saved by the precious blood of Christ, we must be eternally lost, for the Scripture saith, "*There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved*" (Acts iv. 12).

Amongst those, who attended the preaching, was the village publican, a man somewhat advanced in life. He became a most earnest listener, and seeker after the Lord.

On our next visit we found him under deep conviction of sin, and most anxious about his soul's salvation. We had some interesting conversation with him in reference to simply trusting in the blood of Christ. We left him in a much more peaceful state of soul. He again attended the preaching of the gospel that evening on the village green.

On our third visit we found him exceedingly happy, rejoicing in Christ as his Saviour. Moreover, we found him nailing up a gate that gave access to the grounds at the rear of his premises, which were laid out as pleasure grounds. This, let me tell you, was on a Saturday afternoon. He had determined that his house and grounds should no longer be a resort for pleasure-seekers on the Lord's Day. He had become a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, and now

HIS GREAT CONCERN WAS TO PLEASE THE LORD, who had bought him at so great a price, and glorify Him, who died for him, and rose again for his justification. Thus boldly did he confess the Lord.

I wish, dear reader, you could have seen his bright, happy face, and have heard his expressions of joy as he spoke of the precious Saviour he had found, or rather, that had found him, and that he could now call his. So great was his joy that in wakeful hours in the night he would praise the Lord, who had so graciously saved him.

But this was altogether beyond the comprehension of his wife, who wondered what strange thing had happened to him, and feared that his head was a little touched. But no, my dear reader, it was not his head but his heart that was touched, and that by the love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When his wife expostulated with him, wishing to silence these expressions of joy and praise, in his simplicity he would reply, "Oh! my dear, if you believed what I believe, you would feel what I feel."

Blessed, simple, incontrovertible argument !

I have often thought that if unbelievers could only know the peace and joy of the true believer for one solitary hour, they would no longer wish to remain in unbelief and sin, 'but would turn with longing souls to the Lord, in true brokenness of spirit and repentance, and He would receive them graciously, and bestow upon them the great gift of eternal life.

Some years have passed since this dear man entered into the presence of his beloved Lord and Saviour. But you, my dear reader, are still in the place where

MERCY AND SALVATION ARE FREELY OFFERED.

What decision have you come to on this all-important subject? Have you received the Lord Jesus, and in Him become the happy possessor of this eternal life, which is God's greatest gift, or are you still lingering in doubt and indecision, exposed to the righteous judgment of God, still travelling that broad road, which can only end in the lake of fire, which is the second death.

“How short is life—how brief its longest day ;
 Health mantled on the cheek soon fades away.
 Yon lovely flower, so rich in colours gay,
 Must droop too quickly, and its leaves decay.
 But what of man ; is he not like the grass ?
 He grows and flourishes, but soon to pass
 Into a day that never ends.—But where ?
 To home of bliss, or confines of despair ?
 Choose then the narrow path ; do not delay.
 Trust Jesus now ! He saith, ‘*I am the Way.*’”

WITHOUT NOTICE.

I T was at the village of Q—— I read the following:—

“NOTICE.—*The owner of the H—— Estate reserves the right to cut off this water at any time without notice.*”

It was where a full, free, and fresh supply of water flowed for whoever might need it. It was there to supply the village. Any one that was thirsty might drink, but at any moment it might be *cut off*; the owner reserved the right, and that *without notice*.

How like the gospel; there is a full, free, fresh supply of *living* water, and whosoever will may drink: “*Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY*” (Rev. xxii. 17). It is the Owner of heaven and earth, who says these words; and they are the last invitation of grace to the sinner in the Bible.

The days are coming when it will not always be so. Listen! “*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it*” (Amos viii. 11, 12).

This is the day of good news from heaven. The angel brought the good news of the Saviour's birth

to the shepherds, and the Apostle Paul, in speaking of Christ's death and resurrection, says: "*We declare unto you glad tidings*" (Acts xiii. 32); "*Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Remember, the rich man in hell wanted a drop of water to cool his tongue, but it was denied him. Not a ray of light, not a drop of mercy there. The great gulf was fixed, no coming and going. NOW is the time to *drink*: "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him *come unto Me, and drink*" (John vii. 37). Yes, *cried*—it was the *last day* of the feast; we are in the *last hour*. Now or never. Decide for the Lord.

R. W.

FRAGMENT.

IT is well to bear in mind that this is not the day of Christ's *power*, but it is the day of His *sympathy*. When passing through the deep waters of affliction the heart may at times feel disposed to ask, "Why does not the Lord display His power and deliver me?" The answer is, "He could avert that sickness—He could remove that difficulty—He could take off that pressure." But, instead of putting forth His power to deliver, He generally allows things to run their course, and pours His own sweet sympathy into the oppressed and riven heart in such a way as to elicit the acknowledgment that we would not, for worlds, have missed the trial, because of the abundance of the consolation.

C. H. M.

GOD'S LOVE LIKE THE SUN.

A DRUNKARD had somewhere heard this expression, "*God's love is like the sun.*" He was sitting in his own miserable dwelling, when a ray of the sun's light shone through his window, and fell upon him. He repeated the thought, "*God's love is like the sun,*" and added, "*A ray of the sun falls on me, why not a ray of God's love?*"

He retired to rest full of these thoughts. In the morning, the sun was up before him, filling his room with its splendour. He arose, started to his feet, and basked in its morning beams, and then uttered aloud the thought, "*God's love is like the sun, the sun is all over me; if God's love is like the sun, His love is all over a poor drunkard.*"

It is this kind of love that melts our hearts and wins them back to God. We, who believe unto salvation, can account for it only in the way mentioned by the apostle: "*God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved),*" (Eph. ii. 4, 5).

The most harrowing representations of "wrath to the uttermost" will never reclaim us; the most pungent convictions of our sinfulness will never lead us to the enjoyment and service of God; but when the eyes of our hearts are divinely opened to see Christ once suffering for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, to be forgiven, purified,

and glorified, we cannot resist the drawing influence of divine love, and we put our trust in the Lord Jesus as our personal Saviour, and receive all the blessings of the gospel.

One of Brainerd's Indians furnishes a beautiful illustration of this. He came to him one day in great joy, and gave the following account of his conversion: "I often heard you say, that in order to come to Christ, we must feel ourselves utterly helpless and undone. I long strove after this, thinking it would be a good frame of mind, and that in return for it God would bestow on me salvation. But the longer I strove the more wretched I became. At length I heard you setting forth the glory of Christ, and inviting sinners to come to Him, naked and empty. That night *I saw with my heart the glorious Saviour: and it stole my heart away.*"

Reader, have you seen the glorious Saviour with *your* heart, so that the sight has stolen *your* heart away? This is conversion, this is salvation, to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.

ANON.

FRAGMENT.

THE next thing for this poor world is God's judgment. Without the slightest warning judgment will fall on a Christless Christendom. Happy the man that is outside of it. Happy is the man that gets clear of it to the spot of safety. You say, Where is that? It is CHRIST—the knowledge of CHRIST.

W. T. P. W.

"HE DIED FOR POOR ME."

A MINISTER resident in a large city had prepared and preached, as he supposed, a most convincing sermon, for the benefit of an influential member of his congregation, who was known to be of an infidel turn of mind. The sinner listened unmoved to the well-turned sentences and the earnest appeals, which, however, left him unaffected. On his return from church, he saw a tear trembling in the eye of his little daughter, whom he tenderly loved, and he inquired the cause.

The child informed him that she was thinking of what her Sunday-school teacher had told her of Jesus Christ.

"And what did she tell you, child?"

"Why, she said He came down from heaven, *and died for poor me,*" and in a moment the tears gushed from eyes, which had looked upon the beauties of only seven summers.

In the simplicity of childhood she added, "Father, should I not love One, who has so loved me?"

The proud heart of the infidel was touched. What the eloquent plea of his minister could not accomplish, the tender sentence of his child had done.

In giving an account of his Christian experience, he remarked: "Under God I owe my conversion to a little child, who first convinced me by her artless simplicity that I ought to love One, who had so loved me."

JUSTIFICATION IN FIVE ASPECTS.

IT is deeply important for the abiding peace and establishment of souls in the true grace of God to clearly understand the subject of justification.

Justification goes beyond forgiveness. A person might be forgiven one offence or many, but that would not make him righteous.

Justification is not merely the clearance of the past. It is all that, but much more. It is being made righteous in the sight of the One, whose laws we had outraged.

No charge can possibly be brought against a righteous person. The consciousness of being made righteous dispossesses us of all fear or tormenting dread. "The righteous are as bold as a lion." Being made righteous is being made right with God, which supposes we had not been right with Him.

How could such a change be brought about without abrogating Divine law, and weakening or setting aside righteous government? In human law it amounts to an impossibility. Law is law. It shows no pity. Government must be according to law—fixed law—else there could not be true government. Anarchy and chaos must ensue.

God's law is as fixed and unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Much as the king loved Daniel, and however he might seek to deliver him, he could not do it without setting aside the law. Had

he allowed himself to be given to the lions with the consent of his rulers, that would have met the case. It would have proved the depth of his love for Daniel, and met the requirements of his command.

In Galatians and Romans, man, whether religious or profane, is proved to be—what all true experience ever did prove him to be—totally bad in his moral nature, and guilty by practice. The addition of the holy perfect law so far from helping him only made him appear worse. It proved his total incapacity to deliver himself because of his bad and helpless state. It shut him up to wretchedness and despair, and put him under the curse. “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them” (Gal. iii. 10).

That is the fixed and final unalterable statute of God’s holy law. It truly kills, but cannot make alive or clear the guilty.

The gospel proposes to deliver man from its awful curse. If no lawful means could be devised for the deliverance of Daniel, who was the chief subject of the realm, by the king who loved him, how can God, who loves His creature man, effect a righteous deliverance for him?

What a tremendous problem! What an apparent and insurmountable difficulty! How can it be met and unravelled? How can it be righteously solved without the infringing of Divine law, and setting aside righteous government, and allowing anarchy in the universe?

All the foolish talk about the universal Father-

hood of God will not meet the difficulty in the least. David's love and fatherhood did not meet the difficulty righteously with Absalom. If David showed love it was to the entire setting aside of law and righteous government. "He that ruleth over men must be just." Justice shows no favour. He afterwards paid the severe penalty of it. Every serious man must see the difficulty.

"God is love." But God is holy and hates sin. In absolute righteousness it must be punished. If man were brought back by overlooking his sin, why not bring back the fallen angels? If man were delivered unrighteously, the morality of the universe were involved. In bringing back man God's love and attributes must not clash. If in the infinite wisdom of God He did not find out a way consistently with His righteous character, all were for ever shut up in despair.

Scripture speaks of—

1. *Justification by Grace.*
2. *Justification by Blood.*
3. *Justification by Faith.*
4. *Justification by Life.*
5. *Justification by Works.*

JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE.

Grace in plain language is love. But it is love as the result of no merit on the part of those on whom it has been so freely lavished. Grace supposes no procuring cause on the part of those, who are the subjects of it. It is sovereign and free on the part of God. It is undeserved on the part of man. It

would be utterly superfluous to speak of grace, if the subject of it were not a hopeless ruin in himself. Grace sets aside works of merit, otherwise it were not grace.

This mighty act of sovereign favour is shown out in the fact that the Almighty Sovereign Himself stooped down to man's estate. How inconceivable to the human mind is such love! Though it was the Second Person in the Godhead, who became man, He was the Son—the Almighty Creator. "By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth. He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col. i. 16, 17). The love of the Godhead has been expressed in the love of the Son.

If sin has been allowed, and in its awful train brought death, and broken hearts and weeping eyes, yet the Almighty Creator coming into manhood in the infinite depths of His grace went into death that He might meet the awful ravages it had made. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9).

Had sin not have been here there could never have been such a display of grace. What finite mind could conceive the infinite glory of Him who is called "The Lord of glory"! What finite mind could conceive the infinite depths He went into when He was made sin for us, and was forsaken of God! That was poverty indeed. He was bereft of every friend, and forsaken at the moment of His

greatest weakness and extremity by the God He served so faithfully. He was stripped of all His outward glory, and of dear life itself.

Such fathomless grace on the part of the Creator, whose favour we had forfeited, and whose wrath our sins had incurred, is beyond our feeble minds to grasp. Such grace, when fairly and honestly looked at, and believed in, has stopped the mouths of the most blatant infidels. Their cavilling has been turned into admiration, appreciation, and unstinted praise, and weeping for their hardness and slowness of heart to believe. They have been led to exclaim, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

JUSTIFICATION BY BLOOD.

It has become fashionable in certain quarters to speak slightingly of the blood—the precious blood of Jesus. When we behold the greatness and infinite glory of the Person who shed it, we are not surprised that the Holy Spirit should call it "precious." No estimation of man could possibly calculate the worth of that by which God proposes to lift a world from the misery of hell to the eternal felicity of heaven's endless bliss.

It was the evidence of the life given up in atonement without which there could have been "*no remission*" (Heb. ix. 22). Expunge these words from Scripture you cannot. Their meaning with the whole context is obvious to all save the wilfully blind. The shedding of the precious blood of God's Holy Son was the vindicating and upholding of

God's righteousness and majesty before all the created intelligences of heaven and earth. That was no small matter for the Son of God to undertake! That was His greatest triumph! That completely meets, and for ever solves, the difficult problem of our justification on the part of a holy righteous God.

His law and government are upheld, and not infringed or set aside by so acting toward us. He has now become the Justifier of the ungodly—of all those who believe.

A touching story is told of a mountain chief, who was at war with Russia during the middle of the last century. He found out that some one was exposing his plans and designs. He made a law that if the traitor was found out, he should receive one hundred lashes on the bare back. To his grief and astonishment it was discovered to be his own mother.

He stood pallid and ghastly as he ordered his mother from her tent, and her back to be bared for the scourge. As he witnessed the fearful lash, which gashed her flesh, strike the fifth time he bade the executioner arrest his blows, bared his own back, and took the other ninety-five lashes in his own person, till the flesh hung in threads. The *moral* effect on his sinning mother, and on his followers, was marvellous. Thus were the ends of justice secured, and his deep love for his guilty mother exhibited in a way that would have been impossible had she not sinned against him. He upheld his law before his followers, and proved his love to his offending mother.

In like manner, in the blood of God's Son shed for sinners, the infinite love of God, and His justice against our sins, was declared. The cross where He shed His blood will stand for ever in its own solitary glory as the mightiest moral achievement of all. Yes, it is a great monument of a glorious victory. Not of defeat. The great moral effect of that victory will yet be seen in all the universe. What a glory and joy that will be to the Victor! Who that knows Him would rob Him of that crown.

God can now justify on the basis of it without the least inconsistency. He can do it boldly before all the intelligence of the universe, *because He can do it righteously*. He can hurl out the defiant challenge before heaven, earth, and hell, and ask, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Why? "It is God that justifieth." Why? "It is Christ that died. Yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God" (Rom. viii. 33, 34). "Much more then, being *now justified by His blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Rom. v. 9). What confidence and boldness these scriptures impart to the weak, timid, trembling soul!

How blind the man must be to moral perfection, who slights the blood of Christ! His eyes must be blinded by the awful smoke of the pit. The Bible must be burned before expiation by blood can be expunged from its contents. It is interwoven through all its inspired pages like warp and woof.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

Faith is a very simple thing in ordinary life. It implies confidence and trust in the person who brings any kind of testimony to us. If we receive his testimony we give him credit for truthfulness. If we refuse to believe him we mistrust his word and thereby put him in the place of a liar. That is to his dishonour. No honourable man likes to be so treated. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record [witness] God gave of His Son" (1 John v. 9, 10). So much for belief or unbelief in God's Word about His Son. So much hangs upon belief or unbelief that Jesus has said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." There is no possibility of escape from these plain words. They are final.

How important to believe, and how serious not to believe. To make God a liar is not humility but presumptuous folly. To believe God's Word is to honour Him. It brings the exercised soul into the position and portion of a justified person. To stand before the light of God's holy righteous throne is the position. Peace with God is the portion. The resurrection of Christ is the positive witness that all who believe the testimony of God are justified. "He was raised again for our justification." "And by Him all that believe are justified from all things." "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

JUSTIFICATION BY LIFE.

It is the life every believer possesses in the risen Christ. We were in death and under condemnation in Adam. In Christ risen we are brought out of death and into a life where there is no condemnation. It is, therefore, a life to which no charge of sin can be attached. In that life God sees us so clear of all that belonged to us in the Adam life that He can truly say, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel." We may boldly lift up our heads in the face of every foe!

JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS.

If a man say he believes, we have a right to look for the evidence of it in a consistent life of good works. We have a right to say with the practical-minded James, who believed in no cant, "*Shew me your faith by your works.*" Good works are the fruit of faith, and of the new life, which has its spring and power in the living God. They flow from it as naturally as fruit from a healthy tree. A healthy tree makes no effort to produce fruit. It *grows*. Faith *worketh* by the power of love, which is the evidence of new life. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and, therefore, impossible to produce works that would be acceptable to Him.

Dead works are the works that do not flow from the new life and a living faith. They may have the *appearance* of those that flow from a living faith. But they are dead works, and are, therefore, the

works of those who have a name to live, but are dead toward God. "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

The difference is as wide as the poles. It is infinite. Good works as the fruit of a living faith in the living God delights His heart. But dead works are most distasteful to Him. Man cannot read the heart, but he can pretty nearly read the life. It is the heart that God looks at, and the life men look at.

No one who is a true believer would willingly be inconsistent with his faith. His inconsistent practice would be the contradiction of his faith. He would not be tolerated in any truly Christian company. Inconsistency would even lower his standing amongst men. He would be rightly named—hypocrite. Nevertheless let all who *profess* faith be *zealous* to maintain good works. "Let your light so shine before men; that *they may see* your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Rejoicing then by faith in the wonderful clearance God has given us through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believer can sing out of the fulness of his heart,

"Now I can say I am pardoned,
Happy and *justified*, free ;
Now there is no condemnation,
This is the Saviour for me."

What a portion! What a Saviour! What a God! "Perfect love casteth out fear."

THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE.

TUNE—*Stand up, stand up for Jesus.*

COME now, come now to Jesus,
 He died thy soul to win—
 The door of mercy open
 Invites thy entrance in.
 Fast, fast the hour of pardon
 Is drawing to a close,
 When God will make Christ's footstool
 Of those who are His foes.

Come now, come now to Jesus,
 And Him as Lord confess ;
 Long, long has He been waiting,
 He waiteth, He waiteth still to bless.

Come now, come now to Jesus,
 The hour is drawing near—
 The dead in Christ arising
 His shout of power shall hear,
 And living saints all caught up
 With them into the air
 To meet on high their Saviour—
 His glorious image bear.

Come now, come now to Jesus,
 For mercy calls no more,
 When once the Master riseth
 And closeth, and closeth fast the door.

Come now, come now to Jesus,
There is no time to lose,
Delay not, oh ! delay not,
Nor mercy's call refuse.
Neglect so great salvation
Till day of grace is past,
Escape then will be hopeless,
Thy doom shall come at last.

Come now, come now to Jesus,
No longer make delay ;
Oh ! come to Him this moment,
And trust Him, and trust Him
e'en to-day.

I come, I come, O Saviour,
And Thee as Lord confess.
Thy love has won an answer,
And now Thy name I bless.
No work of mine could save me,
Thy work and Thine alone
Upon the cross of Calvary
Did for my sin atone.

I come, I come, O Saviour,
Confess Thee as my Lord,
Thy name on earth, in heaven above
For ever, for ever be adored.

"PRAY, AM I NOT A CHRISTIAN?"

THERE she sat, with an almost angry and defiant expression on her face. She was evidently a lady, belonging to the upper class, who had for some reason remained for an inquirers' meeting, held at the close of a gospel address given by a well-known and much-used evangelist.

A Christian gentleman—an army officer—noticed her sitting bolt upright with an indignant look in her eyes. He asked a lady if anyone had spoken to her.

"No," she replied, "I think not."

"Why," he inquired, "do you not go and speak to her?"

"No, thank you," was her answer, "I would much rather not."

Another lady refused with the remark, "But if you are desirous that she should be spoken to, why do *you* not speak to her yourself?"

The fact was the angry look on the lady's face had frightened all who saw her.

What follows had best be told in the gentleman's own words.

Reflecting that this formidable-looking personage would hardly have stayed to an after-meeting unless she desired a word with someone, and asking for needed grace and courage, I ventured to approach her with the inquiry, "Are you waiting to speak to

the preacher? He will, I think, be disengaged in a few minutes, and I will bring him if you wish it."

"Oh! dear, no; I have no desire whatever to speak with him."

"Perhaps you are waiting for a friend, who is engaged in conversation," I ventured.

"No, nothing of the kind!"

I confess that I was about to beat a retreat, when, to my surprise, the lady said, "If you will sit down, I should like to put a few questions to you."

I took a seat by her side, wondering what was coming next.

Here let me say that I was a total stranger to this lady, and lest I should be deemed guilty of indiscretion in relating the conversation which followed, I may state that it is *at her express desire* that I do so. Her desire is that her experience may be helpful to others.

"Will you be good enough to tell me what this preacher has been preaching about?" she inquired.

"'What he has been preaching about,'" I repeated. "I have seldom been privileged to listen to a more clear, faithful gospel address."

"What! you liked it? I thought it detestable."

"To what did you object?" I asked.

"He said that some of us were converted and some unconverted, that some of us were dead in trespasses and sins, and some had passed from death unto life. He even went so far as to say that some of us were Christians, and some of us were not Christians."

"Pardon me," I remarked, "I think he said that some of us were *true* Christians, and others were only *nominal* Christians."

The lady hotly retorted, "*Pray, am I not a Christian?*"

I replied, "I cannot say, for I know nothing of your life."

"My life! Why, what has my life to do with it? I was baptized as a child; in due course I was confirmed; I attend my church, not only on Sundays, but frequently on week-days; and I am a regular communicant. When in London, I have a district, which I visit; and when in the country I sometimes take a class in the Sunday school. *Now, pray, am I not a Christian?*"

I replied, "I do not for a moment doubt what you have told me, but all this would not of itself, or necessarily, constitute you a *true* Christian."

"What *can* you mean? You all seem to me to have taken leave of your senses here. Perhaps you will say what you consider is the right definition of a Christian—a *true* Christian?"

I answered, "*A Christian is a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

I felt we had talked quite enough, and that it was high time to direct this lady's attention to the Word of God. Looking to God for guidance, I was led to Matthew vii. 22, 23:—

"Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy

name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU."

That word went home in mighty power. After a solemn pause of quite two or three minutes, the lady broke the silence—

"Is it possible that I am all wrong, and that the preacher was right in what he said? If I am wrong, tell me where I am wrong."

For answer I showed her John i. 12, 13:—

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power [right] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

"The simple, but all-important question," I said, "is this: Have you *received* Him? Do you ask *how*? By *believing* on His name. By *faith* in Him. Have you been '*born . . . of God.*' Has this definite transaction, this personal transaction taken place between you and God?"

After a few moments of thought, the lady replied: "No, I know nothing of this in my own experience."

By this time we were almost the only ones remaining in the building. As she now appeared to be really anxious as to her condition in God's sight, I asked her if she would care for me to call upon her next day, and, if so, at what hour. She at once gave me her name and address, and fixed the hour for my visit.

Accordingly, the next morning I called at her house. I found her very unhappy, and sadly ignorant of God's way of salvation. She had been taught like many others, alas! to trust partly to ordinances, partly

to her church, partly to her own doings, and only partly to the sacrifice of Christ. She was astonished when I told her that in the matter of our justification Christ is to be *all*.

Each time I visited her she appeared to have been brought lower. There was no need to dwell upon the sinfulness of sin in her case. How I longed and prayed to see her rejoicing in Christ.

At last I discovered her chief difficulty to her having "peace with God." She had been taught that it was "gross presumption" for anyone to say that he was "saved," and to know it.

I pointed out to her two passages of Scripture, in which we have the very word, "*saved*," and showed her how *the believer is saved* from the penalty of sin.

"By grace ARE YE SAVED [lit. : by grace have ye been saved—R. V.] through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

"God . . . HATH SAVED US, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace" (2 Tim. i. 9).

Further, in regard to its being "gross presumption" for the believer to say that he has received eternal life, I turned to the following scriptures:—

"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).

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation ; but IS PASSED from death unto life ” (John v. 24).

After some further conversation this lady received the Lord Jesus Christ as her *Saviour*. On bended knee in her own drawing-room, in simple Christ like faith she was saved and knew it. No longer was it “ *gross presumption*,” but receiving “ the record that GOD HATH GIVEN TO US [believers] ETERNAL LIFE, and this life is in His Son ” (1 John v. 11).

For eight years she lived a very bright, happy, because consistent and useful, Christian life, and then passed peacefully into the presence of that Saviour of whom she had become a *true* follower.

How many thousands there are in the condition of this lady before she was converted. How many, who kneel at the communion rail, who teach in the Sunday school, who are district visitors, are just like her, deceived and religiously going to hell ?

Reader, are you one of such ? Do not be offended at the question. Better to run the risk of offending you than to allow you to drop into hell from the communion rail, or from the Sunday school. Empty formalism and lifeless profession are more abundant to-day, alas ! than reality.

Answer these questions honestly and truthfully. Have you been converted ? Have you received Christ ? Are you born again ? Are you saved ? A. J. P.

ANOTHER MARVELLOUS INVENTION.

DR ROSIG, of the St Petersburg Institute of Technology, announces his invention of an electroscopic apparatus, which will give the user to see through stone walls, so that a person outside a building can observe what is being done inside, and *vice versa*. Truly this twentieth century is a marvellous age, as far as discovery, invention, and general scientific progress go. It has yet to be shown, however, that men are one whit the happier for it all. True happiness lies in the knowledge of God, and nothing that science can offer is of any help in this direction.

But suppose that Dr Rosig's invention is all that he announces it to be. There are many who would prefer that there should be no such appliance. It would be intolerable that stone walls should no longer be able to conceal our doings from the eyes of our fellow-men.

A far more serious matter, however, is this: that all our actions, our most secret thoughts, the motives that are the mainspring of our lives, are open to the eyes, not of men, to whom we are not responsible, but of *God*, to whom we are directly accountable, and "*with whom we have to do*" (Heb. iv. 13).

NOTHING IS HID FROM GOD'S SCRUTINY.

The years of our lives lie before Him like the pages of an open book. He knows us better than we know ourselves.

Knowing us as He does, He declares that we are not to be trusted (*see* John ii. 24). Our hearts are wicked and treacherous (*see* Jer. xvii. 9). Not one of us, not a single individual among the many millions of earth's inhabitants is really good (*see* Rom. iii. 10-12). We might almost have discovered this terrible truth for ourselves, by our general experience of men, and by the knowledge of our own hearts. But the Word of God makes it plain, indeed, to us.

Marvellous indeed it is that He can look with eyes of compassion upon creatures such as we are! Still more marvellous that He should *love* us, and that His love should be great enough to make Him willing to devote His own Son to an ignominious death in order that

SALVATION BROUGHT WITHIN OUR REACH

might be offered us.

To those who have believed the glad tidings, and trusted in Christ, it is an unspeakable comfort to remember that God knows all that is to be known about them. Nothing in their past, present, or future can be a discovery to Him. Knowing all, He dealt with it in holy judgment, visiting sin's penalty upon the spotless head of our Substitute. Not one sin was forgotten. He bore them *all*.

The believer, knowing this on the authority of the Word of God, rejoices that his sins, having been all remembered and charged upon the Sin-bearer, are

remembered no more (see Heb. x. 17). Never can they rise up in judgment against us.

But in this holy and happy portion the unrepentant sinner has no share. His sins, all recorded in God's book of remembrance, are the witnesses that will secure his eternal condemnation.

GOD'S ALL-SEEING EYE

he may well dread.

Reader, how do you stand with regard to this matter? Are *your* sins blotted out from God's sight for ever? Or do they stand in all their black hideousness before His eyes? When He looks upon you, does He see you sheltered beneath Christ's precious, atoning blood, or covered with your sins? Let me entreat you to weigh these questions, and to give yourself no rest till you can answer them in the only happy way.

H. P. B.

FRAGMENT.

THE truly broken and contrite heart will vindicate God at all cost. "Let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged" (Rom. iii. 4). God must have the upper hand in the end; and it is the path of true wisdom to give Him the upper hand now. The very moment the soul is broken down in true self-judgment, God rises before it in all the majesty of His grace as a Justifier.

C. H. M.

PURSUED BY DIVINE LOVE.

EXACTLY forty years ago, at this very hour, the most important event in my history occurred. I refer to nothing less than the passage of my soul "*from the power of darkness . . . into the kingdom of God's dear Son*" (Col. i. 13). I have seldom related how that event took place, either privately or otherwise. But it so occupies my mind to-day, filling my soul with deepest gratitude to the God of all grace, that I feel He would have me relate His all-gracious dealings with me on that occasion. My only motive in doing so is to extol the wondrous grace of a Saviour-God.

My conversion was nothing extraordinary, yet to myself it was extraordinary indeed. For how could I call that ordinary which found me in a state of sin, and lifted me into a state of bliss, that no angel can ever know. To be "a child of wrath" one day, and to find myself a "son of God" the next, and my eternal destiny to be conformed to the image of God's Son, was indeed most extraordinary.

Before I was twenty-two years of age, drinking in moderation, combined with the game of dominoes, had a dreadful fascination for me. Dominoes, alone, had none; and drinking, by itself, had as little; but these combined proved the devil's strong vice that held me firm.

Getting alarmed lest this fascination might ultimately lead to my ruin for this world, I resolved to

cease frequenting the public-house where this went on. But it was then I began to feel my real weakness, for resolve as I might I could not pass that public-house, if I had money in my pocket. This alarmed me dreadfully, so much so, that I began to look around for some "helping hand."

Just at this time I learned that a lodge of "Good Templars" was to be formed. Here, I thought, was the "helping hand," so I was among the first to enrol myself one of its "charter members."

About the time I joined the Templars, my elder brother, living ten miles away, got saved. When I first heard of this through my sister, who told me she had got a letter "full of religion" from him, I was filled with fear lest when he came home some week-end he should try to get me converted. This he did repeatedly. Suspecting the object of his visits, I had my mind made up to ward off every attempt he might make to approach me on the subject of my soul's salvation.

Week after week he came and did his best to introduce the matter in an indirect way. But being on my guard, I was adroit enough to get the subject turned into other channels, such as temperance, on which we were at one. I felt great relief, however, when the time to say good-bye came.

What an exhibition of the natural man this was. My "Good Templarism" had clearly made my *heart* no better. If I was afraid of my brother, because he was a happy Christian, and wished me to share the same happiness, how could I be fit to be in God's presence for all eternity?

Baffled in every effort to reach me my brother ceased his visits. Soon a new fear filled my mind, viz., that he would write me. This fear haunted me night and day, till the postman became positively an object of dread. The first letter that came home was written to father and mother, who were, as yet, unsaved. Both were afraid to read it, and at mother's pressing request, I read it to them. It was full of what she called "religion." Glad, indeed, I was when my painful task was over. None of us made a single remark about its contents. But, ah! how it intensified my fears that one direct to myself would soon follow. My fear was soon realised. Had it been a summons to appear at court for a serious crime I could not have trembled more in opening it. I read it as quickly as possible. It was all about the salvation of my soul, a thing I did not *then* want. I summoned all my "will power," only too successfully, alas! to drive from my soul any effect the letter had made.

As I reflect on all this, how it shows up the terrible hold the devil has got of the heart of man, and how he keeps that hold by the sins and pleasures of a fleeting world, hiding from view the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

A second letter from my brother soon followed. I got it as I seated myself at the dinner-table. With trembling hands I opened it. I had not read many lines of that never-to-be-forgotten letter before I felt God was speaking with resistless power to my soul. My dinner was left untouched. With but one

thought in my soul, *How* am I to be saved? I left the house.

A TWENTY-SIX HOURS' STRUGGLE, AND HOW IT WAS SETTLED.

You will doubtless wonder what there could have been in that letter to produce such an effect on my soul. Without going into details I will say enough to show you how God was exercising my brother in regard to me.

For a considerable time before his conversion he had been a total abstainer, and like myself, had felt the benefit of it for *this life*. But he learned from experience that total abstinence was not salvation. There were other sins than "intemperance." Seeing my enthusiasm in the temperance cause was being used by me as a shield against all the efforts of God through him to win my soul for Himself, he clearly showed in his second letter to me that temperance cannot save the soul. He warned me not to rest satisfied with the blessing total abstinence had brought me, as he had done. It had given his life a new charm. His spare money he had saved or spent usefully. But, finding out that temperance did not save him from sin, he became so disgusted at himself, and got so miserable, that he felt he must get rid of his misery in some way. Two things came before him. The devil suggested he should fling himself into his old public-house habits, and drown his convictions. But God was saying in his guilty conscience, "*You have to meet Me about your sins,*

Why not face Me now, and get all forgiven?" He took God's advice. He faced his sin, confessed his guilt to God, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and God forgave him, and made him happy. He entreated me to face matters, too, and get saved. He pressed upon me that total abstinence would not give me the power I needed to resist the temptations of the devil. Then, besides the sorrow sin brings us here, he added, there is its eternal punishment to endure in the place of woe hereafter.

But my determination was to go on living to please myself. I thought a time would come at some distant date when I would feel inclined to think of my soul's salvation, and get it settled. Thus was I *practically* saying to God, "You must wait *my* time." Oh! daring, blasphemous thought.

But when the thought, "NOW or NEVER: *which?*" was pressed home to my soul, the issues were so overwhelmingly momentous, that in the deepest depths of my soul I could only come to this resolve, "*Now I am determined to be saved, cost me what it may.*" Leaving my dinner untouched, I put the letter in my pocket, not half-read, and left the house. My parents were bewildered. I left them at the table, looking at each other in silence.

Having a little spare time, I betook myself to a quiet spot near by the "damside," the foot-path between the "mill-race" and the river.

There I got out the letter, hoping I might find in the part yet unread *how* I was to be saved. Evi-

dently led of God to anticipate my condition of mind, my brother straightway began to write as if to an anxious soul. He showed how God out of love for my precious soul had given His own Son to make atonement on the cross for sin, that He might be able, *righteously*, to set me, the guilty one, free.

That the work of atonement had completely satisfied God, and this had resulted in God presenting to guilty sinners for their acceptance His *gift* of eternal life (*see* Rom. vi. 23; Rev. xxii. 17), and I had only to *take it*.

All this I fully believed, yes, as truly as I do to-day; yet I had no peace or joy. Why? Because at the end of his letter there was what proved to be a problem that cost me twenty-six hours of deepest anxiety. The perplexing puzzle lay in the two small words, "Take it."

How can I take it? *How* will I be *sure* when I have taken it? *How* will I feel? Such questions presented difficulties to my dark mind. I thought for long over the two words, "*Take it*," thus making the two simplest words in our English language an impenetrable mystery.

Dinner-hour being gone, I had to return to work, but far more concerned with my problem than work. The day's work over, I lost no time in resorting to the "damside" again, to read and re-read that heaven-sent letter of my brother's. But after reading and pondering till darkness set in in the hope of getting a ray of light as to *how* I was to take this gift of eternal life from the hand of God, I had to

return home as dark as ever in soul as to what taking it really meant.

Had God sent an angel in visible form with a document written by God's own hand, and engraven and stamped with His own seal, to assure me that my sins were all forgiven, and that my eternal bliss in heaven was settled, and holding out the document, had said, "*This is for YOU, this is God's certificate—TAKE IT,*" how simple, I thought, it would be to take it. The messenger being visible, and the document both visible and tangible, would have suited me, I thought. But here was the "*invisible God*" holding out to me something called "*eternal life,*" neither visible nor tangible, but containing, *I was certain,* all I needed as a guilty sinner to make me happy and at peace with Him, for ever. But, oh! how could I lay hold of it? was my terrible, unsolved problem, as I laid my aching head on the pillow that night.

Ultimately I thought I would have to work myself up into some mysterious state of soul, that would make me, in some uncontrollable manner, lay hold of the gift. But the more I tried this the further I got from the very state I wished to reach; but the more occupied I got with the FACT that God was in *earnest* for me to take the gift, I felt myself nearer the act of taking it.

- Especially was this felt after lying in bed wholly engrossed for hours over this matter. I concluded that God MEANT me to take it at once; and under a strong impulse, I swiftly raised myself in bed to tell the Lord I would take it there and then. But before

these words were uttered, as quick as lightning, came the Satanic suggestion, "The gift of God is not to be got so easy as that." Almost, but not altogether, thank God! in despair, and exhausted, I threw myself back, and went to sleep for two hours. How sweet it would have been could I have opened my eyes again with my problem solved, and my soul in happy possession of God's gift of eternal life. But, alas! there it was, the first and only thought in my mind, when I awoke, "*How! Oh, how!* am I to take God's gift?" How strong is unbelief. How slow we are to take God at His word.

My breakfast and dinner-hour found me again at the "damside," reading the same letter, but getting no help, nor did I think of seeking help elsewhere. All my hope seemed to centre in that letter.

As I write, I have before me a pictorial post-card, sent by a relative, who knows not how the foreground of that picture is fixed in my mind; for there, prominently, is the scene of my deep soul-exercise forty years ago. But the damsides, so distinctly shown, true to nature, lacks one thing to make it the "damside," fixed in my mind, viz., a young man seen on that secluded foot-path, transfixed, pondering over a letter he is reading.

In sadness I returned to work again. But to the everlasting praise of my God my *sadness* was to give place to *gladness* in an hour's time. Seated at work, with my yet unsaved father in front of me, and Ned B——, a boon, unsaved companion, on my right, and another on my left, the blessed God, who knew

I was DETERMINED not to give up till I possessed His gift, led my mind away from all thought of how I WAS to take it, to the glorious FACT that He was *beseeking* me to take it, and be thus reconciled to Him (2 Cor. v. 20).

“Why, then,” I said, “would I not give Him the PROOF that I believed Him, by taking Him at His word, when He was saying, ‘WHOSOEVER WILL, let him take of the water of life FREELY’” (Rev. xxii. 17). His attitude towards me as the GIVING God became all so real that I ceased to allow a difficulty on my part, for there was none on His. So, without thinking of *effort* of any kind, my heart went out there and then, saying, “Blessed God, I do take it,” and while so saying, took from the hand of the living, loving, giving God, the gift He had been pressing on me these twenty-six hours. Yea! He had been in this attitude towards me all my life.

All anxiety fled from my soul, and the heavy burden of my life's sins disappeared from my sin-accusing, guilty conscience. My soul was filled with joy and gratitude to God at the thought of His love, mercy, and grace to a poor, wretched sinner like me, in blotting out my WHOLE guilty past life, and giving me His own gift of “eternal life.” My heart, dancing for very joy within me, sought for some means to express it aloud. Strange to say, again and again, *two lines* of a well-known hymn came into my mind, and the tune the hymn was commonly sung to—

“Oh! I am my Belovèd's,
And my Belovèd's mine.”

Nor did I know another word in it save these two lines.

But each time they came before me during my twenty-six hours' anxiety, how I *longed* to be able to give expression to them *as true of me*. Now that I was Christ's, and He was mine, I could not sing them. I had no music in my voice, and did not sing the world's songs on that account, but having a little bit of ear, I was fond of whistling them for my own pleasure. It may make you smile when I tell you that my happy heart found vent for its overflowing joy in whistling these two lines over and over again. Nor do I believe, if I had had the voice of a seraph, my first note of praise would have been sweeter to God.

Reader, have you eternal life? It is God's gift. "The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). A *gift* costs the receiver nothing. The great point is, Is it offered? It is, and that by God Himself. You may have it. May God say to you, as He did to my brother, "*You have to meet ME about your sins. Why not face ME NOW, and get all forgiven?*" Why not?

"*Get right with God—no longer be rebellious
Against the love that seeks thy soul to win ;
Bow down at last, and as thy Lord confess Him,
Whose blood alone can cleanse away thy sin.*"

ANON.

[Any anxious to be saved, who would like to correspond with the writer of this article, are invited to address their communications to "ANON, c/o *Gospel Messenger*, 2 and 3 Bristo Place, Edinburgh."]

PEACE WITH GOD: IS IT YOURS?

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. . . . Not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”—ROM. v. 1, 10, 11.

IT is a wonderful thing to have peace with God. This is your portion, if you receive the gospel. The man, who believes the gospel, is *justified* by God, instead of being *judged* by God. Get this, however, into your heart, that if you are not *justified by God*, on the ground of faith in the work of Christ, you are going to be *judged by God*, at no distant date, on the ground of your guilt, and that means the lake of fire for eternity.

We live in a day when the truth as to God's judgment of sin is rejected. No hell, no judgment, no wrath to come, are theories, alas! that suit sinners most thoroughly. But there is such a thing as being deluded, and the book that speaks about the believer being justified by God, is the same book that says,

“THE WRATH OF GOD IS REVEALED FROM
HEAVEN

against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men” (Rom. i. 18). If you receive the gospel you will give up justifying yourself, and find that you are justified by God, instead of nearing the moment when you will be judged by Him. Romans v. shows us first how to get peace *with* God, then how we are reconciled *to* God, and finally how we can joy *in*

God. I used to be afraid of God. I was like a young Edinburgh joiner, who worked beside a godly old Christian. He was converted by discovering that he was afraid of God. One day the old man said to him, "When you get home to-night, William, open your Bible, and get down on your knees, and say, '*There is*

NOBODY IN THIS ROOM BUT GOD AND ME.'"

"Oh! no," said he, "not for the world." Why not? He was afraid of God, and that is what you are, my unconverted friend.

If you only knew His heart you would not be afraid of Him. Nay, more, the gospel would bring you to "*joy in God.*" If you have not been thoroughly converted you are now, what you have been all the days of your life, a sinner in your sins, handcuffed by the devil, and hell-bound. That was my condition till grace met me, and there is no Christian but will say, "Yes, that was *my* condition." But do not forget, for I want to make it quite plain, that you are now either a glory-bound saint, because washed in the Saviour's blood, or a hell-bound sinner for eternity, because you are in your sins. You say, "I don't like that hard and fast line." Don't you? It makes my heart dance with joy that I am going to see my blessed Saviour shortly—does not that fill your heart with joy? You must be in a wrong state, if it does not.

Have you never yet been broken down about your sins, never been convicted, never been converted;

have you never lost a night's sleep about your sins? Go back to Job's curiously worded book, and see the counsel given us there—chapter xxii., verse 21—*“ Acquaint now thyself with Him, and BE AT PEACE.”* Verse 15 asks, *“ Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden ?”* A wicked man gets as far from God as he can. Not to desire God is man's nature. That is the enmity of the natural heart, and there is no real peace. How can there be peace in the heart when God is not known?

What do you understand by peace? When peace comes in, it is the termination of a state of war. You have been in a state of war against God—a rebel sinner. Look at the counsel here, *“ Acquaint now thyself with Him, and BE AT PEACE.”* But you say, I don't know how to get it. God will tell you. Turn to Isaiah lii. 7, *“ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.”*

A man once asked me what I was travelling in, and I told him *“ Heavenly Goods.”* What are they? *“ Peace, pardon, the knowledge of heaven, the tale of the love of God, and the value of the blood of Jesus.”* Go in for this—nothing pays like it.

Every Christian should be a publisher of Isaiah's stamp, bringing *“ good tidings that publisheth peace.”* Paul quotes this verse in Romans x. 15, and finishes up by saying, *“ So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”* You carry to some poor, anxious, troubled soul a bit of God's Word, and it will go right in.

A story is told of a ship captain, who lay dying, and was not ready to meet God. He sent for the mate, but he could not help him. He tried each one on the ship, till, at last, the little cabin-boy was summoned. He had a godly mother, who had taught him to read the Scriptures. So he read to the dying captain—“*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. 6). The captain died happy, trusting in Jesus. That little cabin-boy had beautiful feet.

Unsaved reader, do you know why you have not got peace? Turn to Isaiah lvii. 21 : “*There is*

NO PEACE, SAITH MY GOD, TO THE WICKED.”

How could there be? You are terrified at the very thought of death ; you are not right with God ; you are “*like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.*” Don't you think there is a good deal of moral mire and dirt in your history? It is not a question of any great or gross sins, it is man viewed in his natural state, man without God, and God says, “*There is no peace.*”

Again, in Isaiah lix. 8, God sums up man—“*The way of peace they know not ; and there is no right in their goings : they have made them crooked paths : whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.*” Has not yours been a crooked path? These are God's words, not man's.

But you say, I think I have got peace. What kind of peace? Turn to Jeremiah viii. 10, 11. There God says:—“*From the prophet even unto the priest everyone dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.*” Satan has plenty of so-called priests and prophets to-day, saying, “*Peace, peace; when there is no peace.*” To-day, he himself is “transformed into an angel of light,” and his messengers are “transformed as the ministers of righteousness” (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15).

What kind of peace have you got? Is it peace through the blood of Jesus, which gives you a purged conscience, because God's claims have all been met, and your sins have all been washed away, and because you have been turned from darkness to light? If not, it is false peace. You may say, I have never been disturbed; I have never had any great unrest about this matter. Very likely. Do you know why? Luke xi. 21 gives the reason—“*When a strong man [Satan] armed keepeth his palace [the world], his goods [sinners] are in peace.*” That is very striking. You say you have never passed through exercise, never known soul-trouble; in fact you have always been a decent person, and you are at peace. I would not have it for a million worlds—it is *false* peace, it is not the peace of God, it is Satanic. The devil has given you an opiate—he has got a great many peace manufactories in this world, and a great many servants busy making

PEACE POTIONS TO GIVE TO SIN-SICK SINNERS,

and they are kept in peace. "*His goods are in peace.*" Satan knows whom he can claim as his own.

Do you see where you are? An unconverted man is under the power of Satan. If you are without the conscious, definite knowledge of God, and of your sins being forgiven, where are you? Satan has decorated his palace, and by ten thousand worldly pleasures keeps his goods in peace. You admit you never had a night's trouble about your soul—you are in peace. How sad! One particular form of soothing syrup Satan administers is, You are no worse than your neighbour. This, sinners gladly believe, and are deceived by it, and thus they get a false peace. But Christ has come into the devil's camp, and He takes hold of a poor sinner like you, and delivers you. Christ was the victor over Satan. No man has ever withstood and overcome Satan but Christ, until grace has saved and strengthened him. Man as man Satan overcomes, and holds him.

Is your peace based on the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, or a mere indifference to eternal realities? What an awful thing for a man to be afraid of being converted. Man, are you not afraid of being damned? Why are you not anxious to be converted, anxious that you might know the Lord? I will tell you why—"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." The devil has told you that you have been a decent, respectable person all the days of your life, have

paid your way, done no great harm, been outwardly polite to God, and kind to your neighbour. Such a life, he tells you, merits heaven. In this way he would bolster you up with what is false until the crash comes, when death hurls you into eternity, and you find yourself eternally damned in your sins. God wake you up!

In view of the coming of the Lord, we read, "*For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them*" (1 Thess. v. 3). Unsaved man, professing Christian, church member, but unsaved yet, I beseech you, turn to God. Let me plead with you to get out of this hollow, false state, and get peace with God. Do you know how the gospel era was commenced—how the tidings of peace were first promulgated? Look at Luke i. 77-79. Zacharias speaks prophetically—"*To give knowledge of salvation unto His people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God: whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*" Christ the Son of God has visited this earth. His object was, "*To guide our feet into the way of peace.*" Have you had your feet guided yet into the way of peace? If not, put your hand into the hand of God, and let Him guide your feet into the way of peace. When the blessed Lord Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem, the heavenly host delightedly said, "*On earth PEACE.*" It had come in the person of Christ (Luke ii. 14).

He is not now upon earth, but in heaven, hence we read in Luke xix. 38, of "*peace in heaven.*" Where is peace now? In heaven, because Christ is there, and "He is our peace." On the cross He *made* peace, and He now *preaches* peace—it is all centred in the person of Christ.

We read in Luke xix. 41, 42, that Jesus "*beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.*" Oh! the tenderness of the heart of Jesus. He could weep over the city that did not want Him. Shall we not weep over you that don't want Jesus? You want the world, pleasure, sin, knowledge, to go on as you are going. Alas! alas! if you do not want Jesus.

But how is peace with God made? Further, how is it to be obtained by us? Scripture tells us. There is a lovely verse that tells us Christ *made* peace. "*Having made peace through the blood of His cross*" (Col. i. 20). Who made my peace with God? Christ. He died for me, He bore my judgment on the cross, and He has made peace. Do you know what He said to His disciples when He rose from the dead? "*Peace unto you*" (John xx. 21). He was the *Peace-maker*. You can be the *peace-taker*. You cannot make peace. Christ has made it. How did He make it? He bore in His body on the tree the judgment due to the sinner, and He did the work by which God's claims have all been met. He removed from God's eye all that was obnoxious to Him.

Peter says that God is now "*preaching peace by Jesus Christ*" (Acts x. 36). God now tells you of pardon, of forgiveness on the ground of atonement. He invites you to taste His goodness, and trust His Christ. Christ on the cross made peace, and now from the glory preaches peace. Who gets it? The man that in his heart simply believes and accepts Christ. In Ephesians ii. 14, we read, "*He is our peace.*" He is the peace of the one that trusts Him, for He has *made* peace, and the moment I see that Christ's work has met all God's claims in righteousness, I understand how God can justify me, and I have peace with Him. God has nothing against me; my sins were laid upon Jesus—"the chastisement of OUR PEACE was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed."

If anybody is kept out of heaven for my sins, who will it be? The One who in love and grace bore those many sins, when He died on Calvary's tree: but He has gone in, and I am going in, too. God's claims have all been divinely and perfectly met by the atoning death of Him who, when on the cross, was my Substitute, and, as my Advocate, is now in God's presence, on high.

The sinner that believes in Jesus comes under the benefit of all His work. Trust Him simply as the One who died for your sins, and is raised for your justification, and you will have "peace with God."

Take God at His word. He surely means what He says. Faith is God-honouring and Christ-exalting.

BACKSLIDING AND DECISION.

(Read RUTH i.)

THIS chapter of the book of Ruth provides us with an illustration of three classes of people that are met with to-day. Naomi is the figure of a backslider. Orpah and Ruth illustrate the soul's history of two, who have got exactly the same privileges and opportunities in relation to God, but at length the point is reached when one says, "I have had enough of this," and she goes back to her relations and her religion, while the other decides to go on with the Lord and His people. It is the old story, that there often comes a moment in the history of an immortal soul

WHEN THE CHOICE IS MADE—

calmly, quietly, definitely, alas! often irrevocably made—for eternity.

Orpah and Ruth had lived together for a long time, but now every second took them further away from each other for time and eternity. Reader, make up your mind to come to Christ *now*. If you will have a little more of this world, and the pleasures of this present life, the end will be, by-and-by, that your lips may utter those solemn words, "*The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.*" If you are going to be saved, now is the time, and with all the energy of my soul I urge you to decide now. You have heard the gospel over and over again, but you have never bowed to it. It has never gripped

you, never broken you down, never brought you to decision. You may have been impressed with its beauty, its value, its divinity, but it has never brought your heart to know Christ as your Saviour, your Lord, and your Friend. Now be in earnest; do not miss the blessing this time.

A WORD TO BACKSLIDERS.

What led to this scene? Why did Elimelech (figure of a Christian) and Naomi, his wife, go to Moab? There was a famine in Bethlehem-judah. The meaning of Bethlehem is "house of bread"—they lived in the "house of bread," but they could not trust God in a day of difficulty, so they went to Moab, figure of a backsliding Christian going into the world. How many a one has done that! How many parents have done it! Are you there now, and your family? No wonder your sons have married ungodly girls, and your daughters are allied with ungodly young men. No wonder the hand of God comes in upon families, as it did in this case.

What did they get in Moab? A little relief for the moment from the oppression of the famine, and *then*—three graves, and a broken heart. Naomi's husband is taken, that is the first thing. Moab was the enemy of God, and He had said, "*A Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even to their tenth generation*" (Deut. xxiii. 3). Do you think He expected His people to go down and be friendly with Moab? Certainly not. "*Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with*

God?" (Jas. iv. 4). The Christian ought to be a separate person, a witness for God.

What witness could Elimelech give in Moab for Jehovah? If there is a person under the sun that the world despises it is a backsliding Christian. A backslider is a disgrace to God, and a stumbling-block to others.

SINNERS WILL STUMBLE OVER SUCH

into hell, and then lay the credit of it at their door.

God calls on the heavens to witness the awfulness of backsliding. "*Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid. . . . For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water*" (Jer. ii. 12, 13). Was there any joy or peace in Naomi's heart in Moab? Oh! it was soon spent. Young believer, do not let the world beguile or entrap you. You say, "I must get on in it." No, you must get *through* it. I have seen many, bright and earnest to begin with, but they thought they must get on, and they set themselves to get a little bit of money in their pockets, and got a good bit of misery in their hearts. It is like a canker that has corroded everything, and they have lost the sweetness of the love of Christ. If that is your state, my reader, get back to the Lord. He has missed you, and He wants you back. The Father has missed you from the family, the Shepherd has missed you from the flock, and the Saviour has missed you from His side. Return, you

will find Him ever the same. You know the road, for you came to Jesus years ago, but the world has come in, and your face is now the picture of misery while the world points the finger and says, "There is one of your converts."

Backsliding is indeed a serious thing. Peter backslid very seriously, but the Lord recovered him. Naomi got recovered by the sense of the grace of God. You may be recovered. The way is open. Naomi's two boys, whom she had led into Moab, took to them wives of that district, idolaters. Marriage is a very serious step for a Christian; very blessed if it be in, and of, and for the Lord, but very serious, if it is not. These young men had remarkable names, Mahlon, meaning "sick," and Chilion, meaning "wasting away." Soon we find they die. Thus Naomi was bereft of her two sons and her husband—first, of the one who was the pillar and support of her life down there, and then of her sons also (*see* Ruth i. 5). I pity Naomi, while feeling the gravity of her conduct—everything was gone. Death took all the light out of her life.

Is all the light gone out of *your* life, backslider? The light is still in heaven—Christ is there, the unchanging One, and your folly and sin in turning away from Him do not alter Him one bit. Naomi learnt the grace of God, and was restored, and you should, too. "*Then she arose.*" God had been compelled to strip her; it was love that did it, and then at length she turned to go to Bethlehem. What moved her? Not only the pressure of death, but

there was the other side. She heard "*that the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread.*" She heard of the goodness of the Lord. And, if you are miserable, the Lord is the same—come back to Him now, return to His tender heart. He has not a word of rebuke for you. He has got a look for you such as He gave to Peter. He denied his Lord, and was cursing and swearing and denying all association with Him, and "*the Lord turned and looked upon Peter.*" What kind of a look did He give him? A look of withering scorn? Nay, a look of broken-hearted love, which seemed to say, "You don't know Me, but I know you." His heart was broken by that look, "*and Peter went out, and wept bitterly*" (Luke xxii. 62).

His heart was

TOUCHED BY THE LOVE OF CHRIST,

and what but the love of Christ will put *you* right? Nothing. You will never put yourself right, and nobody else will put you right, but if you get in your soul the sense, He loves me as deeply and tenderly as ever, that will put you right. So was it with Naomi. "*Then she arose.*" Let us have a look at them starting. Naomi says, "I am going back to Judah and Jehovah—back to God's people." Was that right? Quite right. Her face was set in the right direction. When Orpah and Ruth saw her going, they said, "*Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.*" Do you think, dear unsaved reader, because there are backsliders you should not be a believer? That is

immense folly. You do not refuse a good bank-note because there are forgeries about. Are there failures among Christians? Admitted; but don't let that hinder your coming to Jesus.

You have not come out very distinctly for Christ yet, but your face perhaps is in the right direction. People thought that Ruth and Orpah were both going with Naomi, but no—the links with the world were not really broken for Orpah. Naomi says, "*Go, return each to her mother's house*" (ver. 8). It seems almost incomprehensible why she said this, but

THE BANEFUL EFFECT OF BACKSLIDING

comes out in these words. She had got worldly-minded, her spiritual vision had got dulled, and therefore she says, "*Turn again, my daughters*" (ver. 11). I do not doubt that what led to Ruth's determination was the light she had got from Naomi. There had been a little bit of light carried to her poor widowed heart, I have no doubt. Naomi added, "*The Lord deal kindly with you*"—you stay there in Moab, but I am going to Bethlehem. I would not so speak to you. I am going heavenwards, and the end of the road I am on is where Jesus is, and would I tell you to go back to the world? No, not I. I would urgently invite you to go with me. We are going to a land of wonderful blessing; come and join Christ's band, His company; come to Him, whom to know is life eternal.

It is a great thing to be a Christian, and to know Christ. Perhaps you are saying I would like to be a

Christian. Mark Naomi's words, "*Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me?*" All your worldly prospects will be blighted, was the meaning of her words in verses 12, 13. Do you ask, "If I become a Christian, will all my worldly prospects be blighted?" Perhaps. Moses, when he came 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*" (Heb. xi. 24, 25). Wise man! Happy choice! What are you doing—enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season? That will not do for me—I want

"PLEASURES FOR EVERMORE,"

and I must go where Christ is to get them. Moses turned his back on everything here, for he endured, "*as seeing Him who is invisible.*" He had his eye on eternal realities. Ruth saw them also; Orpah did not. If you turn to the Lord your life will be greatly changed, as a matter of course. My earthly prospects were dashed in the hour of my conversion, but I have better prospects—association with Christ, and I want you to come and join me. I am on the road to everlasting glory, and I should like you to go with me. Naomi truly said in effect to her daughters—"If you go with me your earthly prospects may be ruined." But Ruth's were not, for wherever there is faith God always gives blessing. She became the wife of Boaz, and an ancestress of the Lord Jesus Christ, when in

grace He — the Lord of Glory — became a man. Wondrous grace! How came she in? She had

FAITH IN THE LIVING GOD,

and when Naomi says, "Go back," she says, "Not a bit of it—I have had enough of Moab; I am going to the living God." Boaz says to her later on, "*The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust*" (chap. ii. 12).

What was in Ruth's mind when she left Moab? She said, "I am going to shelter under the wings of the God of Israel." Not so Orpah as she kissed her mother-in-law. Orpah means "fawn," and it is the most easily frightened animal under the sun. Are you an Orpah—frightened at the prospect of having your prospects spoiled? Go on in your sins, and you are bound to be damned, there is the blackness of darkness for ever before you. Orpah, so to speak, says, "I didn't quite realise what I was going in for, and my worldly prospects may be influenced by it," so she said "Good-bye," and they kissed each other. They are brought to a point, and Orpah turns back. You have had the blessedness of knowing Christ put before you, and have you never made up your mind yet? Ruth cleaves to Naomi, who says, "*Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law.*"

Perhaps there are two of my readers that have come to a certain point together, side by side, and now there will be a cleavage—one of you is turning

back. You say, "I will call a halt," and the one by your side is saying, "I will go on. God's salvation is not all clear yet, but I want it, and I must have it." Orpah went back to her people and her gods. Follow her not. The greatest danger young people have is their relations and their religion—idolatry in that day. Many a young soul gets hindered by the thought, "If I get converted what will father and mother say? What will my friends and relations say? What will be the effect?" Think not of them. I want your heart for Christ, out-and-out, and you to be

A DOWNRIGHT, DECIDED CHRISTIAN,

a lover of Jesus, a witness for Jesus, and a servant of Jesus, not a backboneless creature, a sort of moral jelly-fish.

There are a great many jelly-fish young people nowadays; they are swayed by the tide. I want you to be a downright lover of Christ, and follower of Christ, standing for Him where you live and where you work, that everyone may know that Jesus has saved you, washed you from your sins, purged your conscience, and filled your heart to overflowing with joy and peace. He sits now on God's right hand in glory, and He can do that. Orpah disappears in the distance, going back to her people and her gods. She has turned her back on the Saviour, on the land of light and blessing. She has gone back to idolatry, she has chosen the world, and we never hear of her again. Be warned by her example and fate.

Let us follow Ruth a little. Naomi says to her,

"Return thou after thy sister-in-law." "No," says Ruth, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (vers. 16, 17).

DECISION FOR CHRIST

is expressed in these words. There is something morally very fine about this. Is that what you are saying now? Then you have been brought to the point of *decision for Christ*. I am going to glory, I am to be with Jesus for ever—what say you? "*Where thou lodgest, I will lodge.*" I don't suppose Ruth found very comfortable quarters sometimes.

"The road may be rough, but it cannot be long,
So we'll pave it with hope, and we'll cheer it with song."

It is a grand thing to be on the road to heaven. No matter how many brakes and briars you have to get through, the end of it is with Christ in glory. The road to hell is very smooth, and easy, and quiet. You need not stir; just go quietly on as you are now in your sins, and Satan will give you a nice, easy berth on the road, and at the end the blackness of darkness for ever. Ruth says, "Your company is what I want—'*Thy people shall be my people.*'" I like when a person says, "I see what Christians have—they have got Christ, they are the people of God." Like Moses, they make up their mind, "*choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.*"

Who are God's people? Sinners saved by grace, who know Jesus as their Saviour. "*Thy God, my God,*" was Ruth's motto. She had heard enough about the blessed God to make her want to have Him, and have not *you* heard enough about Jesus to desire to be His? He drank the cup of judgment for us, went down into death, yea, into the grave, was raised from the dead, and is now gone up on high? Surely you would fain be like Thomas when he said,

"MY LORD AND MY GOD"?

I call that proper decision.

Orpah made a wrong decision. She and Ruth parted company, never more to meet. There may read this paper two souls that perhaps have known each other many a long day, and now have come to the point of decision, and one says, "I am not going to give in"; and the other says, "By the grace of God I will make up my mind for Christ *now*." One is decision in the wrong direction, and the other is decision for Christ. One is a fatal choice. Oh! reader, decide for Christ.

Ruth's decision is grand. "*Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.*" She wanted to be with God's people, and have the living God as her God. This decision closed Naomi's mouth. "*When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her*" (ver. 18). It was high time that she did. If you have made up your mind for Christ, I am content, I have no more to say. W. T. P. W.

AFRAID TO THINK.

“ALAS! sir,” said Doctor Johnson, speaking of grand houses, fine gardens, and splendid places of amusement, “alas! sir, these are only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh, it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind such as I never experienced anywhere else; but, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in that brilliant circle that was not *afraid to go home and think.*” * * *

A REMARKABLE PRAYER.

HE was an old decrepit workman whom we visited in an almshouse.

We prayed together, and, at my request, leaning back in his easy-chair, he prayed for me in terms I have never forgotten.

“God bless him! Make him like the candlestick—beaten gold. Help him to say like the sailor when he rounds a dangerous point, ‘All is well.’ If Thou make him useful, Thou wilt give him trials; but it’s gran’ cross-bearing when it’s tied on wi’ love.”

ANON.

THE BOAT AT ANCHOR.

OFTEN from my window, on the seashore, I have observed a little boat at anchor. Day after day, and month after month, it is seen at the same spot. The tides ebb and flow, yet it scarcely moves; while many a gallant vessel spreads its sails, and catching the favouring breeze has reached the distant port, this little bark moves not from its accustomed spot.

True it is, that when the tide rises, it rises; and when it ebbs again, it sinks; but it advances not. Why is this? Approach nearer and you will see. It is fastened to the earth by one slender rope. Here is the secret. A cord scarcely visible holds it, and will not let it go.

Now, professing Christian, see here your state—the state of thousands. Lord's Days come and go, but leave you as before; ordinances come and go, but leave you as before; ministers come and go—means, privileges, sermons move you not. Yes, they move you—a slight elevation by a Lord's Day tide, and again you sink; but no onward, heavenward movement. You are remote as ever from the haven of rest; this week is as the last; this year as the past. Some one sin enslaves, enchains the soul, and you will not let it go. If it be so, snap it asunder; it must be, else it shall be thy eternal ruin. It stands between thee and eternal life.

* * *

"UNTO THE UTTERMOST."

A PREACHER of the gospel, about to set forth on his glorious errand, asked me if I could find the tune for the hymn, of which the refrain is, "*Jesus saves.*"

We searched a little, and found it was No. 473 in the "Sacred Songs and Solos" Hymn Book, and after singing it together, he went forth to tell out once more the sweet old story, while I, kept at home by illness, have thought that I might write it, if perchance it shall thus reach some one, who was not within hearing of the preacher's voice.

I do not now address myself to the young, the glad, the prosperous, but to the sin-stained, the way-worn, the tempest-tossed. I wonder for whom my little message is intended. It is very short, very simple, only two words, and yet how full of meaning are they.

"JESUS SAVES."

He was so named of the angel. We read, "*Thou shalt call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins*" (Matt. i. 21). He saves "from sins," "out of distresses," "unto the uttermost."

Perhaps it is for that miner on yonder far-away Australian digging. How hard you toil! day in, day out, Sundays and week-days. Refreshing rains and burning suns are alike to you. The lust of gold is on you, and to it you have sacrificed everything—

home, health, friendships, all that makes life sweet and gracious. The prey of the devil, you are losing the semblance of humanity, in the mad quest of gold, always more gold, you must have gold. You were not always thus. Your sisters still point out to each other the place in the old church at home, where, as a boy, you knelt to pray. In the silent churchyard your mother sleeps, her prayers as yet unanswered.

Do you never stop, and think what must be the end of it all? that if you should die with both hands full of your hardly gotten treasure, it could not carry you

ONE STEP OVER THE THRESHOLD OF TIME?

I cannot speak to you face to face, and say in your ear those two sweet words, “*Jesus saves.*” I cannot do this, but let me stretch out a hand across the seas, and offer you this little book with its pleading message, “*Jesus saves,*” even you. Oh! I am yearning over your soul, your dear ones long over you, as you sit at night in your desolate hut. Jesus longs over you, waits for you; only believe in Him, only receive Him, only cry aloud to Him, “*Lord, save me, I perish,*” and you shall surely prove that He saves from sins, and the prey shall be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered.

I cannot tell who beside may read my words. A drunkard, perhaps groaning at the wreck his sin has caused, yet bound by a chain he cannot break; a forlorn and outcast woman, helpless and hopeless; a gambler staking his life on the table, or at the race-

course. Alas! poor man, who shall describe the fever in his veins? the wild restlessness urging him on? the depths of despair into which a reverse of fortune may at any moment plunge him? the iron grip in which his ruthless enemy holds him? but to each the message comes, *Jesus saves*, JESUS SAVES. Is it not good news that there is such a mighty Deliverer, who has fought and conquered your foe, who has purchased at the cost of His own life the right to set you free? Yes, *Jesus saves*, by virtue of His atoning blood, by the power of His holy name, and by the working of His all-subduing Spirit.

Blessed Saviour, thy freed ones worship Thee. "We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord."

But I have said that "He saves out of distresses." Will you, my reader, take your Bible and turn to Psalm cvii.? There you will find mentioned very many of the trials and griefs under which men groan—hunger, thirst, loneliness, weariness, sickness, adversity. And you may read the brief but pregnant statement, four times repeated in nearly identical words, "*Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses.*"

I do not know what is the special distress that afflicts you at this moment, but I know that you may turn to the Lord with it, and that He is the same to-day, as able to deliver now, as in those distant days when the Psalmist wrote. Will you unburden your heart to Him, and wait quietly, trustfully for His answer?

It may be that the boon you so earnestly desire would prove but an apple of Sodom, turning to dust in your hands, or there may be, unconsciously to yourself, an unreadiness or unfitness to receive, and God waits, patiently, pitifully, tenderly, until His end is reached in you, then He will send deliverance, and you shall cry aloud with joy, "*He saveth out of distresses, . . . He maketh the storm a calm, . . . Oh! that men would praise the Lord.*"

Some one, however, may remind me that there are some sorrows from which there is no deliverance this side the grave. The ruined health can never be restored. The lost fortune never be recovered. Jacob shall halt on his thigh, and Paul suffer the thorn in the flesh to the end of the pilgrim path. True, but there is something even greater than deliverance from the trouble—being sustained in it—to be made so conscious of the Lord's support, and the sufficiency of His grace, that the heart is satisfied, and the saint worships, leaning on the staff with Jacob, or taking pleasure in infirmity with Paul. This is being saved to the uttermost, up, and up, through every stage of the earthly journey, through every phase of soul-history, higher, and higher yet, until the Saviour presents the believer faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy.

May you, my reader, make acquaintance with this mighty Saviour, and receive His wonderful salvation, for His eternal praise, and for your own soul's present and never-ending joy.

"WE WOULD SEE JESUS."

SUCH was the desire expressed by certain visitors to Jerusalem, when our Lord was upon earth (*see* John xii. 21). They were among the last of whom such a desire was recorded, and what their motive was the sacred record does not tell us.

Zacchæus "sought to see Jesus who He was" (Luke xix. 3), surmounting every obstacle. He did see Him, and learned from His own lips that He was the Saviour of lost sinners (*see* verse 10), therefore He just suited him.

Herod had long desired to see Jesus (*see* Luke xxiii. 8-11), and he did see Him; but, I fear, throughout a long eternity he will bemoan the fact that he missed the opportunity of a life-time. An unbeliever in His person, a rebel against His authority, and a sceptic as to His power, he merely sought to gratify his curiosity, but the Lord Jesus Christ had not a word to say to him. One day the tables will be turned, and as the Son of God He will have to say to Herod, and remind him of that never-to-be-forgotten time. In that day Herod will be speechless.

To-day we, true believers on the Lord can say,

"WE SEE JESUS"

(Heb. ii. 9), Him who died, and, by His death, settled once and for ever the question of sin, expressed God's love, declared His righteousness, glorified His name, annulled death, and broke the power of Satan.

He, who was raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father, is now the mighty Conqueror at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour, and through the opened heavens we look up and see Him there.

The proud, blaspheming Saul of Tarsus got one look. It altered the whole course of his life. He was looking, looking ever after, and the whole theme of his ministry was that wonderful, glorious Person on the throne of God. He is the Eternal Son of the Eternal God, and every believer in Him can add, “That glorious person is my precious, personal Saviour.” Reader! is He *yours*?

Then there is that which is still future :

“EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM”

(Rev. i. 7). First, at His coming into the air for His blood-bought people — an event which may take place at any moment — when they will be changed into His likeness (Phil. iii. 20, 21), then faith, by which He is seen now, will give place to sight, “and they shall see His face” (Rev. xxii. 4). Fellow-Christians! can you imagine what it will be like? We shall actually see the One who loved us and died for us; who loves us and lives for us; whose glories and beauties the Holy Spirit has been revealing to us; we shall be with Him; we shall hear His voice: we shall gaze and gaze again upon His face, and—

*“Then, while we look and wondering gaze,
We'll fill the heavens with endless praise.”*

Reader! will you be there?

Second, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to the very world where He was—and is—rejected. Enoch, that saint of God of whom we read in Genesis v. 21-24, prophesied of it :

“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (Jude 14, 15).

Prophets foretold it ; the Lord Jesus Christ Himself proclaimed it ; apostles preached it, and the closing pages of the canon of Scripture announce it :

“Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him” (Rev. i. 7).

Herod will see Him, the blaspheming thief will see Him, Felix will see Him, Voltaire will see Him, Tom Paine will see Him, Colonel Ingersoll will see Him ; and, unsaved reader, YOU *will see Him*. You do not believe it ? That does not alter the fact. As well might the criminal awaiting his trial for murder protest that he will not see the judge before whom he is to be arraigned ; in fact, his case is less certain than yours, for he might die, or the judge might die ; but the Lord of Glory lives to die no more. No matter where your dust may be, death will yield you up at the bidding of the Son of God. *Your eyes shall look into His eyes ; your ears shall hear His voice ; your lips shall acknowledge His authority ; your knees shall bow in His presence, and with the awful memory of it all haunting you, you will pass from His presence to an eternity of woe.*

Reader! “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace” (Job xxii. 21). Hear His voice saying, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else” (Isa. xlv. 22). Bow to His claim; own His authority; believe on His name; rest on His work. Do not say like Balaam, “I shall see Him, but not now. I shall behold Him, but not nigh” (Num. xxiv. 17): for the Holy Ghost saith, “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). Then here and now, with nought to commend you but your sins, come to Jesus. He has said, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37). Trust Him, for God’s Word says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31). Confess Him, for the testimony of Holy Scripture—confirmed by the experience of millions of sinners saved by grace—is that,

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. x. 9).

And then:—

“THINE EYES SHALL SEE THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY” (Isa. xxxiii. 17).

*“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.”*

RECEPTION OF CHRIST'S TESTIMONY.

IF any credible person should bring us a story, we should very properly believe him, and be influenced, more or less, by the story he brings.

That is a common part of our daily life; but a report has been brought to us by One, whose word may not be questioned, even our Lord Jesus Christ; and one of the effects produced in the soul by the hearty reception of His report is that "*God is true.*"

Now, this may seem very strange, because we would take for granted that such a fact is never questioned. Surely the unerring truthfulness of God is owned by all His intelligent creatures!

Stranger still is the fact that the very opposite is the case! Man does not believe God, but has been guilty, alas! of rank unbelief ever since "the serpent beguiled Eve."

Awful fact—the Creator is discredited by the creature, and, by him, "the truth of God is changed into a lie."

Such is

THE TERRIBLE RESULT OF SIN.

Let us not, in pride of heart, refuse this great exposure. It really lies at the bottom of all wisdom. Let it be said reverently that, if man be right, then God is wrong; but this being impossible, "let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 4).

Any system of doctrine, which is not reared on the absolute truthfulness of God, and the authority of His word on the one hand, and on the total falsity of man on the other, is a system of error and to be refused. Ah! this may humble our natural pride, and cause feelings of revolt to work in us; but the solemn fact remains, and will be demonstrated in the clear light of the Day of Judgment (*see Rom. iii. 4*).

The first thing to learn is that "*God is true.*" Now the words before us are these — "He that hath received this testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (*John iii. 33*).

What is Christ's testimony in the chapter from which we quote?

First, He describes to Nicodemus the complete ruin of man by telling him that except on the ground of new birth, none can see God's kingdom. Thus man is put aside as utterly worthless. Amendment is of no use;

THERE MUST BE A NEW BIRTH.

His nature is so tainted, vile, fallen, false, that God must start with him *de novo* — afresh, anew — in order that he should be fit for His holy presence. So much for man; but now, secondly, the Lord declares the love of God to man as he is. "God loved the world," the world, as such, fallen, rebellious, guilty, God-hating—that was the kind of world He loved, giving proof thereto by the gift of His Son, and His

lifting up on the cross in all its infinite agony and grace.

But why this awful cross? Why must the Son of man thus be lifted up?

To make atonement.

THIS WAS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

because of our sins and the outraged throne of the Creator; but beside that, and here is the testimony so worthy of reception, while it shows what man is, it also makes known all that God is, in love and light, in grace and holiness, in compassion and truth! Hence He adds — “He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John iii. 21). In God there is no darkness at all. His is a nature as infinite in holiness as in love. “God is true.” The cross—that wonderful cross—explains it all. There we see boundless love to the sinner, but also the judgment due to him falling on the blessed willing Victim and Substitute. There is the grand solution of the universal riddle, the key which opens the door of doubt, the divine settlement of the dark question of sin, the solid foundation of peace with God and hopes of glory. Other there is absolutely none!

Such, so far, is the testimony to be received. On its reception the once-guilty conscience can gladly and adoringly own that “God is true.”

Then, if God is true, what is man? What, dear reader, are you? What am I?

Let Calvary explain it all.

J. W. S.

PRIVILEGE: A BLESSING OR
A CURSE.

“**A**NYTHING in my line, ma'am?”

The speaker was an old woman with a hawker's basket on her arm, who had crossed the road to ask me to buy.

“I have only taken twopence since I left home this morning,” she continued; “and that the Lord knows.”

Surprised I said, “You used the name of the Lord. What do you know of Him?”

With a very emphatic shake of her head, and in a decided tone of voice came the answer, “*He's my Saviour.*”

“How do you know?”

Again came the decided answer, “The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from *all* sin. God says it, and bless His name for His mercy to me, I believe it, and I'm saved.”

“You are quite right,” I replied, “it is the same precious blood that has cleansed away *my* sins, so you and I are fellow-believers. But how long have you known this?”

“I'm just six years old, ma'am, come Michaelmas. Please God, I live so long, I shall be sixty-four, but I'm only a babe for I've only lived six years. The fifty-eight years of my life before that I spent in serving Satan. I was *dead* in my sins, but, bless God, He showed me His blessed Son shedding His

blood for *sinner*s, and I knew I was a sinner, and I heard the message, 'The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth . . . from *all* sin.' Not a few sins, ma'am, but *all*. I believed it, and I know all my black history is wiped out, all covered by the blood of my precious Saviour. That's just upon six years ago, so you see I'm only a babe.

"I often sit down to think, and it seems to me that spiritual things are very like natural things. At first when a babe is born, it can only *cry*. Well, I cried, and *God heard me*. Then the babe gets a little stronger, and begins to *crawl*, and that is where I am now. I'm very ignorant, but I know that God—the great God up there—is my Father, and His blessed Son up there in the glory is my Saviour."

I replied, "You are thinking about the scripture in the First Epistle of John, where the apostle speaks of the babes, young men, and fathers."

"No, ma'am, I never heard about that. What is it?"

"But, of course, you read your Bible?"

"Ah! I wish I could. I don't even know my letters. I've tried to learn, but I'm too old, so I goes to the mission-room, and gets them to read it to me, and if you tell me where it is about the babes and young men, I'll ask them to read it to me."

The very next day, on the very same spot, I met a lady, who was most particular in reading a portion of Scripture each day with her household, and in private too. She was well acquainted with the

letter of Scripture. She said to me, "I'm going to see Aunt L——. She's a wonderful old woman—ninety-four years old, and still trots about. I hope I shall live as long, but I fear I shan't. *I don't want to go to heaven.* I'd like to stay here. Earth's not such a bad place after all, and I'm quite happy here. I'm in no hurry to go to heaven."

The above two accounts of conversations were sent me. They afford a striking contrast. Alas! with all her knowledge of Scripture this lady knew not the Saviour. With all her familiarity with the Bible, she had not believed its truths. She had a name to live but was dead. With a Bible every day in her hand she was blindly, religiously pursuing her way to hell. What an awakening, alas, would be hers.

The old hawker could not read, yet she was a true child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. The lady who could read, and did read, had the advantage, but she did not profit by it. The old hawker was at a great disadvantage, but she overcame the disadvantage. Happy old woman! with all her poverty, she was truly rich. Are you?

How happy it is that "*faith cometh by HEARING, and hearing by the Word of God*" (Rom. x. 17). Reader, have you heard yet? Not merely heard with your *outward* ears, but with the ear of the heart. Have you heard to pay attention? Have you heard so as to receive the blessed message of

salvation? Are you among those "*who believe to the saving of the soul?*" (Heb. x. 39).

The Jews were familiar with the Scriptures. *Outward* knowledge of the Scriptures they had, and—*no life*. Knowledge of the Word of God, and—refusing Him of whom it spoke.

On the same lines the Apostle Paul asks the question, "*What advantage then hath the Jew?*" He answers his own question, "*Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*" In other words they had the Scriptures. But an advantage not profited by is worse than no advantage at all.

Imagine a heathen in a lost eternity. In life he has never seen a Bible, never heard of Jesus, never heard the gospel. Imagine yourself in a lost eternity. What would be your feelings, if you reflected that hundreds of times you had held the Bible in your hand—the Bible telling so plainly of God's judgment on sin, and of the gracious provision for the sinner's blessing He has provided in the Saviour—the Bible warning you so plainly of hell, and inviting you so warmly to heaven. Far better be in the position of the poor heathen, if such should be your fate.

For you are running tremendous risks. Be wise, and let your advantages prove to be to your everlasting blessing, or else the neglect of them will be to your everlasting sorrow and shame. "*Behold, NOW is the day of salvation; behold, NOW is the day of salvation*"—just as you read these lines!

A TRAIN MISSED AND AN OPPORTUNITY CAUGHT.

I HAVE had another new experience: I missed the train yesterday, for the first time in my life. The cabman came to the house twenty-five minutes after the time appointed, and I just stepped into the Port Elizabeth station in time to see the train steam out.

The post-cart at Barroe could not be detained at this end; but my brother telegraphed for a private cart, and I travelled by the next train. This happened to be a "goods" leaving Uitenhage at 1.15.

The stationmaster at Port Elizabeth was very kind. He telegraphed to Uitenhage, and when A—— and I arrived, the stationmaster there had ordered the new guard's van to be attached, telling us that he could not put on a carriage for fewer persons than six.

The van was almost empty, and I was not at all uncomfortable. The guard and I sat opposite one another on cushioned seats with cushioned backs. He gave all the respectful attention he could spare, taking quite a lively interest in the distribution of my little packets of books among the folk in the cottages by the way. Once he jumped up of his own accord, swung himself round, grabbed a packet from my seat, and threw it into a doorway. After that a man, who attends to the water supply, came aboard for a seven miles' ride.

Previously the English guard and I had had a scrappy conversation on the lack of congenial company in the country. I told him I did not miss all that he said other passengers with whom he had conversed would miss: for *circumstances* did not entirely make my life; that I had life and interests apart from circumstances here, and in spite of them.

When he appeared interested, I spoke of God's *Light* and *Life* coming in the person of His Son, the Lamb of God, in John i.; of the *new capacity* in chapter iii., and *eternal provision and safety* in chapters iv. and x.; then why that life could never be lost—for He is our life—showing how He must have His own with Himself at His coming.

Then the waterman got in. Thinking the guard might weary of my conversation, I rose and stood on one side of the door of the luggage compartment to speak to the man within. He had his head tied up, and appeared ill, so I inquired and let him talk.

He spoke of the water and difficulties connected with it, &c.

I remarked that even this common thing is not lasting here.

"No," he said, "nothing is, we must have something better."

"What is that?"

"Contentment."

"How is that obtained?"

"By love and fear."

Here the guard leaned forward with his face in his hands listening intently. The sun had gone, and the

afternoon light had waned. The man began to speak with more vigour.

“Love and fear of what?” I inquired.

“God.”

“But love and fear are effects, not causes. They are feelings produced by something.”

“Yes, but love and fear will give you contentment.”

“Indeed? Have you got it?”

“Well, not in the way you mean.”

I had *said* nothing about it, but asked again, “Well, how are you going to get it?”

“By doing my best.”

“But that would be like a man going to his creditors, and offering to pay all his *future* debts to clear away the heavy debt of the *past*. Would this *honestly* clear him?”

“No.”

“You are underestimating the righteousness of God; He ‘requireth that which *is past*,’ that you may have a clear book and be *justified*.”

“True,” he said, and then with bent head as though recalling something slowly to memory, he added, “Well, what about this: ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as wool’?”

“That is an effect also.”

“Yes: but it is not a feeling, is it? It is written.”

“Yes, thank God, it is written: but it is an effect, and

HERE IS THE CAUSE—

‘*The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin.*’ If this and this alone can cancel *all*

your debt, and God can justify you *freely* by His grace, where does your '*doing*' come in?"

"Ah! I don't know."

"Throw all your thoughts down at His feet, and ask for His. Do you think He did not fully estimate *you*, and your sins, when He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood in His agony before going to the cross? . . . When He took up the question of human state and its fruit with God, could He forget anything? Do you think He, who knows all, would trouble to suffer as He did for only *some* of your sins?"

The poor old man listened with bowed head, and the guard sat in the same position, so I continued—
"You undertake to work. Well, nothing short of perfection will suit the holy God. Listen! the Lord Jesus trod this earth in a perfectly pure way from His birth. He grew up in favour with God; God was 'well pleased' with Him in all the scenes in which He was found. He passed through Gethsemane (the depth of His suffering it is not possible to know). He passed through the scenes of judgment at man's bar; He was set upon, and yet He stood with closed lips. Let a man strike you, and keep your hands still. Let men say you are of the devil, and curse not; let them lay the burden of another's cross upon *you*, and how would you behave? . . . But, thank God, you were not found there, but Jesus was—in your place, for as man He rendered to God all that was due from man: and He took the wages of sin. 'It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul':

for this reason you may take the words you quoted to your own heart. You have never thanked Him?"

He stood convicted. I went on to speak of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and His risen life, and the way to Him, and sought to lead His heart into personal contact with Himself.

After I had sat down again, he said, "Your journey is a long one."

I replied: "My destination in this world may be farther off than the glory of which I spoke. I am quite certain of the latter, but not of the former. I've no hope in my own doings, that's why; and no doubt you would be ready to believe that a sheltered home-life such as mine has been purer than yours?"

"Yes, indeed."

"No more reliance could be placed on such works as mine, any more than on the reformation of a drunkard."

Afterwards I learned that he had been fond of drink, and had given it to engine-drivers also.

Unconverted reader, the Lord Jesus is a *present*, living Saviour, who will not only save you from that which is *past*, but in the *present* and from the *future*. That long, awful PAST: full of general and detailed sin that you dare not look back upon. The PRESENT: with its despairing struggle to get above indwelling sin, and temptation without. The present that slips by to swell the past while you look upon it! And the FUTURE certain looking-for of judgment.

What have you got?

All, all is LOST to *you*, poor unsaved soul :

PAST,

PRESENT,

FUTURE,

LOST!

Why not turn to the Lord before it is too late, and all may be retrieved? You may be saved!

A. J. W.

ALL TO DO AT DEATH.

ALAS! how many men have their whole work for eternity to do when their hour of death is come! their weapons to look for when the enemy is in the gate! their grace to seek when death is at the door! their oil to buy when the bridegroom is come! the city of refuge to think of when the avenger of blood is upon them! the seven years of plenty wasted, and nothing laid up for eternity.

Let my first care be to be in Christ, and let me by His grace finish all my work, that at last I may have nothing to do but to die; or be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Look at that dying young lady. She looks up to her weeping mother, and says, "You taught me to read, to write, to play, to sing, to dance—you have taught me everything but how to die!" * * *

“THE HEAVY SINNER” CONVERTED.

HE was the very last man one would expect to be affected by the words of any hymn. He was well known as having probably no equal in the little town in which he lived for the wild character of his life, and for the awful language so constantly on his lips.

A few Christians were in the habit of holding gospel meetings at the street corner, and Tom Frost had often been within the sound of their singing.

One Sunday morning one of their number heard that he was ill, and went round after dinner to see him, finding the two Christian men, from whom he had learned of his illness, already sitting by his bedside.

It was easy to see that

A WONDERFUL CHANGE

had been wrought in him. Instead of oaths and curses flowing from his lips, his mouth was filled with praise to God for having saved his soul.

He told them of the deep exercise God had brought him into about his sins, and how heavy the burden had been upon him night and day. Often during the night he was driven out of bed, and forced upon his knees to cry to God for mercy. Thus “the heavy sinner,” as he described himself so graphically, was brought to seek salvation.

He told how these converted men had showed him

from the Word of God that the judgment he so dreaded had been borne on the cross by the Lord Jesus, that "the blood of Jesus Christ His [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). They told him in the words of Scripture, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

He drank in the message, turned to the Lord Jesus in simple faith, and knew on the authority of God's Word that he was saved.

As they sat at the bedside many scriptures were quoted showing the security of the believer, that

THE BELIEVER POSSESSES ETERNAL LIFE,

and has the blessed prospect of being with Christ for ever.

If anyone would like to look at these scriptures, let him refer to the following passages among many which might be cited:—John x. 27-29, iii. 16, v. 24; 1 John v. 13, iii. 2.

The eagerness with which the sick man drank in the statements of God's Word was delightful to see. When the scriptures were read, all so new to him, he would say, "*Is that God's word? then I will back that.*" Would that we all received without a question God's Word! What a lot of needless misery and anxiety would be avoided did we do so!

After a little time he asked for a hymn, which he had often heard at the street corner. He told them how this hymn had got into his mind, and often

when he was drinking and carousing in the public-house he could not get rid of its words.

So they sang, while he sat up in bed, the tears streaming down his cheeks—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
 Drawn from Emmanuel’s veins,
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood
 Lose all their guilty stains.

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

“The dying thief rejoiced to see
 That fountain in his day :
 And there have I, though vile as he,
 Washed all my sins away.

“Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
 Shall never lose its power,
 Till all the ransomed saints of God
 Be saved to sin no more.”

No longer did the words distress and disturb him. His tears were grateful tears of joy.

As his visitors rose to leave, he addressed one of the two Christian men, who had put the way of salvation before him, and who had been a former companion in sin, saying with great earnestness, “*William Kirkup, the first time you preach at the corner, be sure to tell them that Tom Frost, the heavy sinner, is saved.*”

This was faithfully carried out. And no one doubted it, for he lived many weeks, giving full proof of the reality of his conversion to God.

Praise God, this little incident does not stand alone. There are thousands upon thousands of "heavy sinners" who can testify of the saving and keeping grace of Christ. Conversion is a reality. Multitudes can take up the inspired words, and say with triumph, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16).

The day may grow indifferent. Empty profession may be abundant. But there is the real thing. In every country, in temperate and torrid zones, where perennial snow grips the country in its freezing fingers, where the palm tree and orange tree luxuriate under glowing skies, among the noble in their castles and the low in their slums, among the black and the white, the real thing exists. God is no respecter of persons.

But, reader, what about you? Are you converted? Are you saved? Do you know the real thing?

For remember the Lord Himself said, "*Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. xviii. 3). These are solemn words for each unconverted reader of these lines. You see in plain language what lies before you. Die unconverted, and you die without mercy and without hope. Be converted, and your prospect is as happy as Tom Frost's, "the heavy sinner."

Oh! be in earnest about these matters. Have a care for your soul. Do not rest till you have turned to God, for that is conversion.

and fall as you have lived, be concerned about these things. It is not the will of God that you should perish. Take this fact in, notwithstanding what your own heart or Satan suggests. If you perish (and oh! may God grant that you may not), the responsibility will be entirely your own, therefore I call aloud again—

BE IN TIME.

Till now you have been duped, deceived, and cheated out of present, not to speak of eternal happiness, and of giving God joy. God is now offering you in the gospel (His own glad and good news to lost and sinful man) salvation, peace, eternal life.

Pause just a moment, and see what you are missing, and will ever miss, by your neglect of God's love in Jesus. Who is it that is seeking your blessing? God! Think of His greatness, His glory. Remember He is not now demanding, "*This do and thou shalt live,*" but because of a work done He is freely offering, "*without money and without price,*" SALVATION, full and free.

Then, what next? Lay down your arms of rebellion and resistance, and in simplicity hold out the hand of faith, and receive what divine love has provided. If I do this, what takes place? Why, the great transaction is done. I am my Lord's, and He is mine, saved by the blood of the Crucified One, and peace fills my soul.

Transcendent wonder, I see Jesus, whom God delivered for my sins, is now alive again on the

very throne of God without them, every claim met, every question settled, every foe and accuser silenced. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Peace made by Christ, so that nothing can alter or touch it; and not only so, transcendent grace, just like God, He gives *now* to everyone, who believes His love, and receives as a little child what He is freely offering in the gospel—eternal life—as a present portion, so that we can now know, and now enjoy Him, and now live to Him. The Holy Spirit given to us, and filling our hearts, is the power of this wonderful life.

Reader, very soon for you time will be gone. Where will you spend eternity? Instantly I implore of you, believe God's wonderful love. J. R.

 FRAGMENT.

ONE special want of the present moment is brokenness of spirit. Nine-tenths of our trouble and difficulty may be traced to this want. A thousand things, which else would prove more than a match for our hearts, are esteemed as nothing when our souls are in a truly contrite state. We are enabled to bear reproach and insult, to overlook slights and affronts, to trample upon our crotchets, predilections, and prejudices, to yield to others where weighty principle is not involved, to be ready to every good work, to exhibit a genial large-heartedness in all our moral movements, which so greatly tend to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.

“THE TWO WAYS,” AND THEIR END.

(Read Ezekiel xxi. 18-32.)

THIS scripture contains a solemn and striking warning, such as are often given to men by God in His Word. The question is about two ways. It was a question of where the King of Babylon should strike. He stood “at the parting of the way,”

UNCERTAIN WHICH WAY TO TAKE.

The king wanted Jerusalem. To get direction, he had recourse to divination, *i.e.*, he got Satanic help.

Perhaps you do not believe in the power of Satan, you do not believe that Satan can be consulted. There are many other instances besides this in Scripture where men have turned to an occult power—spiritualism—which is Satanic.

Can a person be converted, who has recourse to necromancy and spiritualism? Well, God gives us in His book the story of the conversion of the man who here stands at the parting of the ways—Nebuchadnezzar. Many years after this he was blessedly converted to God through the instrumentality of a godly young Jew named Daniel, I doubt not. The story of his conversion, written by himself, is found in Daniel iv. Spiritualism is not all humbug, it is all of Satan, the positive power of the devil, and always used for misery and sorrow.

What I want you to observe is that there are “two ways,” and the question is, What shall be *the*

end of your way? What is going to be *the end* of your history and mine? It is not a question of what is going to be along the line. No, you come sometime to “the parting of the way,” and, my dear reader, it may be that to-day you are just at “the parting of the way,” and you will either take the road that leads to glory or to gloom.

There is a solemn verse that says, “The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us [professing Christians], what shall *the end* be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Pet. iv. 17). You may depend upon it

WHAT GOD SAYS ALWAYS COMES OUT RIGHT

and true. You have heard the gospel. Have you obeyed it? that is the question. “What shall *the end* be of them that obey not?” Your conscience can tell you what the end will be. These are solemn questions in 1 Peter iv. I want you to ponder this question. I want you to face the end, and I will show you the two ends.

Our Lord speaks most solemnly of a broad and a narrow way. “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). If you are not in the narrow way you are in the broad. Now what is to be the end of your course? You say, I have

not yet got to the end. But you may be nearer the end than you think. You are now in perfect health; but that old archer, Death, may have his arrow already put to the bow, and your heart may be the target. The end is death, and what then? You say, I do not know. God's Word will tell you. He knows the end.

God declares, "I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring *the end* from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isa. xlv. 9, 10).

CARELESS MEN PUT ASIDE THE THOUGHT OF GOD,

but He says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Then He adds, "Hearken unto Me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness" (ver. 12). Are you still a stouthearted sinner far from righteousness? You have not that which will suit God, which you must have if you are to know God. He says, "I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry" (ver. 13). There is a beautiful bit of gospel there. God says to the man that is far off from righteousness, a stouthearted sinner in his sins, If you will listen to Me, I will bring near My righteousness. God says to those that are all wrong, I will put you right.

Now then, again I ask, What about the end—where are you going to spend eternity? You say, I do not know. That will not do; you ought to know,

because God has given us light in His Word. You say, I should like to have a nice end. One would suppose that you and Balaam were old friends. He has a great many followers in this day. Balaam was a prophet, and Balak, the king of Moab, sent for him, and offered him money to come and curse God's people (*see* Num. xxii. 5-7). Balaam was against God's people. The world and Satan were against God's people in that day, as they are in this. "And the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand." They knew that Balaam was in league with Satan. Necromancy is no new thing; and Spiritualism, that is to-day growing rapidly on every hand, has nothing new about it.

You might say, I thought Balaam professed godliness. I answer, He was a man that kept up the

OUTWARD SEMBLANCE OF RECOGNITION OF GOD,

while he was in thorough league with the devil in order to get money. It is terrible the power of money over people. It is written of Balaam, that he "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Pet. ii. 15). He went to Balak, but God took hold of him and made him speak His words. Not only did God make his ass speak, but He made Balaam speak. The ass was the wiser of the two, for he saw judgment coming and shrank from it (*see* Num. xxii. 22-30). You do not believe this story? Very likely not, I do. When God is seen to come in, however, it is wonderful how simple things become. Balaam said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last

end be like his" (Num. xxiii. 10). You say, that is a pious sentiment. Yes, and very easily enunciated.

Balaam said in effect, "These people evidently belong to God; He has separated them (ver. 9), justified them (ver. 21), beautified them (xxiv. 5), and will glorify them (ver. 17); let my *last end* be like theirs." Yes, but if you are going to die the death of the righteous, you must live the life of the righteous. Do you know how Balaam died? With all these

PIOUS PLATITUDES ON HIS LIPS

at this time, his end, as shown in chap. xxxi., was death by the sword—he died fighting against God's people. He gets his character when his end is told in the book of Joshua. "Balaam also the son of Beor, *the soothsayer* [the spiritist], did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them" (Josh. xiii. 22).

Reader, it is of no use to utter these sentimental, pious platitudes about the *end*; what is your relation to Christ *now*? Balaam stands as one of the most awful beacons in Scripture to warn men. His history is intensely solemn. Let him be a warning to you. If you are going to die right, you must live right; and if you are going to live right you must come to Jesus, you must come to close quarters with God's blessed Son.

David spoke about the end of a man in Psalm xxxvii. 37, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for *the end* of that man is peace." Who is

a perfect man? A man that has been brought to know his own utter ruin as a sinner—that he is the most imperfect man under the sun. He is upright because he has found out he is absolutely corrupt. He has found out that his

HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS,

and desperately wicked, and as a result he turns to God and gets his life, his strength, his peace, his joy from the Lord, and he is upheld and sustained by Him, and becomes practically righteous.

Could you show me a man that lived and died like that? I will show you one. Jerusalem, destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, was rebuilt, and the temple too, but the blessed Son of God, when He entered it, was refused, and the gospel not believed. Stephen (*see Acts vi., vii.*) was an upright and perfect man, and gave a wonderful witness for Christ. But he was cast out of the city, stoned, and then died like his Master, saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Was not that a beautiful end? It is the absolute illustration of Psalm xxxvii. 37. Notice now the next verse. "But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: *the end* of the wicked shall be cut off" (Ps. xxxvii. 38). These two verses in the Psalm run side by side. If you have never been brought to know the Lord as your own Saviour, I beseech you to ponder the path of your feet and heed these verses.

King David had a son, a clever, wise man, Solomon, and he wrote a great many proverbs; I want you

to look at one of them. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but *the end* thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12). Dear unsaved reader, I do not doubt that is the way you are in, the way you have taken. You say, I must have a little enjoyment; you do not want to make me sad. No, but read the next verse, "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and *the end* of that mirth is heaviness." You have plenty of laughter, but you know you have not touched

A PERENNIAL SPRING OF JOY

yet, you, that are not yet converted, not yet saved, and do not yet know God. Think of it, unsaved man; think of it, heedless, careless worldling, "*the end* of that mirth is heaviness."

Good is it when the moment comes that a man says, "I am on the *wrong road*, I will turn." You say, How shall we turn? Look at Romans vi. The apostle is talking to believers. He has told them how the Son of God died, and rose again for sinners. You have often heard that, but it has never affected you. You have an immortal soul; when you pass out of this world, where will you go? Man passes out of this scene by death. He does not cease to exist; he lives to God. Are you going to live with Him, or without? Paul says, "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness"—we all did what we liked in days gone by, and the apostle sums it up by saying, "and to iniquity unto iniquity;" then he says, "even so now yield your members

servants to righteousness unto holiness" (ver. 19). "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for *the end* of those things is death" (ver. 21). The end of it all is death, as far as this life is concerned. The end of your life of folly, sin, and self-will is death, sooner or later, and what then? "The great unknown." No, that will not do.

Poor Colonel Ingersoll, the leader of American infidelity, could talk about "the great unknown" till he died, and then he knew his

SORROWFUL FATE FOR ETERNITY.

But the Christian knows now. He knows Christ, knows his sins are forgiven, knows and enjoys salvation, peace, pardon, and eternal life. Further, we read, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and *the end* everlasting life" (ver. 22).

Look steadily at the two ends here. If you now stand "at the parting of the way," and have not taken a step yet, pause—which way are you going? There is not much apparent divergence in the two ways to begin with, but at each step they widen out. What is the end of the broad way trodden by the worldling? Death, and what then? Judgment! Awful end! What is the end of the real Christian? Everlasting life. And what along the road? "Fruit unto holiness."

Unsaved reader, you would not like your life written up for others to read, but God knows it.

He asks, "What fruit had ye *then* in those things whereof ye are *now* ashamed?" (ver. 21). None. Apples of Sodom, if you will. Look at the Christian's life and end. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and *the end* everlasting life." A happy, holy life of serving Christ, and then

THE END—EVERLASTING LIFE

—everlasting life.

Do you say, How can I get it? Listen, "For the wages of sin is death; but *the gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." Will you not have the gift of God? He is a giving God now; He will be a Judge by and by, but He is not that yet.

You are "at the parting of the way" to-day, and Satan is ready to give you a push along the wrong road. Receive the gift of God, and put your feet on the right road. What do you pay for this gift? Nothing. Must I not earn it? No, you cannot earn it, you do not deserve it, but still you may have it to-day. "Eternal life is the *gift* of God." What we cannot earn, He gives in wonderful love. Then,

*"Oh! take, with rejoicing, from Jesus at once
The life everlasting He gives;
And know with assurance thou never canst die,
Since Jesus thy Righteousness lives."*

WHAT PEACE WITH GOD RESTS UPON.

PEACE with God rests on the fact that God finds His satisfaction in what Christ has done on the cross for us. My peace with God depends on His satisfaction in Christ. If God did not rest in Him and His work for me, I could not rest in God. If God's demand in righteousness against me had not been answered, I could have had no warrant for talking of reconciliation, or taking my place in peace before God. I was God's debtor—debtor to die under the penalty He had righteously put upon sin. Christ acted as my Surety with Him. He undertook my cause as a sinner. If God had not been satisfied as to my responsibilities to Him, He would still have a question with me, a demand upon me, and against me.

Therefore I ask, *Has God been satisfied with what Christ has done for me?* I answer, He has, for He has let me know this by the most wondrous, glorious, magnificent testimonies that can be conceived. *He has published His satisfaction in the cross of Christ, in Christ as the Purger of sins*, by the mouth of the most unimpeachable witnesses that were ever heard in a court where justice or righteousness presided to try a matter. He tells me that all His demands against me as a sinner are fully and righteously discharged.

The rent veil declares it. The empty sepulchre declares it. The ascension of Christ declares it,

The presence of the Holy Ghost (gift as He is, and fruit of the glorification of our Surety) declares it.

Were ever such august testimonies delivered on the debating of a cause? Were witnesses of higher dignity, or of such unchallengeable credit, ever brought forward to give in their depositions? Were depositions ever rendered in such a convincing style?

The sequel is well weighed. Peace with God is our condition, a condition settled by God Himself. For if we plead the cross of Christ as our title to peace, God Himself having declared that He and all His demands against us are satisfied in and by that cross, God rests in Christ and so do we.

J. N. D.

FRAGMENT.

IT gives great rest to the heart to know that the One, who has undertaken for us in all our need, and in all the exigencies of our path, from first to last, has first of all perfectly secured, in every respect, the glory of God. In the grand work of redemption, and in all the most minute details of our history, from the starting-point to the goal, the glory of God has the first place in the devoted heart of that One with whom we have to do. At all cost to Himself, He vindicated and maintained the divine glory. For that end He gave up everything. He laid aside His own glory, yielded up His life, in order to lay the imperishable foundation of that glory, which now fills all heaven—shall soon cover the earth, and shine through the wide universe for ever.

C. H. M.