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The Gospel Messenger.

“THIS IS THE SAVIOUR FOR ME.”

WE had decided to erect our Gospel tent in a small Yorkshire town, as notorious for the godlessness and infidelity of its men folk, as for the smoke and grime of its foundries and mills.

We chose a fine summer's evening for this work and had, in consequence, an interested group of on-lookers. One of these said to us, “Why are you putting up your tent here?” We replied, “In the hope that you may be converted, Joe, and when you are we will thank God, and take it somewhere else.” He assured us that we should not get him inside the tent, and walked away.

The man was well known to us, the husband of a woman who had put her trust in the Saviour a few years before, a decent sort of man in his way, but indifferent as to his soul's welfare, and quite regardless of God's claims. How earnestly his wife prayed for him, for she was a Christian of the right stamp, but her prayers and entreaties did not seem to move him from his purpose not to attend the Gospel services. In fact, as the meetings went on, he began to turn more frequently into the public-house, and to return to his home quite drunk more than once a week.

This was unusual and was a great trial to the praying wife and to us who were longing for his salvation.

The summer drew to a close, and the cold, damp autumn evenings made it necessary to draw the meetings to a finish. We decided on one last week, the annual feast week of the town. The people who could do so took a holiday that week and amongst them Joe's wife. He was left at home and spent the time in carousing.

We saw him on the Saturday the worse for drink, and in the same condition again on the Sunday: he continued his potations on Monday and Tuesday. On the latter evening we met him as we walked in the direction of the meeting, and taking him by the arm said, "You would not come to the tent sober, Joe, you must come to it drunk." He protested, but at length we prevailed upon him, and when the service commenced he was sitting amongst the people. We began by singing those lovely words—

"Christ is the Saviour of sinners,
Christ is the Saviour of me;
Long I was chained in sin's darkness,
Now by His grace I am free."

Joe stood up with the audience, but he had to hold tight to the seat in front of him to keep on his feet. But while we sang the chorus—

"Saviour of sinners,
Saviour of sinners like me.
Shedding His blood for my ransom,
This is the Saviour for me,"—

we noticed that the tears began to flow down the

drunkard's cheeks, so we sang it over and over, for his sake. Then came the preaching, from the story of the dying malefactor, who was taken from a gibbet into the paradise of God, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

The word did its work, and at the close Joe sat with his head buried in his hands, sobbing like a child, and saying, "Nothing but Christ will do for me." He passed through the deep waters of repentance, and when the Christian wife returned from her trip to the seaside she found a God-fearing husband awaiting her, anxious to hear the word, and to know, without a question, that all his sins were pardoned by the God whom he had so neglected. And he got that precious knowledge and ere the week was out could sing with joyful heart—

"Long I was chained in sin's darkness,
Now by His grace I am free."

Happy man, and happy wife who had prayed for him so long; happy servant of God too, who had laboured long to win him for the Saviour. But infinitely more happy the Shepherd who had found the sheep, and the Father who had received and kissed the wanderer.

Thus the grace of God continues to win its trophies, and the heart of the once-crucified Redeemer finds it joy, and He sees of the travail of his soul.

Oh, that all who read may know this Saviour and be saved by His grace. That all may say—

"This is the Saviour for me."

"BE AT PEACE."

"Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood; which said unto God, Depart from us; and what can the Almighty do for them? Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me. The righteous see it, and are glad; and the innocent laugh them to scorn. Whereas our substance is not cut down; but the remnant of them the fire consumeth. **ACQUAINT NOW THYSELF WITH HIM**, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart" (Job xxii. 15-21).

THE man who was speaking in this chapter, Eliphaz the Temanite, was not very intelligent about a great deal that he said, but there are some of his words which are very weighty, and I want to draw your attention to them. His point was that there could not by any possibility be peace in a man's heart till he knew God.

"Acquaint *now* thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee" (ver. 21) are weighty words.

I do not deny that when a sinner first begins to think about the Lord, the conscience is troubled, because there is the feeling, I am not right. You had better be troubled now, and get rid of your sins, than carry them into hell, and have eternal trouble. This is, however, splendid advice from Eliphaz. You would not like to die to-night. You say, No, God forbid. Why not? I should have to meet God. Yes, you will have to meet God, how soon I do not know.

By nature we do not know God. Our thoughts

are all wrong. We think Him hard, stern, and vindictive. When unconverted, I used to think the name *God* in the Bible had a black, hard, repulsive look. I did not know Him, or care for Him, I thought He was against me. I know Him now; I wish you did. It would alter your life immensely.

"Thereby good shall come unto thee" is absolutely true. What good? All the good the gospel brings, pardon, peace, forgiveness, the knowledge of eternal life, the sense that you are a child of God. What untold good would come to you if you got to know Christ.

First of all note the query Eliphaz puts. "Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?" (ver. 15). Perhaps you have forgotten it; you had better mark it. "Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflowed with a flood" (ver. 16). You have some doubt about the flood: Eliphaz had none. I have none. Our Lord Jesus Christ had none. He said, "As it was in the days of Noah," &c. Eliphaz was quite right. Did you ever ponder the way of the wicked? They were cut off, and cut off when they least expected it. They were like the present hearers of the gospel, even in Noah's day. People thought him an immense fool, building his vessel hundreds of miles from water. They believed in neither the ark nor the preacher. But they were wrong, and Noah right in the end.

Every treenail Noah drove in told the tale, It is coming. What is coming? Judgment. Enoch had said the Lord was coming to judge this wicked scene,

and Noah, being warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. What moved him? Fear and faith. "By which he condemned the world." How? Because they looked on and saw him preparing to escape coming judgment. Just like you. You have heard of "judgment to come" again and again, and also have heard the gospel scores of times. If you die in your sins you cannot gainsay that you heard the gospel, but you have made light of it.

These men were very bold and defiant, and said to God, "Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?" (ver. 17). I question if they said it outright, but they said it in their hearts and their lives. Yet God was speaking to them, for we read: "Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me" (ver. 18).

Reader, you too have health, strength, comforts, and friends round you, and numberless privileges—where did they come from? You cannot leave God out. In Noah's day they made light of all this, but one day they found the door was shut, and Noah was saved, while they were lost. Beware lest that be your case. Be wise, "Acquaint *now* thyself with him and be at peace." You may say, But I have not got much trouble. No, but you are not at rest. True are the words, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is *no peace*, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. lvii. 20, 21).

But the wicked, who are they? The unconverted.

Not that all are flagrant sinners. Sin is the will of the creature. In the Epistle to the Colossians the apostle Paul speaks of "wicked works," yet I do not suppose the sin was very flagrant. Sin is the will of man at work. There are two words in the Old Testament which describe the two classes—righteous, and wicked. When the wicked own and confess their wickedness, and by faith pass to the Lord's side, God calls them righteous.

Did you ever stand by the seashore in a storm? Note what happens when the tempest lashes the waves? Have you seen what comes after the storm, when all is calm? Mire and dirt are in view. I have sometimes stood by the sea and said, "Will it ever be quiet?" No, it cannot rest. God has declared with regard to the sea it cannot rest. So are the wicked. (*See Isa. lvii. 20, 21.*) No peace.

You are religious, but not at rest. It takes a storm sometimes to break up the dirt at the bottom. It takes a storm in men's lives to bring up what is at the bottom. You have been amazed at what came up. God paints it accurately. Have you rest? Not unless you know the Lord. Have you peace? You say, I have had no great distress in my soul. I have got a kind of peace. Have you? I wonder if it is what the Lord speaks of in Luke xi. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace" (Luke xi. 21). Who is the strong man? I have no doubt it is the god of this world, the devil.

You do not believe in Satan? Do you think he is going to let you believe in his existence? Not if

he can help it. If you believed you were his "goods," and in his "palace," you would not be at peace. The devil is well armed, never better than he is to-day.

Nothing can give true peace but the knowledge of Christ. Satan's armour is his tactics to keep out what God seeks to get into you. The devil's object is to keep God from getting in, because God is seeking to bless you. His palace is the world; it is very well decorated, very well furnished, splendidly got up. Every room in His palace is well looked after by him; he wants to keep his captives, his goods. What a crafty captor you have. What a terrible captivity is the captivity of sin.

Satan will tell you that you are not the person that needs conversion; it is the openly profane, the drunkard, and the like, not a decent, respectable church-goer like you, oh! no. He keeps you in peace. He has got you imbued with the idea you will do for God. You yourself illustrate the truth of the Lord's words, my unsaved, respectable, religious reader.

If God cut you down in your sins, where you are, you would go to hell. God save you now. What a wonderful thing if you woke up to discover that the blessed Lord Jesus Christ had taken up your case, and come in to settle the whole question of your sins, and to raise the right of your captor to hold you. He has paralysed his arm, in order to set the captive free. Hence we read: "But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and over-

come him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils" (ver. 22). Satan was the strong man. Who was the stronger? Jesus the Saviour, mighty to save. None can save you but He.

Take care, lest you are among those that are too good for Jesus; there are many such to-day. They have done nothing very wrong, they have been decent and respectable. You have to learn that sin has put you in the grip of the enemy, and none but the hand of Christ can deliver you. Oh, for the touch of the finger of God to be on you. Christ has come in as the friend of the captive, the friend of those who have been the goods of Satan, and He proposes to deliver you. How did Christ overcome the strong man? I do not doubt that first He overcame him, morally, in the wilderness. He was the victor there, and Satan the vanquished one.

Then, again, in the garden of Gethsemane, Satan drew near and put before Jesus what He must go through if He is to deliver man. In agony, and with strong crying and tears He looks at the cup of wrath and says, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me." Blessed be His name, Jesus, Son of God, Friend of sinners, Victor over Satan, He looked into that cup, measured it, and recoiled from it in the perfection of His holiness. He saw that, if He drank it, it meant the forsaking of God, the bearing of sin, and the judgment of sin upon the cross, and when He had recoiled from it in the holiness of His nature, He went straight to the cross,

took that awful cup, and, in the deep love of His heart, drained it to the very dregs. He put away sin, smote Satan and crippled him. He rose from the dead, and sent down the Holy Ghost to put into our hands the cup of salvation—the sweet news of peace and pardon. What a Saviour. Will you not have Him as *your* Saviour?

But you ask, How can I get peace? What is the foundation of the peace of the believer? Jesus' atoning death. "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar He said, **IT IS FINISHED**: and He bowed His head and gave up the Ghost" (John xix. 30).

John's gospel does not unfold the atoning side of the death of Christ, but it gives us what is the effect of the atonement—peace. Christ, on the cross, took up the whole question of sin, as God knows it. He bore sin, was made sin, and tasted the wrath of God in respect of sin, so that God forsook Him. But at length His voice is heard saying, "It is finished." He came to glorify God, to take up the question of the sinner's sins and blot them out, and what does He then say? "*It is finished.*" There was a ransom to be paid for the sinner's redemption, and here He says, as He offers Himself up, "It is finished." Glad tidings, wondrous legacy of the dying Saviour!

Did you never hear before that Christ's is a finished work, the work of the Saviour for a sinner like you or me? Receive it now, embrace it, take this wonderful legacy. You say, I never had a legacy. Here is one for you. "It is finished." It is the legacy of a dying Saviour to a poor doomed sinner

like you. Embrace it, and you are delivered from the power of Satan, you will get out of darkness into light, from distance to nearness, and be brought to God in perfect peace.

What think you was the effect in heaven when that cry reached it—"It is finished"? I believe heaven was filled with gladness, and hell was filled with trembling. We find later that the Lord rose, came among His disciples, and His words were, "Peace unto you." He made peace, and then He preached peace. He had presented to God that which met all His claims, all His righteous demands. God is satisfied, His righteousness is answered too, and more than that, He has been glorified in the death of His Blessed Son. Satan's power has been broken, death has been annulled, and Jesus has gone on high, but before He went up He came in among His disciples, and said "Peace unto you."

You say, How can I get it? You have no righteousness in yourself, but God has got it for you in the Person and through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and what you have to do is to believe God's testimony, as Abraham believed it in his day. Abraham took God at His word. "And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. iv. 22-24).

How came Jesus among the dead? Love took Him into death, His deep interest in us. He came

to reveal the heart of God, to make God known. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). If He was delivered *for* my offences, I am delivered *from* them. "Therefore being justified *by faith*, we *have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

We get this peace by simple faith. Jesus made it, the Holy Ghost proclaims it, and faith accepts it. Justification is spoken of in three ways in Romans. In chapter iii. 24 we are justified by *grace*; in chapter v. 9 we are justified by *blood*; in chapter v. 1 we are justified by *faith*. God is the spring of it. It comes from God. God has brought all this in, showing Himself on man's side, and bringing man from the devil's grip out of the devil's palace, to His own palace, to the enjoyment of His love, to a scene of unmingled blessedness.

We are justified by Jesus' blood—that is the foundation of peace—the groundwork. Then we are justified by faith—that is our side. There are three parties to my justification. The first is God and His *grace*; the next, Jesus, who shed His *blood*; and I am the third—justified by *faith*. I hear God say, I should like to justify that man. Jesus says, I will die that he may be justified. I see justification held out to me by divine love, so put out my hands and say, Thanks, Lord, I will take it.

The result is we have peace with God, and Christ is our peace. Hence, in Romans v. 11, we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. What is the

effect of the gospel? You are brought to enjoy God, and be at home with Him; you call Him Father, and know His love, and know that all the past is forgiven and forgotten.

Face your guilt, your state, your sin, your danger, own what you are, and see what God is, what Jesus is. You receive God's testimony, and you will get peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

W. T. P. W.

"GONE!"

"**I**T has actually taken place, the Church is gone." Shall such words appear some day soon in the public newspapers?

More than likely!

What do they mean?

Simply that the truth, which is being so earnestly declared to-day, viz., that the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of archangel, and the trump of God, to raise all His saints who have passed away in death, to change those who are then alive, and to catch them all up in one blessed company, to meet Himself in the air, and to be for ever with him, has been actually made good. The prophecy of nearly two thousand years has been accomplished; the Word of God has been verified; the promise is fulfilled and the Church is GONE.

Gone from earth ; gone to be with her Lord ; gone to Heaven ; gone !

Oh ! it will cause no small stir in Christendom when it finds so many of its cemeteries decimated of their occupants, and so large a percentage of its population gone ! But this is sure to happen some day, and perhaps very soon.

Try to lay hold of the idea. It is as certain as that you read these words that this extraordinary event must take place.

Notice, I am not saying that it is the end of the world, that will come in good time when "the world and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (as we read in 2 Pet. iii.), for such is the close of the busy, godless little world where we are to-day ; but I refer to a mighty incident which will occur long before the dissolution of the world, and one which requires no precursory events. "The coming of the Lord" (not the end of the world) "draweth nigh" (James v. 8). How can that be ?

Well, the earth is dependent for her existence on yonder sun, and for her vegetation on these clouds ; but, mark, the presence of the Church is no necessity for that existence. Were the Church gone to-day, the world would, in every particular, move along just as it did yesterday. What would be the only difference ? Merely the absence of the saints ! And that would not mean very much numerically—God knows. Their translation would not affect the revolution of a single wheel, whether political, commercial, or religious. Certainly the home-call of

Enoch had no such effect, and he is our beautiful type.

No doubt his translation caused some perplexity, but this quickly passed away, and the people gave themselves to their eating and drinking, planting and building and other concerns, just as before. But when thousands of Enochs—relations, friends, neighbours—are mysteriously spirited away, nay, caught up, by shout and voice and trump, by power divine, this will cause perplexity and alarm. Yes, for a moment, and then the rush of life will proceed as before. Churches, marts, political crowds, and all such other interests as the race course, the football or cricket match will go ahead very much as usual.

The effect of the translation of the Church will be practically nil. “Nil.”

Note what followed that of Enoch. “Eating and drinking”; yes, but thereafter came the Flood! Judgment followed. Just a space and then Doom. And so, again, the Church—all who are Christ’s, and only such—is gone! A space, and then damnation, for God says—“That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thess. ii. 12)!

Appalling fact! The revolution of the post-translation world will be suddenly arrested by damnation—hopeless and eternal.

He that hath ears to hear let him hear!

The Church gone! The saints—they who believed the truth and had pleasure in righteousness—gone!

While they who rejected the truth and believed the lie must be—shall I say it? let God do so—“damned.” The word is His!

Reader, this is no picture, no stage possibility, no croaking alarm. We are living, responsible, reasonable men to-day. It becomes us to learn by example, by analogy, by prophecy and by warning, that present conditions cannot last much longer. The glass has nearly run out; the years are quickly passing; God’s “long-suffering” cannot suffer always.

A blood-bought glory awaits all who, through grace, believe the truth; an eternal doom, beyond earth’s narrow confines, awaits the unbeliever. Hence, make sure that you are ready for that soon-coming event, the return of the Lord, the translation of the Church, and the consummation of your own personal and everlasting weal.

J. W. S.

THE GRAVE A WARDROBE.

ON a tombstone in the Balmoral cemetery at Belfast the following inscription is written—

“The form we used to see,
Was but the raiment that she wore,
The *grave* that now doth press
Upon the cast-off dress
Is but the *wardrobe* locked.
She is not there.”

The question may be asked, “Where is she?”

In the book of Job—chap. xiv.—three questions are asked. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” . . . “But man dieth and wasteth away; yea man giveth up the ghost, and, *Where is he?*” . . . “If a man die *shall he live again?*”

These are most important questions. Man has only a few days and full of trouble on earth, and, at the best, is like a flower—soon cut off. But underneath all the outward appearance, like Naaman, he is *unclean*. “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away” (Isa. lxiv. 6). Nothing that defiles can enter heaven: so those going there must be made fit. “The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

We read of some very bad people in 1 Cor. vi.: “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Also, in Titus iii., how unclean they were, but the kindness and love and mercy of God saved them; “by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Every believer can say, “unto Him who loves us, and has washed us from our sins.” This is all done now. What man could not do, and what the law could not do: God has done by sending His own

Son (Rom. viii. 3). The leper, in Lev. xiv., was made clean by blood and water, and then took his place among the people of God; and in his tent. Then at the door of the tabernacle, he can stand in all the value of Christ's death—the blood on the *ear* and *thumb* and right *toe*, and the oil on the blood. He is not only clean through the work done, and the word spoken; but claimed by God, and has power to answer to God's claims by the oil—the Spirit—and to glorify God in his body. This is for us *here* and *now*, as by the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter the holiest (Heb. x. 19).

But when one is *dead* or *asleep* as to the *body*, like Stephen (Acts vii. 60), of whom we read, "*he fell asleep*," "*Where is he?*" The words on the tombstone at Balmoral cemetery say that all that is *in the grave* is only the clothes of the person—"she is not *there*." Luke xvi. tells us when one dies he is either *better* or *worse*. The poor man was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; as to the rich man, his body was buried—but *his soul*. Ah! where? Who can tell? Yes, there is One who knows *all things*, the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, *in hell*, in the flame, in torments he lifted up his eyes, and desired a very small mercy—a *drop of water*—but there is no mercy in hell.

Then he desired a message sent to his *five brothers* that they might not come there. The end will be death and hell cast into *the lake of fire* (Rev. xx. 14). The dying thief, that turned to the Lord, desired to be remembered by Him in His kingdom when He comes

again. What was Christ's answer? "To-day shalt thou be *with me in Paradise.*" "To depart and to be *with Christ*, which is far better," is what Paul says (Phil. i. 23.) Both have the better part.

Yes, we know from the word of the Lord that the sleeping saints are *better* off than any here in the body. But the *best* is to come at the resurrection. "If a man die, shall he live again?" said Job. Yes. The word of the Lord in John v. is plain. "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, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (vers. 29). *Paul's hope, towards God*, was, "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the *just and unjust*" (Acts xxiv. 15).

The first fruits of resurrection are seen already (1 Cor. xv.). "*Christ the first fruits*," so, all that are Christ's, at His coming; the dead will be raised, and the living changed in a moment, and caught up to *meet the Lord in the air*, to be *for ever with Him*. Then it will be a *new house and new clothing*, eternal in the heavens, for which every one really going there is *now ready*, for they have the *earnest of the Spirit* (2 Cor. v. 5.)

"For ever with the Lord!"

Amen! so let it be;

Life from the dead is in that word

"Tis immortality."

"I'M GOING HOME, AND I'M NOT AFRAID."

IN the long ward of a great hospital lay a young man in serious illness—we were visiting there, and, having sung a hymn, we had passed from one to another with a tract, or a word of inquiry as to the soul's welfare. It seemed specially important that we should speak to this poor sufferer, for it was but too evident that his time was short. Consumption had laid its fatal finger upon him, as the strange sad beauty of his hectic cheek and brilliant eye most plainly told.

We asked him, "Have you comfort beyond this world?"

He at once replied, "I am trying all I can."

"Oh! but you must be done *trying* and—TRUST," we answered. "This was the counsel an eminent servant of Christ gave to one who anxiously said like you that she was *trying*. Yes! you must be done *trying* and TRUST."

Then the finished work of Christ was set before him with the precious invitation from the Lord Jesus Himself to come at once to Him. We prayerfully left him; but not quite expecting the delightful surprise that awaited our next meeting.

A few days after, on entering the ward, we found the sufferer in a very different frame of mind—with a very happy face. He said, "*I'm quite happy now,*" and listened with earnest attention to the Scripture read to him, and to any remarks about the finished

work of Christ. Quite overcome as the glorious salvation was dwelt upon, his quickly starting tears spoke more eloquently than words of the joy of salvation received.

It was a privilege to hear him describe his passage from darkness into light thus, "When you came that day, and said, 'You must be done *trying* and TRUST,' I thought there must surely be something in that—and I thought on it, and thought on it all that day, and on into the night till I just depended on Him—and I'm quite happy now!"

Knowing that his end was near he wished to go home to die, so his wife came to fetch him. We found that she had been brought to the Saviour only a few months before this time, and had become deeply anxious and prayerful for the soul of her husband. Now she discovered that he was "safe in the arms of Jesus," and very heartfelt was her thankfulness to God. Not long after his return home he departed in peace, saying, "*I'm going home, and I'm not afraid.*"

C.

A SERMON ON NOTHING.

A WORD TO DOUBTING BELIEVERS.

EARNEST seeker after light, you who diligently search this periodical every month, desiring help, and who are not yet filled "with all joy and peace in believing" (Rom. xv. 13), have you ever heard a sermon upon "nothing"?

Lately, when upon a visit to Cockenzie, near Edinburgh, a dear Christian fisherman reminded me of a gospel address I had given at Stornoway, in a public hall, many years ago, to a crowd of fisher-folk who had come from various parts of the British Isles to spend a few months in that town in pursuit of their calling, that of catching and curing herring. He said he had never forgotten that meeting, and had often since preached the gospel himself from the same word.

I shall endeavour to give you the gist of that address, and trust you now may get clear of your doubts, and rejoice with us. This is God's desire for you, and His Holy Spirit is here to bring this about. Remember this, that no one ever got joy and peace through *doubting*, but only in *believing*.

There were six points in the preaching—

- (1) Nothing to say (*see* Rom. iii. 19);
- (2) Nothing to do (*see* Rom. iv. 5);
- (3) Nothing to pay (*see* Luke vii. 42);

in order to *be* saved, and then—

- (4) Everything to say (*see* Heb. xiii. 15);
- (5) Everything to do (*see* Col. i. 10);
- (6) Everything to pay (*see* Rom. xiii. 8);

when you *are* saved.

Now let us consider each point separately.

(1) *Nothing to say* (Rom. iii. 19).—You will clearly discern that the Apostle Paul in this chapter is showing every man up in his true colours, as God sees him,

I mean every man and woman, girl or boy, who is *Christless*. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (ver. 10). Do you accept this statement as true of *you*? It is God's estimate of *you*, and must be true. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (ver. 12). Are you an exception to this? Thanks be to God if you can bow your head and say, "Alas, this also is but too true of me."

Read the whole indictment detailed in those nine verses, beginning at verse 10 and ending at verse 18. Then look at verse 19 and learn the reason for which such a sweeping and heavy indictment has been brought against every human being on this earth. It is "*that every mouth may be stopped* and all the world may become guilty before God."

Have you come to this point, guilty before God, deserving nothing but death and judgment? and have you ceased to say even one word in your own justification? If so, then you have reached point No. 1, "*nothing to say*." God is "just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (ver. 26). Look at Job, who said to God, after Elihu showed him up, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? *I will lay my hand upon my mouth*" (Job xl. 4). He had "nothing to say," and soon God greatly blessed him.

There is a story told of a certain king who visited the State prison, purposing to set at liberty one prisoner. The jailer conducted him to a cell. The king asked the man who occupied it, why he was there.

His reply was, "Oh! your majesty, I am an innocent man, it was not I who committed the deed at all." Coming to another cell, and asking a similar question, this man replied, "Because, your majesty, I received no justice at my trial, judge and jury were all against me."

Visiting a third cell, the king received this answer, "Because I am a bad and wicked man, your majesty, and I richly deserve to be here."

Whereupon the king said to the jailer, "Liberate this man, and let him go free!"

This was the only man of the three who was repentant, and the moment you are marked by "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xx. 21), you will also go out free, and leave your prison house, and your old master, Satan, who has so long held you in bondage, and deceived you. The Lord Jesus said, He came "to preach deliverance to the captives" (Luke iv. 18).

Before I turn to point No. 2, I must refer you again to Rom. iii. 11, "There is none that seeketh after God," for methinks I hear you say that that is one clause of the dreadful indictment which is not true of you, for you do seek after God, and would give all that you possess to find Him.

Thank God if this is so, my friend, for this proves that there is a work of God in your soul, and that He is working in you and seeking you, for, left to ourselves, you and I would never seek Him.

Now I shall give you another verse, "That they should *seek* the Lord, if haply they might *feel after*

Him, and find Him, although He be not far from every one of us" (Acts xvii. 27). Luke xv. 4 shows that the Lord is seeking *you*, and the verse above quoted says that He is not far from you that feel after Him. Why not, then, find Him, and that just now, before you turn over the next page? Just whisper into His ear—

"Jesus, I will trust Thee, trust Thee with my soul,
Guilty, lost, and helpless, Thou canst make me whole ;
There is none in heaven or on earth like Thee,
Thou hast died for sinners, therefore, Lord, for me."

And what is His answer to such a confession?
"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"
(John vi. 37).

Now let us come to point No. 2.

"*Nothing to do*" (Rom. iv. 5). Why? Because Jesus did all the work Himself long, long ago. "He came into the world to save sinners," and when dying on the cross He cried, "It is finished." His spotless life was laid down in sacrifice. His precious blood is shed to meet all the claims of God's righteous throne.

God won't let us add our puny works to the finished work of His Son, and he that apprehends this, and seeks justification before God by faith (and not by works), God justifies. His faith is counted for righteousness.

In chapter iii. whilst "there is none righteous, no, not one"—the righteousness of God is "*unto all and upon all them that believe*" (ver. 22). Do you believe? If so, then God's righteousness is upon you (ver. 22),

and God has justified you (ver. 26). You are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (ver. 24).

When near Capernaum the people asked the Lord Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" The answer He gave was, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 28, 29); and this makes it clear that the very first work a sinner can do is, not a work done with the hands, but in the heart.

It is really and simply *just to believe on the Sent One of the Father*. Nothing could be more simple. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9). Works come in their proper place *after* we are justified, as the practical fruits of righteousness. But for salvation we have "nothing to do," only believe.

Let us come to point 3 now.

Nothing to pay (Luke vii. 42).—We were lost, and could not redeem ourselves. Christ has redeemed us. He "gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. ii. 6). God wants not what is yours, but he does want *you*. In our text, no doubt in Simon we have one who thought he owed but little, just fifty pence, in the woman, a great sinner, owing five hundred pence, yet we read, "When they had nothing to pay He frankly forgave them both."

Whilst there was forgiveness in the heart of God

for both, we do not learn that Simon ever availed himself of this grace, and got it. So long as sinners think they can meet God with any fancied goodness of their own, they will not admit their utter inability, and as confessed bankrupt sinners allow God to clear them.

The word of cheer to the woman in verse 48, "Thy sins are forgiven," becomes the joint-stock property of all believers. If you are trusting Jesus, He says this is true of you, don't doubt His word.

1 John ii. 12, Acts x. 43, xiii. 38, 39, and Eph. i. 7, tell us the same blessed fact, as the result of God's love and Christ's work. Just receive these blessings in simple faith.

Well, I must draw to a close now. As a believer in the Lord Jesus you have been saved, you have found out that you could have *nothing to say* in self-defence, and *nothing to do*, for the work of the Lord Jesus Christ met everything that God required, and *nothing to pay*, for you have also discovered that your entire stock comprised your sins and a bundle of filthy rags (your best deeds)—altogether of no value.

Now, being saved, and knowing this with certainty, the tables are turned, so to speak, and now we find that we have (4) *everything to say* (see Heb. xiii. 15) about that Blessed One, who loved us and gave Himself for us, and about the love of God His Father, who chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, and in due time sent His Son to redeem us.

By Him we are privileged to "offer the sacrifice

of praise to God continually, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Let us not shrink from using our tongues in this blessed service.

Then, as believers, we find out we have (5) *everything to do* (see Col. i. 10) as led by the Spirit of God, "fruitful in every good work," and "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. i. 10). The Apostle Paul says to Titus, "These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto man" (Titus iii: 8).

Finally, the believer has (6) *everything to pay* (see Rom. xiii. 8).—We should owe no man anything but love, and this is a debt we can all be paying now in little instalments from day to day, whilst never able to say we are free of further liability. Love should, and will, if in exercise, lead us to lay down our lives for the brethren, and we can have the compassions of God for poor perishing sinners as well, and urge them to flee to the Lord Jesus for shelter from the "wrath to come."

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the ways of God :
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.

"Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be !
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee."

"SIX FURTHER ON."

THE train was just leaving Secunderabad, a station in South India, and in it was a young Christian soldier, leaving his regiment, to undergo a course of study and training in an Engineering College in North India. Some Christian comrades were present to see him off, and, as the train gradually got up steam, called out "Good-bye, Sandy, four-nine-four." He replied in a similar enigmatical manner, "Good-bye, six further on," both of these expressions being common among Christian men in the army.

My readers will probably be puzzled, as I was at first, as to the meaning of these expressions. Four-nine-four signifies hymn No. 494 in Sankey's "Sacred Songs and Solos," the first line of which is "God be with you till we meet again," and "six further on" signifies No. 500 in the same book, the first line of which is "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine."

No parting message could be sweeter than that given to the young soldier, just on the threshold of a new sphere of life and interests, viz., the loving "God be with you" of his comrades, and few words could be more expressive of his hope and trust in a living, loving Saviour, than his reply as to the blessed assurance he was enjoying through the finished work of Christ.

After a continuous journey of three days in the train the young soldier reached his destination, apparently in perfect health, and, when visited by a friend of the writer's at 9 P.M. on the day of his arrival, spoke very hopefully of his future. At 7 A.M. the next day he was reported to be seriously ill, and by 11 A.M. had passed away, cholera during the night having caught him in its deadly grip. He was buried the same afternoon.

As I looked afterward on the newly-made grave, and thought of this sudden home-call to one who knew and loved the Lord Jesus, whose consistent life in the barrack room, among ungodly comrades, had been a bright witness for his Saviour, I thought of the message God might have in his death for those who would have been his fellow-students had he lived. All of them young, full of life and hope, and yet all liable to be called as suddenly from time into eternity.

How few there are who can say, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine," who have turned to Him while things are, humanly speaking, going well with them, for the forgiveness of their sins, and that peace and joy which only He can give. The young soldier is now with Christ, which is far better than the best prospects which earth could have for him. His Bible bore marks which not only showed it had been read but carefully studied, and that he not only knew Jesus as Saviour but as Lord.

Can the same be said of you, my reader? You

may be living in a country where journeys are not so long and tiring, where there is little or no risk of your contracting cholera, or any such deadly disease, from eating food prepared, you know not under what circumstances, in wayside refreshment rooms. You may even be settled down (as you imagine) in one place for life, but have you any certainty that your call to leave this scene will be any less sudden than his about whom I have written? If the call comes, are you ready, as he was, to meet the Lord? Do you know the Lord Jesus? If not, are you wise to neglect these matters? We read in Luke xiv. 31-33: “What king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.”

Death is coming, and after death the judgment. If, as wise people, we sit down to consult as to whether we have any power to meet them we must own we have none, for the sting of death is sin, and we have all sinned. How can we obtain “conditions of peace”? God in His Word gives us the answer by pointing us to Christ, Who became a Man that He might bear our sins in His own body on the tree, and “through death destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

God also tells us there is "none other Name given under heaven whereby we must be saved." He now freely offers to all salvation through His Son. May it be yours, while you have life and strength, to turn to Him, and, confessing your sins, accept Jesus as your Saviour, so that you too may be able to say, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine." F. W. H.

A FACT TO BE FACED.

"I CANNOT do with that word 'Hell,'" said an aged man, on whom the editor of this magazine and I were calling the other day.

He was long past the allotted number of years, and if anyone should be sure of the future we felt that he should be so.

He was far from being indifferent, nor was he ignorant of the blessed facts of the gospel.

He fully believed in a heaven, and devoutly hoped he might go there, but how far that hope was well founded gave us both a good deal of concern.

We did our best to explain the way of salvation to our dear old friend, and felt greatly drawn to him naturally; and we hoped very earnestly to see him a true and happy believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore a saved man.

The editor made a solemn reference to hell; whereupon our old friend replied as above—"I cannot do with that word 'Hell.'"

Now, it is a remarkable thing that, so far as I can remember, during a long course of dealing with men on these subjects, I have never once heard the least exception to the word "Heaven." It sounds sweetly in the ear: it is viewed, and rightly, as the place of eternal rest and blessedness, one which wearied nature, whether in lands Christian or pagan, whether it be the Father's house of many mansions, as anticipated by the believer, or the Elysium of the Greek, is, in some form, the hope of the human breast and the glad end of sorrow and conflict here below.

Yes, we like the sound of "Heaven." We hate the thought of "Hell."

And no wonder!

Every gaol in the land is the witness to the execution of judgment; and we look askance as we pass these dreary abodes of punishment.

If we pass them with a clear conscience, because innocent of the crimes meriting such a doom, we feel no terror, only one of sorrow for the guilty prisoners; if as consciously guilty, then with fear and dread of their mighty walls.

No wonder that the poacher, the thief, the burglar, the murderer, detests the word "gaol"! It is the place of his punishment, capital or otherwise. It reminds him of justice, and sentence, and punishment; and these are the things the criminal dreads. The word "Home" is, I believe, peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon language, and a lovely word it is. It is sweet to the boy at school; to the weary labourer in the field; to the tempest-tossed toiler on the deep.

Home is his resting-place. He can put his foot on its threshold, and feel the thrill of liberty. It is his castle, but to him the door flies open. There is nothing more perfect on earth than the home where love reigns. It is a little picture of heaven.

“Where love reigns”—

Can aught reign than love?

If heaven is the abode of love can it have a rival? Is love everything? Do we not read that “God is Love”? We do, and how well for us that it is so. He loved a guilty world, and proved that love in a gift so great as that of His Son. Wondrous gift! None need perish; none need face the judgment, nor hear the sentence of doom, if only they accept the substitutionary work of that blessed Son. Every fear may pass from their conscience. They are justified by faith and thus become children of God.

All this is true, but mark, I beg of you, that the same Word which tells us that “God is Love” declares also that “God is Light.”

There is a Heaven because “God is Love”; there is a Hell because “God is Light.”

The same Book that speaks of the one speaks also of the other. Apart from it we know nothing of either, nor of that God who is revealed to us as “Love” and as “Light.”

Reader, have you pondered all this? Banish every natural idea of God from your mind. “The world by wisdom knew not God.” Our deepest learning, or most profound investigations in the wide realms of nature, cannot discover Him to us. We

may see power, design, and other things in creation, but none of them gives us the very least help in that kingdom which is moral and spiritual.

Love, grace, pity are precious qualities indeed, but Light, truth, and holiness—intolerance of evil—are equally precious.

Then, why is there a hell? Because God is just.

For this same reason, why is there a gaol? Because the law of the land must inflict punishment on its transgressors; or, if not, it were a farce.

Nay, law must be maintained; and hence the prison, the gaol, the place of punishment.

Nor can your hatred of the word "Prison" do away with the prison itself. But how plain is the moral!

If through a wholesome fear of the gaol you would never be thrust into its dungeon, then lead a life that keeps you out of the hand of the law.

If you would escape the hell you dread, but which, alas, we all, reader and writer, so thoroughly deserve, then—and here the gospel flings open its lovely doors to any poor, guilty, self-condemning sinner and bids him welcome Home, through simple faith in the sin-cleansing blood of the Son of God—believe the gospel and turn to the Lord.

It is this that removes all fear of wrath, judgment and hell, while it gives a title to heaven, sure and divine, and places the believer in the relation of a child and heir of God.

J. W. S.

“FOR THERE IS ONE GOD.”

(1 Timothy ii. 5.)

READER, may I count on your grave attention for a few minutes? I am not asking you for much, but feel impelled to draw your attention to these most important words from a book which, though largely despised by some persons, speaks of a gospel which is *still* “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Rom. i. 16).

If I mistake not, you have read the words before—it may be, many times—but have you to any extent realised their true meaning? If not, I would ask you in all sincerity to carefully ponder them and read them over slowly to yourself, for they are of *great* importance to you and me. “FOR THERE IS ONE GOD.” We may dislike the fact or otherwise, believe it or disbelieve it, nevertheless *there is* a God. If you will refer to Psalm xiv. 1 you will find that the *fool hath said* in his heart, “There is no God.” Lest, however, we should doubt *who* it is that presumes to make such a rash declaration, it is *twice* recorded (see also Psalm liii. 1).

But is it possible that *you*, in spite of the positive assertion in God’s Word that there is one God, still dispute it? Why, *the very devils believe this and tremble* (Jas. ii. 19), knowing that their doom is sealed. Yours is not yet, though it must be, if you still continue going on, as you are, in your sins. Do you say, Who are you to judge me? I do not pass

judgment on anyone. I only want to show you, as a friend, whither your course is leading you. But for the grace of God, which bringeth salvation *to all men*, I should have had no hope beyond the grave, but God in His love followed me, time after time, although I had for so long turned my back on Him.

If *you* have no solid hope for the future, and are without God in this world, you will, I think, admit that your position is not a satisfactory one, for this world passes away, and you and I both need a guiding hand whilst quickly travelling through it to eternity. But I trust, by this time, you are at least open to fall in line with Scripture when it says, "There is one God," even though it may be a little disconcerting to you to think that there is Someone who knows all about you, even to the very thoughts of your heart.

Let us now read on—"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." How glorious is this further news! In it, indeed, there is hope. "One Mediator," who was that? The same verse tells us it was "the man Christ Jesus," the One who fully did His Father's will in all respects. You may have had hard thoughts of God and have imagined that He was even desirous of judging us, and that if it had not been for the Lord Jesus Christ shielding us from God's anger, He would have cut us off long ago. If such hitherto have been your thoughts let me say at once that Satan has put that distorted character of God into your mind.

He ever seeks to tarnish God's name and goes

about seeking to give men wrong thoughts of God. But the devil is a liar (see John viii. 44). It is perfectly true that there is one God, but the God you have thought He was is *not* the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is One who is full of compassion and forgives iniquity. "Yea, *many a time* turned He His anger away and *did not* stir up all His wrath" (Ps. lxxviii. 38). But equally it is true that "the Lord is *righteous* in all His ways and holy in all His works" (Ps. cxlv. 17).

Now, if God be righteous and *holy* how is it He can save us when we have so grievously sinned against Him? Here comes the need of "the One Mediator"; someone must be found who is sinless and holy, and who will perfectly meet all God's holy claims upon us, but *none of us* can come up to that standard, so God Himself devised means. He sent His only begotten Son, who came into this world, and at the cross bore the punishment on account of our sins; yes, the only man who could be found so to do was "The Man Christ Jesus."

Observe, our text says, "and *One Mediator.*" No other person can help you but the "One Mediator," for "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). Will you not come to Him now, whilst you read this little paper? You have not even to wait until you get home, or till you get to your bedroom. You can come to Christ just where you are; life is short, and may be your span of life is drawing to a close: what

then will you do with Jesus, which is called Christ? Some of old cried out in answer to that question, "Let Him be crucified" (Matt. xxvii. 22). They did not want Him. Do you?

Friend, do look these matters in the face. Do not continue neglecting God's grace any longer. If you do not come to Him now, in this period of His long-suffering, what reason will you give? Meet Him you must. Do not say you must wait until a more "convenient season" arises. Although God has dealt with you graciously till now, yet you must not think He will allow you to *always* slight Him. "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi. 18). "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

Oh! "see that ye refuse not Him that speaketh," for "*God is* (that is, exists) *and* He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. xi. 6).

L. A. A.

OUR LORD'S FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT.

OUR Lord's first announcement in the synagogue of Nazareth contains all the germs of the gospel.

Sin has brought poverty, sorrow, captivity, spiritual blindness, and bruising, yet He proclaims

emancipation from all these. Spiritual riches, spiritual healing, spiritual deliverance, spiritual sight, and liberty.

RICHES.

We have redemption through the blood of Christ, and we have also the forgiveness of our sins according to the *riches* or abundance of God's grace. Sin has brought man into the poverty of death, for the wages of sin is death. And no one can be poorer than a dead man. He has nothing and can enjoy nothing in this world. Dead in your sins was once the state of all believers. That is now the state of all men who are outside Christ's redemption work, through which forgiveness was made available for us.

No one really enjoys the riches of God's grace in forgiveness who has not felt the oppression of sin's guilt on his conscience. Forgiveness will not be enjoyed where the conscience has not been reached and brought into the searching light of God.

That a holy and righteous God should be able righteously to forgive us is a marvellous thing. That those who are naturally haters of God should ever desire forgiveness is also marvellous. In Christ He now presents or offers forgiveness full, free, and eternal to all classes and conditions of men. *No preparatory merit on our part is looked for by God.*

"As God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," is written to the Ephesians, who are said to have been once without hope and without God in this world. "As Christ forgave you," is said to the Colossians, who are once said to have been enemies in their

minds by wicked works. "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace," was said to a woman who was sunken in the utmost depravity of sin.

None need despair after that. All who freely accept the gospel and believe the words of Christ may go, in perfect peace, and live in the fullest assurance that God will never righteously charge sins to them. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more"—is His word to such.

HEALING.

No heart ever was healed until the pressure of guilt was lifted from the conscience by the knowledge of God's entire forgiveness. Healing may be looked at from various standpoints. Jesus heals the broken-hearted. Broken-heartedness shows how sin has stricken in upon the strongest and tenderest part of man—his affections. When the affections are rent asunder broken-heartedness is known and the deepest sorrow is sure to follow.

Who in this sinful world does not know what that means? Whose heart has not at some time or other been broken by some cause? Who has not known sorrow for which they have thought there was no healing?

Sorrow is the doleful outcome of sin. Banish sin from this world we cannot. Science with all its rapid advancement is helpless to meet the dreadful ravages of sin. It has brought death, which uninvited comes to every home. Death is the severance of the

affections that bind us to those we love. Separation causes deep sorrow, bitter grief, and salt tears.

Think of the Mighty Creator God, in the person of Jesus His own blessed Son, coming down amongst men to heal their broken-heartedness and dry up all the tears of their poignant grief! He became man that He might feel sorrow to its uttermost and that He might be able to sympathise and comfort and heal the effects of sin in the heart of His poor devil-duped, hell-enslaved creature! Yet, after all His service to men, He was nailed to a Roman gibbet as a malefactor. Stand amazed, ye heavens, and shudder! Still His heart remains unchangeably the same. That He healeth the broken in heart is just as true to-day as when on earth He dried the widow's tears.

DELIVERANCE

in itself implies captivity. Captivity implies loss of rights and freedom of citizenship. A bound captive loses the enjoyment of all these. But spiritual captivity is the bondage, drudgery, and slavery of the devil. Satan is man's captor. He delights in his work, and he holds all men in bondage, by one means or another, until deliverance comes through a greater.

Men are held in captivity by lust, and lust takes various forms. "The lust of other things," our Divine Lord says, hinders the Word of God entering men's hearts, which, if it were allowed to enter, would work deliverance. The love of money, possessions, fame, and the ambition to shine in the world's gay

and brilliant society is lust. Envy and jealousy is lust, and murder is the direct result of these. Loving what God has not given you is lust, and, perhaps, loving more than Himself what He has given is lust. Ambitious desire to possess what is not yours is lust. All the guests of lust are in the depths of hell and her house is the way to death. All who are allured by their lusts prove this to be true sooner or later. Lust enjoyed is what Scripture calls "the pleasures of sin for a season." But it is only for a season and often a very short one.

What will deliver from lust? LOVE. Divine love in Christ. Natural affection won't satisfy. It is of God, but it never did satisfy any human heart. When the love of God in Christ is made known and enjoyed in the Spirit's power, that gives true, abiding satisfaction. Those who are satisfied do not lust. "A full soul loatheth an honey-comb." The honey-comb represents the sweetest thing in nature, but the full or satisfied soul loathes even that. It has enough. It draws its pleasures from other than nature's purest or putrid streams.

When the eyes of the dissatisfied heart are open to the beauty and matchless, moral loveliness of Christ, all else is soon counted dross and rubbish. The sight of His glorious Person eclipses all else to those who truly know and love Him, and live in the enjoyment of His company. His company is a banquet, and His love a banqueting house. "And to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God," "He

loved me and gave Himself for me" was the complete emancipation of Paul from the bondage of his own fiery ambition, and the inspiration of his whole life of the most utter unworldliness and unselfishness. It bore him up through all his sufferings, trials, and afflictions, and nerved him afresh for every conflict in his new fields of service to his Master.

SPIRITUAL SIGHT.

This means opened eyes, or new eyes if you like. When this event takes place we then look at things from a different standpoint. How we view things has a marvellous effect upon us. A man says I have changed my course because I view things differently from what I did. New eyes or opened eyes give new visions—visions of God and heavenly glory.

Even the wicked Baalam got his eyes opened. Thus his life was saved from destruction because of his perversity. His opened eyes made him bless instead of curse Israel. That was the result of God giving him His vision of Israel. "The man whose eyes are opened hath said, which heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the visions of the Almighty falling into a trance and having his eyes open." He saw Israel beautiful, because sanctified. He saw them justified and not a spot upon them. He saw the Star come out Jacob (Christ as King), and Israel placed at the head of the nations, a victorious, conquering people.

Why does a man turn to the Scriptures and revel in them to his soul's delight, as he never delighted in

the most interesting literature? It is because his eyes are opened. He has new sight. What entrances him in the paper and ink of the Bible? Christ. He finds Christ in every page. The Bible was all darkness to him once, but now it is all light. Why do learned men not see as he sees? Because of spiritual blindness. Science cannot give sight to the blind. God only can open blind eyes and give new sight that sees heavenly visions. Jesus came to do it, and did it on earth, and He still does it in heaven. Miracles have not ceased. Spiritual sight is a miracle of the highest order. Every true believer can say, "Once I was blind, but now I see." No infidelity can refute this fact.

LIBERTY.

What, next to opened eyes, is so sweet as liberty; more especially to one who has been in bondage? Not all men in Rome were free born. Britons are free born. Ah! hold. Consider. "In sin did my mother conceive me." That tells a sad tale. Being born in sin means being born into the bondage of sin. Only One was born holy. He always walked in the liberty and joy of the Father's love. He only could say, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?"

We must be liberated to be in liberty. We require to be under the perfect law of liberty. What is the law of liberty? Love. The law of sin is lust. There is no liberty where lust reigns supreme in man's heart. Love enthroned in the heart breaks the power of lust and brings into the perfect law of liberty.

The ten commandments were the law of bondage to Israel. "I had not known sin except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not lust.'" Because Paul did what is natural to each of us, the law, disallowing it, made him a prisoner, and brought death upon him. Besides, the law, which is good and holy, provoked lust and made him a transgressor. What human nature is told not to do, is provoked by law.

There is no liberty in Romans vii. All the wretchedness of the man who finds himself there is because he feels himself in hopeless bondage to do what he does not willingly want to do, and struggles not to do. That is not liberty. "The law of the Spirit of life (the controlling force which is love) in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." That is liberty. Love enjoyed in the Spirit's power brings us into perfect liberty to do the will of God, in which the new man finds all his delight. There is no bondage in Romans viii. except being bond slaves to God in the power of His mighty changeless love. Freedom is the dominant note of that great chapter and chart of Christian liberty.

Judaism was a system of fetters and bondage. Christianity is a system of spiritual liberty. What a contrast! Christ came to give liberty to the captives, once in Jewish bondage. "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." "They shall go in and out and find pasture." This is liberty.

"UNCLEAN."

"How can he be clean that is born of a woman?"

(Job xxv. 4.)

THIS includes all classes, high and low, religious and irreligious, heathen and civilised alike. It therefore includes you.

Our first parents were created in innocence, but by one act of disobedience to God's command they allowed sin to enter in. Satan was not long in corrupting their whole being, and turning them against God, insomuch that the first child born to them became a murderer!

For six thousand years Satan has been at his terrible work of corrupting mankind, and he has done his work so thoroughly that the testimony of God to the state of mankind is, *"They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one"* (Ps. xiv. 3). *"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* (Jer. xvii. 9).

All those evil passions, which you fain would have removed from your life, are but the manifestation of the evil within, for it is out of the heart proceed the things which defile the man (see Mark vii. 14-23).

* * * * *

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?"

Not one" (Job xiv. 4).

In the face of such questions from God's Word why do you cherish the delusion that you can cover

up your sinful state by a life of "good works," and that some day it will be all right? What delusion this is! How impossible it is to bring a clean action out of corruption. "*Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*" (Prov. xx. 9). Reform never yet saved a man, nor religion either, for even Nicodemus, who was a teacher of religion, was told that he must be born again before he could see the kingdom of God.

"*Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that THOU art righteous?*" (Job xxii. 3). No: because He sees that any attempt to work out our own salvation is an attempt to cover an unclean thing with still more unclean rags, for "*we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*" (Isa. lxiv. 6).

May the Lord open your eyes to see this terrible condition of your soul. No works have yet brought you the peace of mind you are seeking after, have they? And they never will, for "*by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight*" (Rom. iii. 20).

* * * * *

"*How should man be just before God?*" (Job ix. 2).

Job saw the huge gulf which sin had made between man and God, and also his inability to bridge it, and cried out, "*Neither is there any days-man between us, that might lay his hand upon us both*" (ix. 33), and "*O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour*" (xvi. 21).

Blessed be God, Job's day is not our day, for we need not to look forward and long for some one to come between us and God as he did, for "*now is the day of salvation.*" The gulf has been spanned, and we are invited to draw near "*into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way*" (Heb. x. 19, 20).

But, you may ask, how is this? God has said, "*The soul that sinneth it shall die*" (Ezek. xviii. 20). That placed you, as it were, in a condemned cell awaiting the execution of the just sentence. God loved the world, and sent His own Son from heaven to take the sinner's place on Calvary's cross. God executed the sentence on Him instead of on you. Now the sentence having been carried out, it is finished with, the prison door is thrown open, and you are free to go out *if you choose to do so*. The choice rests with you of accepting pardon and liberty through the finished work of Christ (see John iii. 16).

All that is necessary on your part is to believe that Christ did this, to accept it as having been done for you, and to trust in His word that He will give eternal life to "*whosoever will.*" Will you not accept this? "*Now is the accepted time.*" Salvation is "*without money and without price.*" "*He that being often reprovèd hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy*" (Prov. xxix. 1). "*Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee*" (Job xxxvi. 18).

“HOW LONG HALT YE?”

“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.”—
1 KINGS xviii. 21.

ELIJAH'S query is of vast importance. It is as needed to-day as when he put it to the masses on Mount Carmel. Things had to be brought to a point then. It is the same to-day with you, my reader. You must take your stand for Christ, or against Him. There can be no neutral ground.

God, the God of love and light, has given His only Son to be the Saviour of the world. That world refused and crucified Him, nay, more, it has forgotten Him. Now, the point is this, How does your heart stand in relation to Him? Can you and do you say, “He is mine, and I am His”? Are you, or are you not, on the side of the One whom the world refused and crucified? If He be worth having and following, say so plainly, and fling in your lot with Him and His.

“How long halt ye?” Well, you say, “I mean to decide for Him some day, but I am not in a hurry.” God knows that and the devil too. Satan will not let you be in a hurry, if he can help it.

If you were to come to the Lord, as you now are, what would happen? He would receive you, bless you, cleanse you, clear you of all your sins, bring you from darkness to light, and from sin and Satan to God. Happy result of decision. But the point is,

there must be *decision*. The great want of the moment is decision. Young men and young women, above all, need to be decided. To all such I would say, in deep affection—If you do not decide for the Lord *now*, you will very soon find yourself under the wheels of Baalam's car, with all the fatal results thereof.

If you do not turn to the Lord before you are thirty you have but an ever-lessening chance thereafter. Comparatively few souls are saved after thirty, for the probability of conversion rapidly diminishes as age creeps on. Careful and reliable statistics show that of 1,000 true Christians the age, when converted, was as follows:—

Under 20 years	-	-	-	548
Between 20 and 30 years of age	-		-	337
„ 30 and 40	„	„	-	86
„ 40 and 50	„	„	-	15
„ 50 and 60	„	„	-	13
„ 60 and 70	„	„	-	1

Look well at that table, ye young people. It may well make you say, "I'll have Christ to-day."

Do you still "halt"? Let me encourage you to decide. See what you are risking—your soul's bliss for ever. See what you are missing—present peace with God and the joy of living for and serving Him who has died to save you. Halt till you are thirty and your chance of receiving Christ is but small. If you are wise you will say, "By the grace of God I decide for Christ *now*." Good!

What can you get by delay? Why will ye halt? Is Jesus not worth having, knowing, and following? Indeed He is. "But I am such a sinner," you may say. True, and that proves you are 'the very one for Christ, for He says, "I came not to call the righteous, but *sinner*s to repentance" (Luke v. 32). His very foes said, that He was a "friend of publicans and *sinner*s" (Luke vii. 34), and even more, "This man *receiveth sinners*, and eateth with them" (Luke xv. 2).

Again, do you say, "I have such a burden." He is the only One who can relieve you of that burden. Come to Him, and He will take it away. If you are the vilest sinner under the sun, the blood of Christ can wash you whiter than snow. Come to Him. Come as you are! Come now! Above all things, halt no more. Procrastinate no more, I implore you. Procrastination is the thief of souls. It is the recruiting officer of hell. There are millions of souls in hell for eternity, who meant to come to Jesus some day, but, somehow or other, "the deceitfulness of sin" and the power of Satan so paralysed them that they lingered (like you) and were lost.

Satan is a great preacher of procrastination. "You have plenty of time," he whispers in the ears of the young. "Put it off a little longer. Wait till you get into middle-age." Many heed this infernal advice and rue it for ever. When you are middle-aged the cares of business and family life so occupy the mind that the soul's need and Christ's call get ever lessened attention, and the end, with the mass, is "the black-

ness of darkness" for ever, and the sad, but too true, plaint, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are *not saved*" (Jer. viii. 20).

But, though I write thus, is there no hope for the aged? I do not say there is *no hope* for those who have grown old in their sins, grey in their guilt, and hoary in their forgetfulness of God, but this, with sorrow, I must say, that during the fifty-two long years—since God saved me, at the age of twenty—in which I have been preaching Christ to needy sinners, sound and sick, rich and poor, I have seen very few grey-haired men and women saved.

My experience agrees with others in affirming the absolute wisdom of turning to the Lord in youth. Should my reader be middle-aged, and unsaved, tell me not that you are too busy to come to Christ. This is often the devil's lie to such—"You are too busy to attend to the affairs of your soul." That is not it, my friend, at all. You are not too busy, but too *indifferent*. Sin has begun to harden your conscience, and when you get old, what then? Satan will tell you that you have missed the day of grace and salvation altogether. That is another of his lies. As long as you have a year, a day, or an hour left on earth you may be saved. Yes; thank God, *you* may be saved to-day. Only come to Jesus. If you have halted till now, halt no longer, but decide for Him on the spot.

Let me encourage any old unbeliever to come now. During the last months of 1912 I saw what I have never before seen in my life. Six old people—over

seventy—came to Jesus and tasted His grace, in various places. I narrate one pleasant remembrance.

Tent meetings were going on in Scotland. Old Peter —, just turned eighty, came in often, and at length the light got in, and he joyed in God's salvation. One night, as the people were gathering in, a lady said to me, "I have brought Mr — to hear you, doctor." "Are you saved?" said I to the old and frail newcomer. "No, I'm not saved yet, and I'm eighty-seven years old."

"It's high time you got saved, if ever you are going to be," was my reply.

"That's true," said the old man, "and I'd like to be saved, if I knew how."

"Would you like us to pray for you?" I replied. "We are just going to have some prayer before the preaching."

"I'd be much obliged to you if you would," was his fervent reply.

We went in and got on our knees, and old Peter, coming in just then, sat beside the newcomer.

When prayer was over, I said to Peter: "How old are you, Peter?"

"I'm eighty years old," said he.

"And how long since you got saved?"

"Oh, that's just over a fortnight since," was his happy reply.

"I say, tell me how you got saved, and how you felt when you got saved," ejaculated the old stranger of eighty-seven.

"Oh, I just found out that I was a lost sinner, and

that Jesus came to save the likes of me. So I just came to Him. I believed that He died for me, and bore all my sins on the cross, and I got happy at once," was old Peter's reply.

"Thank you," said his inquirer, and then turning to me, he added: "I don't understand about the new birth. I'd like to be saved."

My subject that night was John iii. and the way of new birth. The 16th verse came in often. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God, loving and giving, and man, believing and having, was pressed.

As the meeting broke up the man of eighty-seven said: "I see it clearly to-night. I've always believed that Jesus died for sinners, but now I see that *He died for me*, and thank God I know that I am saved." It was very simple, but that is just the way every sinner, young or old, can and must be saved.

Friend, "halt" no longer, but believe on Jesus *just now*, and your experience will be similar.

W. T. P. W.

A WARNING DREAM.

SOME years ago I was working in the village of Y——. I was night foreman, and P. M—— was day foreman. He was, alas, a godless, careless man and addicted to drink!

One Saturday morning as I was leaving work, and

he was coming on duty, he said to me, "Edward, I've had such a dream during the night as I never had before in all my life. I dreamed that this Christmas I was to have a great downfall. I thought, too, that I was going along a road when, suddenly, I came to a high blank wall; there was no way past it, and I came to a dead-stop."

I then anxiously bade him take heed, for surely it was a warning from God, and went home to bed. But I could not sleep for thinking of him, so in the afternoon I got up and went to see him. When I called at his house his wife said he was in the public-house drinking, and would I please go and fetch him home. I said, "No, I do not care to go into such a place," and returned to my home in the next village.

In the small hours of Sunday morning there came a knock at my door, and there was a man with a message from Mrs M—— to say that her husband had come home drunk, at midnight, and, apparently mistaking the cellar steps for those of the bedrooms, fell headlong down, and was instantly killed.

Reader, if you have had a warning dream from God, despise it not. Heed the words of Elihu: "*God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men*" (Job xxxiii. 14, 15). But don't wait for a warning-dream. Be warned now. The solemn end of P. M—— may well speak to you. Are you ready should death come? "*Behold, now is the accepted time; BEHOLD, now is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

E. H.

THE DOCTOR'S CONVERSION.

THE shades of winter evening were rapidly deepening, and flinging obscurity over the subjects which lay upon the tables of a well-known London dissecting-room, over half a century ago, as a group of medical students might have been seen standing round one of these tables, evidently, for the moment, deeply engaged. The fading light, shut books, closed dissecting cases, and somewhat grave faces of the dozen listeners showed that anatomy was not the topic in hand, as a seated student, who had till then been busy with his "part," replied to the queries that came from every quarter of the group.

The conversation had been begun by S——, a typically thoughtless and careless young would-be medico, who, in passing the seated dissector—known to be a Christian—had railingly said, "Well, Spurgeon, how many have you baptized lately?" Medical students are notorious for their love of bestowing a *sobriquet* on all and sundry, from professors downwards; so the student thus addressed had, soon after he joined the college and it leaked out that he occasionally preached the gospel, been dubbed with the name of the well-known and popular preacher.

"I do not baptize; I only preach the gospel, when and as best I can," was the rejoinder.

"Oh! you don't baptize, you only preach.

Come, tell us what you say"; and the loud tone of banter in which this was said quickly gathered, as it was intended it should, a little coterie of kindred spirits, expecting some fun from the roasting of the young Christian. At that moment, however, the senior demonstrator of anatomy, a grave, demure man, of whom the students stood rather in awe, joined the group, and took part in the conversation later on.

"You want to know what I preach, do you? I preach glad tidings; the love of God to ruined man; the death and resurrection of His Son the Lord Jesus, and that faith in Him alone secures salvation; that man is guilty, undone, lost; and that the 'Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.' Human efforts are all in vain. Man's so-called good works are all valueless to win salvation. 'Salvation is of the Lord,' and 'the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles'; whosoever will may have it, without money or price. 'The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' The last time I preached I spoke on the 10th of Acts, where it says about the Saviour, 'To Him give all the prophets witness that, through His name, *whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.*'"

"And do you mean to say that your sins are all forgiven, and that you are saved, Spurgeon?" continued his first interrogator.

"Through God's grace I can most certainly say so. I have had that joy for more than a year now."

"Well, that is presumption, and no mistake." "Did you ever hear the like?" "That's rather good to believe," put in a chorus of voices at once.

Nothing daunted, the assailed one replied, "How can it be presumption to believe God? If my salvation depended on my good works, I might well be filled with doubt and uncertainty; but if it depend, as it does, on the perfectly finished and accepted work of the Lord Jesus for me, it would be presumption to doubt that salvation, when God says so plainly in His Word to every believing soul, 'Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace' (Luke vii.). When an awakened sinner once asked, 'What must *I* do to be saved?' God's Spirit replied, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved.*' And further, He has said in Ephesians ii., 'By grace *are ye saved* through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, *not of works*, lest any man should boast.' It surely cannot be presumption to believe the God of truth, when He says He sent His Son to save me, and that, when I trust in Him, I am saved."

"But you do not give sufficient place to our works," put in the senior demonstrator, who had been listening quietly till now.

"If God gives them no place, sir, had we not better leave them out of consideration? It says in Romans iv., '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. 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.*' Our works are either 'wicked' (Col. i. 21) or 'dead' (Heb. ix. 14), and certainly they cannot save us. Christ's work is finished, by it God has been glorified; and it is due to Christ that the one who forswears his own works, and trusts alone in Him, should partake of the benefits and fruits of that atoning work of His, by which alone can sin be put away."

"Ah! that makes it far too easy," said one; "Depend upon it, Spurgeon, you are all wrong," said another; and with varying other such comments the gathering broke up, and the dissector was left alone to pack up his tools in quietness, wondering the while what God would bring out of the incident. The bread of life had been simply presented; whether any were hungry enough to eat thereof, was a question. At any rate, the young believer found comfort to his heart in the words, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccles. xi. 1), and, "So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. lv. 11).

Two days later this young student was again busy with his scalpel and forceps, sitting alone at a table, when one of his seniors, named J—,

brought his "part," instruments, and book, and seated himself opposite to him, and began to dissect. Work went on quietly for a little, and then J—— said, "That was strange stuff you were telling the fellows the other afternoon. I said nothing at the time, but I don't believe what you were saying. I don't at all pretend to be a religious chap myself, but I am sure a man would need to work hard to get to heaven. Your way of it would not be mine at all, if I cared for that sort of thing, which I don't."

"It is not my way, J——, it is God's, and that makes an immense difference. When the Lord was upon earth, and the Jews came and asked Him, 'What shall we do that we might work the works of God?' do you know what He answered them?"

"No. What?"

"Jesus answered and said unto them, 'This is the work of God, that ye *believe* on Him whom He hath sent' (John vi. 29). To believe in the Son of God is all that you or I have to do to get saved."

"But, man, it stands to reason that we ought to do something ourselves. Why, by your way everybody may get saved. Do you believe they will?"

"No, I believe nothing of the sort; for alas, all will not take the place of being lost sinners, and hence do not feel their need of a Saviour, and so do not trust Him. His words are true: 'They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' The whole, the

righteous—or those who think they are such—need Him not, but sinners are welcome to Him. As one of the latter, I have received Him, and He has saved me out and out, blessed be His name !”

“Oh, that’s easily said, but I don’t believe in your way of salvation at all, and you will never convince me that that is the way to be saved”; and so saying J—— relapsed into silence, shortly after left the table, and for the rest of their student-life took uncommon good care not to give an opportunity for a *tête-à-tête* with the man who knew Christ had saved him.

Some years rolled by; student days ceased, the ardently longed-for diplomas and degrees were possessed; and while J—— went into practice in the far West, the other went north of the Tweed, to extend his knowledge, while filling the post of house physician in a large hospital. To that same city, in course of time, who should come but J——, attracted, as he supposed, by certain medical advantages of which he would avail himself; but led doubtless by the gracious hand of God, who had not taken His eye off him since the day an arrow, shot at a venture, had pierced the worldly coat of mail he wore in the London dissecting-room. Great was J——’s surprise to find his former acquaintance chief in those wards where he wanted to gather clinical information. Flung thus across his path again, J——’s friend felt greatly interested in him, and one Lord’s Day said, “Do you ever go to hear the Word of God preached now?”

"Sometimes; but I have not been since I came north. Where do you go?"

"I? Oh! I go to —— Street."

"Who preaches there?"

"The preachers are various."

"Do they preach well?"

"That would be an open question. I believe they preach the truth, and that is what you and I want. You might do worse than come"; and so saying, a little notice of the meeting was handed to J——, which he took, with the remark, "Perhaps I will turn in some night."

That evening the preacher was reading the 7th of Luke, when the door gently opened, and the unbelieving, but evidently interested, young doctor entered. His surprise was not small to find in the preacher the one who had invited him; but the Lord's sermon of twelve words: "THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN. THY FAITH HATH SAVED THEE; GO IN PEACE," soon riveted him; and though he did not go "in peace," he left impressed, and aroused to a sense of his need and danger, such as he had never experienced before.

The next Lord's Day found the doctor again present, as an aged and grey-haired servant of God sweetly unfolded the touching parable of Luke xv., and showed how, when man was *lost*, Jesus came after him; when he was *dead*, how the Spirit quickened him; and when he returned *repentant*, how the Father welcomed and rejoiced over him.

Conviction of sin was now evident in the young physician, and two Lord's Days later, when he again heard his medical friend preach from the words, "Wilt thou go with this man?" (Gen. xxiv. 58), he felt he must decide for Christ that night.

He stayed to the meeting for anxious inquirers; and then, in converse with his friend, as they walked towards the hospital together, admitted that he had never been easy since the conversation in the dissecting-room. Persuaded in his mind that what he had heard was not true, he had gone home, searched the Bible for support, only to find that he was wrong himself, and that what he had heard was the truth. Convinced that he was wrong, and that God's salvation was free to all, by simple faith in Jesus, he had balanced the blessings of the gospel against "the pleasures of sin for a season"; the devil had kicked the beam the wrong way, so he shut up the Bible, and turned again to the world with its sin and folly, but had never had an hour's peace. Now he saw he was lost, and was asked, "Do you believe that Jesus came to save the lost?"

"I do; I believe He came to save me, and I believe in Him."

"Then are you not saved?"

"That is just the difficulty. I don't feel sure."

"Well," said his friend, "if God is worth believing on two counts, why not on the third? When God says in His Word you are a lost sinner, what say you?"

"I believe Him," he replied.

"Good. And when He says He sent His Son to die for you, and that if you trust in Him you shall be saved, what do you say?"

"I believe Him, with all my heart."

"Quite right. Now then, when He says, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life' (John iii. 36), are you going to doubt him?"

"That won't do. If He speaks truly on the two counts, He must speak as truly on the third. Yes, I see it. I believe in His Son, and I have everlasting life. He says it, and it must be true. Thank God, I am saved, forgiven—without any works of my own—by simple faith in Jesus."

"One question more: 'Wilt thou go with this Man?'" "I will go!" was the emphatic reply; and the doctor started for glory, and is yet on his road, sure of the end through grace.

Reader, have you started yet? If not, just start at once.

W. T. P. W.

"SOMETHING TELLS ME I AM NOT RIGHT."

YEARS ago, at the close of a gospel meeting, held in a farm cottage in the beautiful valley of Glendale, Northumberland, G. W——, a young man, waited behind. It was our custom, at that time, to spend a little time in united prayer at the close of the gospel preaching.

This is important, and commendable. It is an expression of the dependence and confidence that honours God; and which God delights to honour. The exercise is good for the Lord's people; and leads to blessing.

As we rose from our knees I noticed that this young man was evidently in great distress. He was trembling greatly, and big drops of perspiration rolled down his face.

Approaching him, I said, "You seem to be in great distress: what is troubling you?"

"Oh," he said, "it is my sins; my whole life comes before me; and sins I had long forgotten seem staring me in the face. I do not know what to do."

"Why not turn to the Saviour," I said, "the Lord Jesus Christ; who in His grace and love died to save sinners like you? 'His blood cleanseth from all sin' (1 John i. 7). Can't you trust Him? 'This Man receiveth sinners'" (Luke xv. 2).

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I know all that; I believe everything you have said in your preaching; but *something tells me I am not right.*"

"What is that something?" I asked.

"I do not know," he replied, "but something keeps telling me I am not right."

"Well, we had better turn to the Scriptures and hear what the Lord says. His words are reliable. Do you believe what He says?"

"Yes, I do," he replied with emphasis.

Thereon turning to John v. 24, I read it slowly;

and then asked him, could he honestly say he was one *who heard the words of Jesus, and believed on God who sent Him?*

"Yes," he said, in a quiet, subdued way.

"Very well, listen, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me *hath everlasting life.*' If that is true you are all right."

Again he said "Yes," looking me full in the face.

"Then next, the Lord says, '*Shall not come into condemnation.*' If that be true, you are all right."

"Yes, I must be."

"Then again He says, '*but is passed from death unto life.*' If that is true, you are all right."

"Now, whether will you listen to that 'something' you spoke of a minute ago, or to *the words of Jesus?*"

"I'll listen to the words of Jesus," he replied, as he held out his hand, with a smile breaking on his face.

Gladly I grasped his hand, saying, "Thank God, that's right; let God be true, and every man a liar, your own heart into the bargain."

It was grand to see him go round the room, shaking hands with all the Christians who remained.

We knelt together again, to thank God for His mercy to another weary burdened one, who had come to Jesus and obtained rest.

When he reached home a most interesting scene transpired. This I had from others.

Opening the door with a bang, he said, "Oh, let

us praise the Lord ; He has saved my soul ! Father ! mother ! let us get down on our knees and praise the Lord."

And earnestly and heartily he thanked God for His mercy to him, and also prayed that his father and mother, brothers and sisters, might all be brought to the knowledge of the Saviour. His father was dumb. But next morning when he went with the rest of the men to attend to the horses, he told them, "Sic a thing happened i' wur hoose last night, as never happened since I had a hoose." On their inquiring what that was, he said, "A prayer was offered up in't."

"An' whae pat up the prayer?"

"Wur Geordie," he replied, "and 'pend upon't he 'mazed us a'. Aw never thowt there was sae muckle i' wur Geordie. He prayed like a priest, and gaw's a' a word."

What the ultimate effect was upon the father and mother of this bright, happy confession of Christ on the part of their son, I am unable to say, as they soon after left the district. But G. W—— himself is married, and lives a steady, consistent life in another part of the county.

May this simple record be used of the Lord in helping into peace, others who may be burdened before God with a sense of their guilt and sin. Simple faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is God's way of blessing and salvation.

Reader, do you trust in Him, and believe His words?

J. G.

A NAKED SINNER SAVED.

DEAR friends, let me tell you, once for all, that you cannot make yourselves fit for heaven, you cannot clothe yourselves with the garments of salvation, you cannot renew your own nature.

Somebody says, "But, sir, you discourage people by telling them that they cannot change themselves." That is the very thing I want to do. "Oh, but, I want to set a man working!" says one. Do you? I want to set him not working; that is to say, I want him to have done with any idea that salvation is of himself; I want him to drop that thought altogether, and just to feel that, if his salvation is to come out of himself, he has to get everything out of nothing, and that is not only difficult, but impossible. He has to get life out of his own death, to get cleanness out of the filthy ditch of his own nature, out of which it can never come.

Discouragement of this sort is the very thing I always aim at in my preaching. I am afraid that there are many people who are made to believe that they are saved when they are not. My belief is that God never healed a man till he was wounded, and that He never made a man alive till he was dead; it is God's way first to drag us down, and make us feel that we are nothing, and can do nothing, and that we are shut up to be saved by grace, that Christ must save us from beginning to end, or else we can

never be saved at all. Oh, if I could but bring all my hearers not only into a state of discouragement, but into a condition of despair about themselves, then I should know that they were on the road to a simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! Our extremity is God's opportunity. Oh, how I long to get you all to that extremity!

“ 'Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large ;
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge.”

It is absolute helplessness and death that lays the sinner where Christ can deal with him. When he is nothing, Christ shall be everything. Have you never heard of the man who saw a person drowning, and plunged into the river after him, and swam to him? The poor fellow tried to clutch him, but the swimmer knew that if he let the man get hold of him he could not bring him ashore, so he kept swimming round him; the man went down, and still his rescuer swam round him, but did not touch him. He went down again, because the swimmer could see that he was still too strong; and when he was just going down the third time, then the wise rescuer laid hold of him, for he was helpless, and so could not impede his deliverer. That is what you have to be, dear friends; when you cannot do anything, then you cannot any longer hinder Christ; but as long as you can do a hand's turn you will hamper my dear Lord and Master. Your business is just to yield yourself right up into His hands to be saved alone by Him.

“Are there to be no good works?” asks some one. Oh, yes! plenty of them, as soon as ever Christ has saved you. The first thing the man does when he has quitted his own works, and given himself up entirely to Christ, is to cry, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Thou hast saved me. Now I will do all I can, not for my self-salvation, but to glorify Thee, and show to men what Thy grace has done, and so express in some poor, feeble way the gratitude I feel for the free salvation which Thy grace has given to me.”

Some of you will have to go down once or twice more before the Lord Jesus Christ will give you eternal salvation; you are too good yet, you are too big yet, you are too strong yet, you have such a very respectable character yet, that you are not content to come in at Christ's back door, where He receives none but poor, guilty sinners. You are not quite naked yet, brother, there is a rag or two of your own righteousness about you. You will have to be stripped, and then you shall put on the robe of God's righteousness. You have only a bone or two broken, and you can crawl about a little; you have to be ground to powder yet.

When you become just nothing, when you have no good feelings, no good desires, or anything you can bring to Christ—when you come to Christ, not *with* a broken heart, but *for* a broken heart—then He will receive you, then you will be the kind of man that Christ came to save. Oh that He would bring you to that point very speedily, for His dear name's sake! Amen.

"I MURDERED HER."

DURING the progress of a great "revival," meetings were often held in a large hall. One evening at the close of the sermon hundreds of persons remained, and Christians were busy here and there speaking a word to the impenitent or the inquiring. A lady called the attention of a minister of the gospel to a tall, grey-haired man with a sad and even stern face, and in a few moments the servant of the Lord was by his side. "This is the first time in more than thirty years," said the gentleman, "that I have heard a sermon, and I was attracted to this place by mere curiosity. I cannot converse with you freely here, but would be glad to see you to-morrow."

The next day they met by appointment in the preacher's study, and the stranger gave in substance the following statement: He had commenced his public life as a lawyer in Kentucky, but had removed with his family to a western territory. In his new home success constantly crowned his efforts to acquire wealth, and his pride kept even pace with his prosperity. He was not only an infidel, but a bitter, vindictive infidel, who, like Saul of Tarsus, verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. It was his delight to scoff at the Bible, and again and again he bought copies of the sacred Scriptures to read certain portions to men and boys who

gathered about him, and then to tear them to pieces with profane and obscene jesting.

He had given strict orders that no religious book nor paper should be admitted into his house, and every member of his family was forbidden to listen to the preaching of God's Word. At length his wife's health began to fail, and she had a sorrowful, wistful look, which he attributed to her illness, although she uttered no complaint, and expressed no concern about anything. A few months previous to the interview with the pastor, business had called him to the city where he was seen in the hall, and his little girl had accompanied him. One day, as they were passing a book-store, she said, "Papa, before we left home, mamma gave me some money, and asked me to buy her a hymn book; please, let me get it." "No," he replied with an oath, "I will have no nonsense about my house."

Immediately on their return home he heard his wife say to their little girl, "Did you not bring me the book?" The child replied, "No, mamma, I did not forget, but papa would not let me buy it." The mother made no reply, but in less than four weeks afterwards she was in the grave. "And now," exclaimed the man in husky tones and with a look of remorse and terror, "I murdered her; I murdered her by inches, for I found out after her death that my infidelity had broken her heart. She so longed for some one to speak to her about Jesus, but she dared not ask the privilege. I would not permit her to read His name even in a hymn book, and she died

and was buried without a prayer. Oh, I am damned, I am damned," groaned the wretch, "and an everlasting hell justly awaits me."

The pastor was so overcome for a moment by the horrible recital that he could only say, "Let us bow before God"; and the chair at which the murderer kneeled rattled on the floor in his grasp, as his strong frame shook and quivered with agony. But with the gospel of God's wondrous love to a lost world, that hated and murdered His dear Son, lying upon the study table, there was nothing to do but to read to the trembling sinner, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28); "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10); "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); "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8); "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7); "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15); "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

Three days later the same minister was holding an open-air meeting. He had announced as the first hymn—

"O precious blood, O glorious death,
By which the sinner lives !
When stung with sin, this blood we view,
And all our joy revives.
The blood that purchased our release,
And washes out our stains,
We challenge earth and hell to show
A sin it cannot cleanse."

While the people were singing, he observed the wife-murderer, who beckoned to him the moment he caught the preacher's eye. Descending from the stand, the man approached him, and whispered with uncontrollable emotion of joy, "That blood has cleansed even me; tell the people that it can save the vilest wretch that ever lived." He afterwards made a public confession of the name he had hated, and has since departed to be with the Lord.

But his message is here repeated for the encouragement of any bruised sinner who fears that his day of grace has passed. Jesus can save, He can save the chief of sinners, He can save *now*, and *will* save every one that believeth.

"He breaks the power of reigning sin,
He sets the prisoner free ;
His blood can make the foulest clean ;
His blood availed for me."

ANON.

N.B.—"The life of the flesh is IN THE BLOOD : and I have given it to you upon the altar, to MAKE AN ATONEMENT FOR YOUR SOULS ; for IT IS THE BLOOD that MAKETH ATONEMENT FOR THE SOUL" (Lev. xvii. 2).

"GOD HAS FORGIVEN ME."

IN the *Gospel Messenger* for October 1912 is the article, "Are You Forgiven?" relating the conversion of an old man, over eighty years of age.

I knew this old man well. He lived in Kendal. His name was Neddy Hine, and his wife's name Molly.

One Sunday he went to church and there heard the parson speak about men meeting God in their sins.

Neddy trembled and was sore troubled as he thought of his eighty years of sins.

His wife said, "I thought, for sure, he was going wrong in his head."

Neddy kept a shop and sold coals, while strokes and crosses in chalk on the back of the door indicated what was owing to him.

When Neddy got forgiven his joy was great, and one day he said to his wife "Molly, I'll tell thee what!"

"Well, what noo, Ned?"

"Well," said Ned, "I quite believe God has forgiven me, what does thoo say if we forgive o' these?" (pointing to the strokes and crosses). To this Molly replied, "I'm willing, if thoo is," and taking a dish-cloth she wiped out all the marks.

This was about thirty-six years ago. I frequently visited Neddy, reading the Word to him. He was

often in great pain, but he drank in the Word with tears of joy.

I hope some readers of the *Gospel Messenger* may, as Neddy Hine was, be arrested of God to consider how they dare meet God in their sins. G. H.

PAUL'S COMMISSION.

“Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 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. 17-18.

PAUL'S great commission from heaven is a most remarkable one. He was Christ's greatest ambassador to the nations. He was separated from his mother's womb for the declaration of the glorious gospel to those who sat in heathen darkness—in the utter blindness and intense beggary of sin. The nations Paul went to were not cannibals. They were the cultured people of Greece and Rome.

The teachers of Greece and the culture of its Platos and Socrates had not lifted them out of the darkness of their moral condition into the light or knowledge or intelligence of God. A mere boy of sixteen, if truly converted through Paul's preaching, knew far more about God than the wisest of the Grecian philosophers.

Four striking things come out in Paul's grand commission.

Deliverance from darkness. Deliverance from Satan. The preaching of forgiveness. Inheritance among the sanctified.

DARKNESS,

it is needless to say, is not physical, but spiritual or moral. It is the ignorance of God, and hence ignorance of the true condition of man by nature and practice. The opening of the eyes is inward—the eyes of the mind and heart. The eyes are the vehicles of the mind's sight or understanding. These are by nature blinded by sin, and hence are closed to the true knowledge of God. This is true of the world's wisest scientist or philosopher until he receives the gospel in the meekness of a little child.

Man in nature will not come to the light of the gospel because his deeds are evil. The true light exposes the darkness, or the evil practice of men. They shun it as the bats or the owls shun the light of day.

Had God not communicated the light of the glorious gospel to men, they never would have sought it. God is light, and when He shines on men He irradiates them with the light of life. Christ was and is the light of God, shining for all men. That light is for every man that comes into the world, just as the sun shines for all, whether they be in the darkness of an inner prison, or amid the natural beauties of the mountain top.

DELIVERANCE FROM SATAN.

Satan is a great personality, but his power is not omnipotent nor unlimited. Nor is he omniscient. He is only a created being, and therefore a creature of God. He is the god of this world. He is the prince of the power of the air. He is the leader or the prince of the evil principalities. He is also the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. The first act of disobedience against God's government was instigated by satanic power. After the millennium has passed he will again instigate rebellion against the seat of God's government on the earth. He has the power of death in his hand, and can terrorise men through it.

Death he ever used as the greatest terror over sinful men. This power could not have been his but for sin. "The sting of death is sin." The darkness serves his subtle purposes and crafty designs against men and God. Break the power of darkness over men, and they will not long remain under his dominion. Let the light of the gospel travel in, and you stir up his enmity and rage to persecution.

Satan gathered all his forces against Christ on the cross, but He defeated and completely shattered them. Thus He worked deliverance for those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. As David overcame Goliath, so Christ overcame death, and broke the power of Satan. Deliverance from the Philistines was the result to Israel. Peace and joy denoting victory followed. Thus was all Israel in the good of David's triumph.

Christ is now triumphant. His triumph is ours. We are victorious in our minds and hearts as we look at Him risen and glorified.

FORGIVENESS PREACHED.

If forgiveness is preached then it is proclaimed or offered. In that case we have not to pray to obtain it. We accept it as God's offer to us in Christ and thank Him for it. The knowledge of God's eternal forgiveness is a great blessing to the soul oppressed with the sense of guilt. The sacrifices that the Israelites brought daily to be offered brought their sins to remembrance. They all prayed for the forgiveness of their sins because they did not know God's eternal forgiveness through the blood of Christ. Christ's purgation of sins was not known, nor His session at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. His one sacrifice to God put sin away for ever, and gave God a righteous basis to eternally forgive us. In consequence of Christ's finished work God says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

The knowledge of this, received on the authority of God's unerring Word in the power of the Holy Ghost, who testifies in the written Word to the great and glorious fact, disabuses the mind of all the terror of the threatening law. In the gospel we learn that all the law's demands have been met, its terrible penalty borne, and its curse removed. Because of this the law is now on our side. The law brings righteous terror to the unforgiven, but has no terror

for the man who is forgiven. The man who knows that all his liabilities are met knows that the law, as the expression of God's government, is on his side. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." The forgiven man fears God because he is forgiven. He has learnt grace by the knowledge of God's forgiveness. Grace humbles; it teaches in righteousness and makes the forgiven soul thoroughly happy. If we fail grace restores, lifts us up and makes us happy again.

INHERITANCE AMONG THE SANCTIFIED.

The saints are God's heirs and He will inherit all things through the saints in company with Christ. The ever-blessed God in all the fulness of His love, displayed in Christ, is ours. This is not true of the angels. The angels are only servants. The sanctified are the sons of God and begotten of His nature. As the sanctified we are set apart for God's infinite delight and pleasure. We are thus sanctified according to the nature of God. We are made partakers of His holiness. This could only be in Christ where all is new creation.

Christ the eternal Son of God is Heir of all things and we are His joint-heirs. We are therefore heirs of God. We could not be heirs of God without being His sons, as well as His beloved children. The angels are never said to be heirs of God, nor will they be associated with Christ as joint-heirs in His glorious inheritance. We are one in life and nature with Christ, as Man risen from the dead. The

inheritance has all been purchased and redeemed by His most precious blood, but He will yet claim and take it by His Almighty power. Every usurper shall be cast down and put out of his estate. He shall yet be supreme and reign alone and have all the sanctified company of men associated with Him. "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him."

Reigning is yet future, but suffering and rejection is the present portion of the sanctified company. We do not like suffering, and therefore the professing Church has assumed to reign. She has been corrupted from her fidelity to Christ and taken the reigns of government in the world where her blessed Head and Master got a cross and a borrowed grave. Because of this the world utilises her and uses her for its own selfish end or purpose. Satan is behind all this to destroy the testimony of Christ showing out through her. Paul's great mission has been hindered, while the Church now is a sad failure. "Ye have reigned as kings without us, and I would to God ye did reign that we also might reign with you," said the great apostle, who had himself suffered the loss of all things.

But the Lord is coming in person to call the Church to Himself and take the inheritance with her. What a bright moment and glorious prospect is in view. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and am sat down with My Father on His throne." "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I shall be his God, and he shall be My son."

"IT IS THE BLOOD THAT SAVES."

RECENTLY a young man of singularly attractive appearance was called to die after a lingering illness. He had been reared almost wholly without the knowledge of the gospel; but when its precious invitations and assurances were first read to him he listened with the most intense interest. In a very little while the Spirit of God led him to trust in Jesus for salvation with a childlike confidence and a cloudless hope seldom equalled.

From that moment until the hour of his departure he never once wavered, but with increasing joy and eagerness awaited the summons to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. During the three or four weeks that elapsed before he fell asleep, the truth of God's Word, or the certainty of his salvation as already accomplished, did not present itself to his mind for a single moment in the form of a doubt; and he frequently gave utterance to expressions that seemed at times to fall from the lips of one who had been caught up into paradise, and had heard unspeakable words.

On a certain occasion his father, who had not attended a place of worship for many years, was standing at the foot of the bed, watching the smiles that played like sunshine on the pale face of the sufferer, and listening to the wonderful testimony that was borne to the loveliness of Christ. At length

the strong man bowed his head, and with streaming tears exclaimed, "Oh, if I were as happy as that boy, I too would wish to die."

"Father," said the dying youth, "it is the blood that saves"; and then with tender exhortations he urged those who were so dear to him to trust in Jesus, to trust Him only, to trust Him wholly.

Yes, it is the blood alone that saves; and there is no sin man has ever been guilty of, however enormous in magnitude, or however painful in remembrance, but the blood of Christ can cleanse away.

The salvation of sinners has always been connected with blood-shedding and death. The reason is obvious, "for sin's wages is death." The law of holiness and truth is, that the soul that sinneth shall die. Death, then, is God's just appointment to man in consequence of sin. The only way, therefore, of putting away sin was by death; and that no sinful man could die for another is evident, because he must die for himself. The Son of God, on whom death had no claim, was able to die for others; and He in matchless grace died for us, the just for the unjust, and thus a perfect and eternal salvation has been completed for man.

It is the blood which justifies (Rom. v. 9), which sanctifies (Heb. ix. 13), and glorifies (Rev. i. 5, 6), and it will be the theme of the redeemed in heaven to the glory of the Saviour's precious name for ever.

ANON.

THE GENTLEMAN JOCKEY.

THE Calcutta race course was thronged with spectators, and a constant stream of various vehicles was rapidly wending its way along the dusty high road leading to the scene of attraction.

The grandstand was crowded, and many fair faces and manly forms bent eagerly forward as the dropped flag and cries of "They are off" amongst the crowd, told that the principal race had started.

There were twelve riders in all—eleven professional and one amateur. As they neared the winning post, conspicuously forward rode a young man, whose slender, graceful carriage, and strikingly handsome face, with finely chiselled features, plainly distinguished him as the "gentleman jockey."

Another sixty seconds the race will be over, and he stands a good chance of winning. But his horse is suddenly checked, and as the others rush past, he is seen to lean heavily forward, when a dozen friendly on-lookers break the ring, and gently lift him from the saddle, which is dyed with blood flowing from his mouth.

The news spread, and many personal friends crowded round to offer sympathy and suggestions; but the doctor's authoritative words, "I will take him to hospital," settled all questions. And when G—— returned to consciousness he found himself

under the skilful treatment and kindly care of the doctor and nurses of the Calcutta hospital.

"Let me write home for you, old fellow, your people will be anxious." "Take my advice, and get a year's leave and run home," had been the friendly suggestions poured into his ears, as he slowly recovered from the low fever which succeeded the breaking of the blood-vessel.

But to all he gave the same refusal, "No, thanks; I will write when I am able."

Proud, and sensitive to a degree, he could not bear to write home when in ruined fortune, as he regarded himself (for he had bet heavily upon the race, and lost), much less to return there. And however his warm, loving heart may at times have yearned for home, his strong *will* refused to yield to the impulse of his feelings.

Doubtless he had such longings; and the enforced quiet of a private ward grew so irksome, that, at his urgent request, he was moved into a public one, where he lay some weary weeks, until able to leave for the hospitable quarters of a military friend.

Long afterwards he was asked, "Were you ever spoken to about your soul when in hospital?"

"Not I," he replied; "an old Scripture reader used to come round sometimes, to read at the bedsides, but the Roman Catholics had tickets hung on theirs, so I used to borrow one, and put it up when I saw him coming, and then he passed me by. I did not want to be bored, you know."

And so G—— lay in the Calcutta hospital, proud, silent, reserved, bitterly lamenting the “ill luck” which had put him there; all the while unconscious that at home loving hearts were breaking for tidings of him, and equally unconscious that God had now stepped in upon the scene, where previously Satan had full sway, and that *this* was His first loud, long, unmistakable call to His wandering child to return!

* * * * *

It is a wild, dark night at the fashionable watering place of St Leonards. All along the coast a storm is raging, and few care to brave the fury of the wind and rain who can remain in shelter.

But inside the little meeting-room, where some are assembled for prayer, the storm seems unable to penetrate, and as, one after another, their voices rise in earnest supplication to the Throne of Grace, the heart seems to recognise it is in an atmosphere of settled peace.

This night the burden of the prayers seems to be for a young man, “the only son of his mother, and she a widow,” and with earnest, anxious hearts many followed the petition of one, “Lord, look upon the dear lad, spare him to come home, and meet him in rich, eternal blessing.”

Yes: the way home for G—— was being paved with prayers by the children of God.

When the news had reached him, some three weeks previously, that his beloved father had been called home, he was far up the country at Dacca, having

sufficiently recovered to enter into an engagement with a rajah to hunt his pack of hounds.

Greatly broken down by the tidings of the sudden removal of his father, whose patient, unselfish life he so well remembered, he at once wrote home. "I feel, when it is too late, what a bad son I have been to the best of fathers; but if ever a man lived a blameless life, and deserved to get to heaven, he did."

Poor boy! he had yet to learn that heaven is not gained on such terms as these.

A telegram, in reply to his letter, with an urgent entreaty to return to his mother, was responded to by his arrival six weeks later.

What a time of mingled feelings of joy and sorrow! A father lost—a brother regained; but a brother still a stranger to his father's God.

His sister went down to the London docks to meet him on the arrival of the steamer, and arranged for him to breakfast next morning at B—— Crescent, where she was staying, and where he was warmly welcomed by her host, Mr B——, who gave thanks to God for his safe arrival, praying for blessing to his soul also.

This was his first introduction to the Lord's people, with whom his family had thrown in their lot. And subsequent reference to it showed it had left its impression.

And now amongst the Lord's people at St Leonards fresh interest was evinced by the arrival of the handsome, delicate-looking young man. At

first he seemed touched by it, specially one day when Mr E—— gave an account of his “conversion,” and spoke of the wild, fast life he had lived in London, and its utter dissatisfaction. G—— covered his face with his hand, while most surely his heart echoed at the moment the Prodigal’s cry of need—“I,” too, “perish with hunger.”

But to one whose life, since eighteen, had been spent roaming the world—the cities and jungles of India, the bush of Australia, the wilds of New Zealand—the quiet home life soon became too irksome, and again this poor world in its polluted streams of pleasure was resorted to, and over-heated ballrooms and crowded billiard-rooms rapidly increased the disease in his right lung.

G—— was conscious of it, for he would often say, in reply to a remonstrance about his rashness, “I know I’ve not long to live, so I may as well enjoy myself while I can.”

Having gone up to London to friends about this time, the Croydon Races proved too strong an attraction to be resisted. He went to them; as usual bet heavily, and as usual *lost*! I say “as usual,” for as was often remarked to him, it was striking how God would not allow him to prosper in his present career, how He would not *smooth* the downward road for him, but rather by failure and disappointment in his prospects seemed ever seeking to draw him off it.

And so prayer continued going up, but as yet the answer was delayed, and trembling hearts at times

would cry, "How long, O Lord? how long?" G—— decided to winter in the South of France and immediately got in with the fastest betting set in Pau. But in the midst of all, the Lord still gave him a testimony through His people, and Miss L——, an aged Christian, used to call, and speak to him about his soul.

So the winter passed; and later he rejoined his mother and sisters at Norwood. Here he was induced to consult a Christian doctor, and again made the subject of special and united prayer in the neighbourhood.

After a careful examination of his chest, the doctor plainly told him the seriousness of his case, adding he did not think he could live more than a year in England—perhaps two or three abroad.

In relating his interview with the doctor afterwards, he said, "Didn't my blood curdle, when he said I couldn't live, but I didn't let him see it. I said, 'Ah! just so, doctor, I thought as much.'" This was intensely characteristic; his extreme reserve in showing emotion, or expressing his feelings, often causing him to be misunderstood.

Often at this time he would talk with his sisters of what he called "their religion," and say he thought they "lived upon prayers," they were so often at meetings.

At this time Mr E—— and others sought earnestly to see him, but half from physical weakness, combined with intense reserve in speaking of his feelings,

he invariably refused to see them when they called. One day in his anxiety Mr E—— wrote him a little note.

“Dear G——,—I *implore* you to give me *seven minutes’ conversation* at any hour you please.” He only laughed on reading it, but when pressed to reply in the affirmative said, “No, indeed, I shall not; if I saw *him*, I should have to see the *whole lot*, or they would think I saw him because he was the ‘big man’ of the place, though I do like him,” he added, “and believe *he is genuine*.”

Sometimes an old coastguard man, who was employed in going messages, would be shown into the dining-room, when G——, knowing him to be a decided Christian, would begin: “Well, Thomas, have you been at any prayer meetings lately?” “Yes, sir, and I am going to-night. Will you come, sir?”

“Ah, no, Thomas, I’m sorry to say, I can’t go *to-night*, but I will *to-morrow*.” Well knowing this was but a favourite excuse, Thomas would reply, “Do you know what day *to-morrow* is, sir?”

“Friday, isn’t it?” “No, sir, *to-morrow* is the devil’s day”; and his sister added, “*To-day* is God’s day.”

Often during these months the Lord’s coming was brought before him by his sisters, and leaning back in his chair smoking he would argue with them about it. “Why,” he would say, “if all you Christians were to go up to-night, it would create such a sensation in the world, that there would be a complete state of anarchy. Thieves would walk

into the banks and take what they want, everything would come to a standstill. How do you expect things would go on?" He was told that so far as could be gathered from Scripture the rapture of the saints would be only a "nine days' wonder," for God would then send a "strong delusion." He would generally end these conversations by saying, "There, now, that is enough preaching for to-night."

All this while the cry from many hearts was going up, "Lord, save him! Save him!" Surely the answer was at hand now!

Towards the close of March 1879 he again began to get restless, and, having been up to London to see his doctor, he returned one day saying he had advised him to go for a voyage to Australia. And as he was very prompt in his actions, and did not like to be interfered with, he had got a "List" and found a sailing ship of the "Orient" Line would be leaving the beginning of May, which would suit him. Such a suggestion fell like a thunderbolt, and at first his mother would not hear of his going! But his heart was set upon it, the restlessness of disease, as well as the false strength which it imparted at times, inducing him to think if he could only get out to Melbourne he "would be all right." And at last, after much persuasion and entreaty and consultation with three doctors, she consented.

At once he went up to London to take his berth in the sailing ship "L——" only to find all first-class cabins engaged, and he returned, not a little vexed, saying that, in consequence of his mother's vacilla-

tion, his plans were frustrated, and he would now be obliged to go by "P. & O."

Four days before the vessel sailed, a sister in the Lord, Mrs P——, came to call, bringing a niece with her who was on a visit. 'On the name of the vessel "Nepaul" being mentioned, she exclaimed, "I know Captain M——, he is a decided Christian. I will write to him for you." She did so at once, as also one of his sisters, begging of him, as opportunity occurred, to speak to her brother about his soul. A reply came the evening of the vessel's departure from Southampton, promising he would do so. A promise most faithfully kept.

That night eleven of the Lord's people met to commit him with special prayer to the Lord. It was a solemn and a real time for the giving over of this precious soul to the Lord. A time for placing him, unreservedly, in His hands, admitting our utter failure in having brought him to Christ, and owning the work must now be accomplished by Him alone.

Five weeks after came a long, full, and sympathising letter from the Captain, dated "Pont de Galle," telling how G—— had won all hearts on board, and with what genuine sorrow they had parted from him, their destination being Bombay.

On the arrival of G——'s steamer at Melbourne, a letter to his mother says:—

"I write these few lines by the S.S. 'Kent' which is just leaving. I am so ill, and miserable. I went to find the 'Brethren' meeting one evening, and met

a Mr H—— O——, who was preaching. I asked him to come visit me, which he will do. He knew Mr E——. Write to some of the brethren to come and visit me, I am so miserable.

"I pray every night for forgiveness and enough strength to get home—I can write no more.—Your affectionate son,—G——."

Surely, "When they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness, and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder" (Ps. cvii. 14).

Two weeks later came another letter:—

"My darling Mother,—I am so ill, I am quite unable to write a long letter. I have had a terrible accident through injecting an overdose of morphia myself. However, thanks to God, the doctor arrived in time to save me. I was almost gone.

"If I am only spared to get back to you all, to beg your forgiveness, I think I could say, Lord, *Thy* Will be done.

"Several of the brethren have been most kind coming to see me. I think I shall have strength to get back to you all again. Oh, why did I ever come! but who could foresee all that has happened to me.

"With love, dearest mother, to you, and the darling girls.—Your affectionate son,—G——."

Two weeks after this letter was received, came a telegram announcing his sudden removal, through the bursting of a blood-vessel.

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet, so He brings them unto their desired haven." . . . "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 29, 30 ; 43).

Later, by mail, came bright testimony from two or three who had visited him that he had turned to the Lord in deep self-judgment and repentance, and accepted "Eternal life as a free gift" from his Saviour and Lord.

A Christian lady, who often called and told him of Jesus and His love, found him repentant, self-judged, and very anxious to be saved. On one occasion G—— said, "I am sure that if I had died when I had that bad attack I would have been lost. I know that I have been spared, and have been given another chance to be ready." At another time he said, "It seems so mean and cowardly to go to God now, when I know that I can't live long."

This wile of the devil did not, however, succeed in preventing him coming to Jesus, and witnessing for Him. Two students lived in the same boarding-house, and one of them writes, "Many a time he bewailed to us his indifference (to divine things) when at home, at the same time *warning us to steer clear of those sins into which he had fallen*. To me also he said :—

" 'Owen, tell my mother,' as his thin worn hand pointed to a text on the mantelpiece, 'The gift of

God is Eternal Life,' 'tell my mother that is my hope.'" Soon after that a sudden and severe hæmorrhage from the lungs carried him off in a moment to see the Saviour, to whom he had so recently come in simple faith.

"Doth he not go after that which was lost, until he find it?" Jesus said, and so surely can we. There is no limit to grace.

"And all through the mountains thunder-riven,

And up from the rocky steep,

There arose a cry to the gate of heaven,

'Rejoice I have found My sheep!'

And the Angels echoed around the throne,—

'Rejoice! for the Lord brings back His Own!

Rejoice! for the Lord brings back His Own!'"

M.

"NO GOD!"

WE read of a certain man who said in his heart, "There is no God," but we do not read that he made the smallest endeavour to find out whether his conclusion was right or wrong.

He seems to have taken for granted that there was no God. Perhaps he may have wished that there was none, and his wish was father to his thought. Perhaps he desired to be his own master and could brook no interference. He wanted his own way, and very likely he craved

the gratification of his own will and passions; nor could he, therefore, tolerate anyone who had authority over him.

At any rate the man who wants his own way refuses the bridle.

He is a fool!

You may be sure that "will leads to want." As surely as the prodigal crosses the threshold of virtue and honesty he is on the inclined plane to destitution. He is bound, sooner or later, to learn his folly.

God claims to be our Master. We are His creatures, and, as such, should have no will but His. His law should be our pleasure, just as all creation yields Him homage—all but man—so that every star revolves in its orbit, and owns His control.

And how comes man to be the exception? Just because he is in revolt! He has rebelled against his Creator and is, spite of the theology of the century, a fallen being. You do not like the word "*Fall*"! Well, give me another which better explains the act of disobedience related, in Genesis iii. That man acquired, by that act, "the knowledge of good and evil," is nothing to his credit. It was a deplorable acquisition. He lost far more than he gained, for he found himself completely under the evil, and unable to do the good. He hid himself! He fled from God! He knew his nakedness. He shrank in cowardice from the eye of his Creator. He wished that there was "no God." Is that not a "*Fall*"?

Saving that of Lucifer could there have been a greater?

Oh! the train of, sorrow and of death and a "judgment to come" that has resulted from that "Fall"!

Look at its effects upon the sixteen hundred millions of human beings who live around us to-day, and on yourself as one of them!

Sixteen hundred millions beating, throbbing, hoping, fearing human hearts, and all of them "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked!" How appalling a Fall! Yes, though all the neo-theologians of the day deny it; their denial is their shame.

Let us put our foot down there and refuse to move it by a hair-breadth. Man is fallen. That fact must lie on the rock-bed. It must be accepted in its awful totality. Whatever is not out of gear, man is. His heart is desperately wicked every way; and, worse still, it is incurably so.

Amelioration, mending, is of no use. This has been tried and failed. Eastern philosophers have tried their systems without any saving result.

The law of Moses, "holy, just, and good" though it were, was "weak through the flesh," and justified no one.

The material is absolutely rotten (pardon the word, but I know not a better), and man is in himself utterly hopeless. Well do I know that I am writing what is intolerable to nature; but I am on solid ground, and have the witness of the misery of six thousand years on my side. The history of the race

during all that period bears unequivocal testimony to the truth I say. No man can truthfully deny these facts.

The assertion, "No God," is abundant proof. And the man who says it, audibly or inaudibly, is well called a "fool" (Ps. xiv. 1). I am sure that his folly consists chiefly in the fact that he does not know the God whose existence he foolishly denies. Did he know Him he would only wish to know Him better.

But God hates sin! Surely. Has sin made man happy? No. Then should not he too hate that which makes him unhappy? Certainly. Hence he so far agrees with God. Does God hate the sinner? No.

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

Yes, loved us—oh! learn the fact—for He has proved that love by the gift and death for us of "His only-begotten Son—that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). This is not amelioration, but salvation—and such a salvation!—so that we, who by grace believe, "love Him because He first loved us." What a difference! How could we love God unless there was a God to love? We love Him because He is what He is, and we would love and serve Him more!

Tell me, reader, if you question His existence, whether you have ever, in honesty of soul, sought

His face? I know some who had such misgivings, but who went on bended knee into His holy presence, saying, "O God, if Thou art, be pleased to reveal Thyself even to me." The result was all, and far more than all, that they desired. "Acquaint thyself now with Him, and be at peace."

J. W. S.

NOAH'S CARPENTERS.

"**Y**OU don't look at all like a patient, Miss Emmie," I said, as a fresh, rosy-cheeked girl of seventeen, the very picture of health—the daughter of Christian parents—came one day into my consulting-room.

"No, doctor. I'm not come for advice, but mamma said that she thought you would help me with a little subscription"; and at the same time she produced a collecting-book, entitled, "Indian Vernacular Society."

"What is the object of this society?"

"Oh, its object is to teach the little boys and girls in India to read the Bible in their own language; and I am doing all I can to help it forward," she answered most eagerly.

"A capital idea," I replied. "I suppose, then, the real object is that the children may hear of Jesus, and be brought to believe in Him, and thus be saved, and know that they are?"

"Exactly so."

"Well, I hope the Lord will use this effort to the blessing of many of them," I replied; "but before going further, may I ask you, Miss Emmie, did you ever hear of Noah's carpenters?"

"Noah's carpenters! No; who were they?" she replied, rather uneasily.

"They were people who may have helped to build the ark, by which others were saved, and yet never got in themselves."

"I never thought of them before."

"Very likely. But do you not think you are somewhat like them? Here you come trying to help other people to be saved, and yet, so far as I have ever heard, you are not saved yourself. Tell me, do you think you have ever yet come to Jesus yourself, and had your sins washed away? To put it plainly, are you saved?"

This query was followed by a lengthened silence; her face flushed crimson, her eyes filled, and then, with a burst of tears, she replied:—

"No, I know I am not saved. I see, I have been like Noah's carpenters."

The bow drawn at a venture had truly entered the joints of the harness, and she was from that moment a spirit-wounded and convicted sinner. A long and interesting conversation followed, which I need not relate. We looked at the Word of God, and she found out to her utter dismay and distress, that all her own righteousnesses were but as filthy rags in the sight of God, and that she was an

utterly lost soul, needing cleansing and pardon. In this awakened state, after prayer with her, she left me.

Some weeks rolled by, and I was wondering what had been going on in my young friend's soul, when she again came at my consulting hour. Her pale anxious face betrayed what her words soon confirmed, viz., that since we parted she had passed through days and nights of deep soul-anguish.

"Mamma said she thought I might come and see you again, for I am so miserable and wretched I don't know what to do"; and, indeed, she looked all she said.

"I am most glad to see you, Miss Emmie. I suppose to-day you want something for yourself, not for others?"

"Yes. I am most anxious to be saved, if I only knew how to come to Jesus; but I am so wicked, and my heart so hard, and I feel so dead."

"You must come to Him as you are—in all your sins—for He has said, 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.' Just believe Him simply. Take Him at His word."

"I do believe on Him, but I don't get any good from it. I don't feel any different."

"You must not look at your feelings; you must just hear what He says, and give heed to His word. Now, look at this verse," and I turned to John v. 24. "Mark what Jesus says, '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.' Now, tell me, who is speaking here?"

"Jesus."

"And to whom is He speaking?"

"To me."

"Well, do you hear His word?"

"Yes."

"And do you believe Him that sent Him? Do you believe that God sent Him to save you, to die for you, and to wash away your sins?"

"Yes, I truly believe He did."

"Now, then, see, you have complied with the two conditions given, you have *heard* and *believed*; listen to the three blessed consequences that the Lord says accrue to the one that *hears* and *believes*. Such an one '*hath everlasting life*,' that is a present possession. Inasmuch as you *hear* and *believe*, what does Jesus say you now possess?"

"He says I have '*everlasting life*.'"

"Good. Stick to that. But there is more in the verse. He says he that *heareth* and *believeth* '*shall not come into condemnation*.' That, you observe, provides for the *future*. There can be no condemnation for the one who believes in Jesus, because He Himself, on the cross, bore that condemnation. Now, since you have *heard* and *believed*, what does He say as to your future?"

"He says I '*shall not come into condemnation*.'"

"If He says you shall not, do you think you ever can?"

"No; of course not. He would not tell me what is not true. He cannot lie."

"Exactly so. Thus you see He meets the present and the future in this verse. Nor is that all. We all lay in death; we were each one 'dead in trespasses and sins,' and out of that state we pass the moment we hear His voice, for He quickens us by His word; and so He adds here that the one who *hears* and *believes* 'is passed from death unto life.' Nothing could be simpler or more blessed."

"Yes, I see it now. I have heard and believed, and, therefore, I have 'passed from death unto life.' Oh, how simple it all seems now!" and the pent-up feelings again got relief in a shower of tears, not now tears of conviction and distress, but those joyous, gladsome tears that will flow down the cheeks of a redeemed, pardoned, blood-washed sinner, when God's grace is tasted and enjoyed. I prayed with her, and thanked God for His grace in saving her; and she left full of peace and joy in believing.

Forty years have elapsed since my young friend found Jesus, but I rejoice to know she holds on her way, a bright, happy witness of the Lord's grace, and is an earnest labourer for Christ, and a true soul-seeker in her own quiet sphere.

Reader, where about are you? Are you a Noah's carpenter or a real genuine Christian? Let not this hour pass away and leave you as it found you. Did it find you unsaved? As you value your soul,

let it not pass away and be for ever a witness against you and your unbelief. Be persuaded to come to Jesus now. Then shall your future be bright and joyous, for you shall be saved, sanctified, and satisfied.

W. T. P. W.

OLD BOB'S CONVERSION.

IT was a bitterly cold day in early spring, when an old man of seventy tipped a load of coals at the door of the cottage in which his son lived.

He was bent and stiffened with hard labour, having worked as a quarryman from his youth. When he was too old for such hard work he managed to get a horse and cart, largely through the generous help of the farmers in the neighbourhood, who knew and respected him.

When he had tipped the coals, his daughter-in-law came out and said, "Oh, grandfather, do come in to the fire and warm yourself, and I will make you a cup of coffee. You must be cold."

"Cawd! A'm cawd baith outside an' in; aw'm jeest aboot deen, R——, maw wumman. Aw'll no fetch your coals much langer."

"Well, grandfather, if you're only ready to die that's the great thing," she remarked.

"Na, na, maw wumman. Aw'm nane ready to die."

"But you might be made ready," was her next remark, "if you trust the Lord and get saved; then it would be all right with you."

"*Saved!*" he exclaimed. "There's a mystery aboot that aw never can see throw."

"Oh, it's simple enough. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'"

"That's right enough, but whae can be sure aboot that?"

His daughter-in-law now sent her girl to ask me to come in. I was working just outside. The girl then came out and cried with her shrill, piping voice, "Mother says wull ee come and' speak to wur grandfaither?" Then came an angry voice from within, "Lassie, come in t' th' hoose whan aw bid yo'; what are yo' staunin' there bawlin' at!" When I went in he apologised for troubling me, and explained it was not *he* who sent for me.

His daughter-in-law now related what had passed between them, and I remarked, "It is a serious thing to have come to the end of one's life without knowing where one is going to spend eternity."

"Aye, but whae knaws that? How can a body be sure?"

"By listening to what the Lord says in the Scriptures," I replied. And then I quoted several passages such as: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "He that believeth on

Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already" (ver. 18). "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God has raised Him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*" (Rom. x. 9). "That seems plain and simple enough, does it not?"

"Aye," he said, "but if aw gat it into maw heid that aw was saved, aw wad hef to stop readin' the Bible."

"Stop reading the Bible," I exclaimed. "What do you mean by that?"

His answer was, "Well, wherever aw open't—frae Genesis to Revelation—aw always read what condemns me."

I could see God was at work with him, and that the light of the truth had so far entered as to convict him of his sinful and guilty condition before God. "Suppose, now," I said to him, "that you were guilty of several offences against the laws of the country; that you were apprehended, and in due course summoned to appear at the county court. You would, no doubt, feel very miserable, and anxious to know how matters would go with you. And let us suppose that you and Mr T——, solicitor at W——, were great friends, and that you wrote to him, telling him how you stood, and asking him to let you know what he thought of your prospects of getting clear at the court. By return post you get a book containing a statement of the law upon the various offences with which you were chargeable.

"You begin to read what is said about being 'drunk

and disorderly,' and you finish by saying to yourself, 'I am condemned there.' Then turning over the leaves of the book you read what is said about 'poaching.' On that count you also read your condemnation, and so with every other case. You are just about to close the book, saying sadly, 'Wherever I open it, I read my condemnation,' when your eye catches sight of a slip of paper pinned to one of the leaves. It is your friend's handwriting, and he says how sorry he is to learn of your painful position. But you need not trouble even to appear at court, for when your name is called he will answer to it, and also pay the several fines that may be imposed upon you.

"Now," I said, "have you never seen anything in the Bible corresponding to that slip of paper?"

He hastily glanced at me, and then with a hand on each knee, he sat for a time, silently gazing at the fire.

During this silence I inwardly prayed that God might open his eyes to see the way of salvation, and give him peace.

Presently, he lifted one of his hands and brought it down upon his knee with a thump, saying, "Aw'll tell yo' what it is, I believe I see't."

"What do you see?" I asked.

"Aw see the meaning of the death of Jesus on the cross; an' aw never saw that till this very minute. Yo' see, *He answered for me; an' paid for me; and aw gan clear.*"

"Yes," I said, "that's it."

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

It was now time he was going for another load of coals. And with my assistance he got into his cart and drove away to the pit.

When he got there, two or three men got hold of shovels and said, "Turn in here, Bob, an' we'll soon fill your cairt."

"Stop a minute," he said, "till aw tell yo' what aw've deen this mornin'."

"Oh, I know," said one of the men, "you've been down at the pub an' got yoursel' a glass o' the best ; an' you cudna deen better i' sic a mornin'."

"Na," he replied, "that's no' what aw've deen."

"What hae yo' deen then ?"

"Aw've trusted Jesus as maw Saviour ; an' aw've got peace. Aw've met wi' a man this mornin' that teld us the meanin' o' the death o' Jesus on the cross ; an' aw never saw that afore."

"Howts, Bob, man," one of them replied, "dinna try to gaur us believe yo' never heard that afore."

"Aye," he said, "mony's the times aw've heard it, an' read it ; but aw never saw how *aw* wes concerned i' the death of Jesus till this mornin'. Yo' see, *He answered for me ; an' paid for me ; an' aw gan clear.*"

The man who sold the coals was a Christian, and was a delighted listener to Old Bob's confession of

Christ; and he it was who related to me what I have just written.

Bob lived several years after; and though he did not seem to make much progress in the truth, he always rejoiced in the blessed fact that Jesus took his place on the cross, and suffered at the hand of infinite holiness and justice, on his behalf. As is said in Isaiah liii. 5, "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."

In his last illness he was very bright, and longed to go home to be with the Lord. J. G.

"THAT'S THE GOSPEL!"

ONCE when I was in the vestry, an Irishman came to see me. Pat began by making a low bow, and saying, "Now, your *Riverence*, I have come to ax you a question."

"Oh!" said I, "Pat, I am not a *Riverence*; it is not a title I care for; but what is your question? and how is it you have not been to your priest about it?"

He said, "I have been to him, but I don't like his answer."

"Well, what is your question?"

Said he, "God is just, and if God be just He must

punish my sins. I deserve to be punished. If he is a just God, He ought to punish me; yet you say God is merciful and will forgive sins. I cannot see how that is right; He has no right to do that. He ought to be just, and punish those who deserve it. Tell me how God can be just, and yet be merciful?”

“That is through the blood of Christ.”

“Yes,” said he, “that is what my priest said; you are very much alike there. But he said a good deal besides, that I did not understand; and that short answer does not satisfy me. I want to know how it is that the blood of Jesus Christ enables God to be just, and yet to be merciful.”

Then I saw what he wanted to know, and explained the plan of salvation thus:—

“Now, Pat, suppose you had been killing a man and the judge had said, ‘That Irishman must be hanged’!”

He said quickly, “And I should have richly deserved to be hanged?”

“But, Pat, suppose I was very fond of you, can you see any way by which I could save you from being hanged.”

“No, sir, I cannot.”

“Then, suppose I went to the Queen, and said, ‘Please, your Majesty, I am very fond of this Irishman. I think the judge was quite right saying that he must be hanged, but let me be hanged instead and you will then carry out the law.’ Now the Queen could not agree to my proposal; but suppose she could—and God can, for He has power greater

than all kings and queens—and suppose the Queen should have me hanged instead of you, do you think the policeman would take you up afterwards?”

He at once said, “No, I should think not; they would not meddle with me; but if they did, I should say, ‘What are you doing? Did not that gentleman condescend to be hung for me! Let me alone; shure, you don’t want to hang two people for the same thing, do ye?’”

I replied to the Irishman, “Ah, my friend, you have hit it; that is the way whereby we are saved! God must punish sin. Christ said, ‘My Father, punish Me instead of the sinner,’ and His Father did. God laid on His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the whole burden of our sins, and all their punishment and chastisement, and now that Christ is punished instead of us, God would not be just if He were to punish any sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. If thou believest in Jesus Christ the well-beloved and only begotten Son of God, thou art saved, and thou mayest go on thy way rejoicing.”

“Faith,” said the man, clapping his hands, “that’s the gospel. Pat is safe now; with all his sins about him, he’ll trust in the Man who died for him, and so he shall be saved.”

“‘It is finished!’ ‘He is risen!’

Ye who these blest words receive,

Peace in Him is now your portion,

Peace eternal He will give,—

‘Peace unto you!’

All who on His name believe.”

"A LEAP IN THE LIGHT."

"**T**HEN to you death will be a leap in the dark?"

"Well, yes, just so; I suppose it will be."

The one who made this terrible confession was a shoemaker of middle age, slowly nearing the grave under the fell power of consumption. Worse than this, he was an infidel—a determined, avowed sceptic. I had been asked to visit him in his attic quarters by an old friend, who was himself a shoemaker, but, through grace, a Christian, and naturally most anxious about his unbelieving acquaintance. His friend obtained his permission for me to call by saying that, as a physician, perhaps I could give him some prescription which would relieve his sufferings; and when he begged me to go, told me briefly of the sadly darkened state of the shoemaker's mind, urging me to put Christ before him if I could.

Having carefully examined him, and thus got his confidence by the interest which I displayed in his case, he asked me, at length, if I thought his condition amenable to cure. To this I replied that I was sorry to have to tell him I did not think he could recover.

"Then how long do you think I have got to live, doctor?" he said.

"A few months, perhaps a year," I replied.

He made no reply, and the stolid look of indifference on his gloomy face was in no way changed by my remark. As he said no more, I continued—

“And are you ready to die, Mr F——?”

“Of course I am, as ready as you, or any one else.”

“And what has made you ready? Are your sins forgiven, and all washed away in the precious blood of Christ?”

“Oh, that’s all stuff. I don’t believe in any of that nonsense. I’m a freethinker.”

“So I regret to perceive; but your being a freethinker will not fit you for God’s presence.”

“I tell you I don’t believe in a God at all, so I shan’t have to meet Him!”

“Your not believing in Him will not help you to evade the solemn certainty of having to meet Him. The Scripture says, ‘So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.’”

“But I don’t believe in the Bible. It’s only fit for old women who can’t reason. No reasonable man believes it in these days.”

“Well, I am not an old woman, but, I trust, a reasonable man, and yet I am free to confess that I believe the Bible to be the Word of God. I believe it heartily from cover to cover.”

“And what good has it done you?”

“Untold good, thank God. It has given me the knowledge of Himself in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. I know from its blessed pages that my sins are all forgiven, that I have

eternal life, and, though I am sure of nothing for a moment in this life, I am quite clear and happy as to the future were I to die, or the Lord to come."

"Oh, that's all a delusion. Nobody knows anything about the future. How can they? No one has come back from the dead to tell us what comes after death."

"That is a great mistake. Why, the One who died for me is the very One who has come back from the dead, to assure me as to my future blessedness, as the fruit and consequence of His death for me."

"I don't believe a word of it. No one can know what will be after death."

"Then to you death will be a leap in the dark?"

"Well, yes, just so; I suppose it will be," was his rather hesitating reply.

"Ah, my friend!" I exclaimed, "I am far better off than you, through God's infinite grace. If I should die, death would be a leap in the light."

"How do you make that out?"

"Because I have got the light now. Christ is my Light. He said, 'I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (John viii. 12). And He said also, 'Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not

abide in darkness (John xii. 35, 36, 46). Both you and I are, alike, sinners before God, but the difference between us is this: You do not believe in the Lord Jesus, are walking in darkness, and know not whither you are going, viz., to judgment, and the lake of fire; I do believe in Him, have got out of darkness by letting in the light, and know clearly where I am going, viz., 'to be with Christ, which is far better.' Don't you think now that I have the best of it? All I can say is, that a man who takes *a leap in the dark*, when he may take *a leap in the light*, must be a downright fool. What say you to that?"

He paused a moment or two, and then replied, "Well, sir, I never looked at it quite in that way before. I won't say there's not some reason in your argument."

With this our interview closed. I left him with my heart lifted to God that His Word might do its own work in his heart and conscience. I never saw him again. Upwards of twelve years after this solitary conversation his friend who had asked me to visit him called to see me, and said, "Do you recollect, many years ago, visiting an infidel shoemaker in L—— Street?"

"Perfectly; and what took place between us too. What became of him?"

"He died in the Royal Infirmary just a year after you saw him."

"Died an infidel?"

"Oh! no, thank God, he died a happy Christian,

confessing his faith in the Lord, and giving a bright testimony. He dated the beginning of the change in his heart from that morning you saw him. Something you said to him about 'a leap in the dark' stuck to him, and he was never happy till he found the Lord."

"The Lord be praised," was my rejoinder, as I heard, with deep joy, of the Lord's grace to one who seemed so fortified in unbelief. It is, however, but another illustration of His goodness, and of the truth of His Word. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. lv. 8-11)

And now, my dear reader, let me, in penning a few concluding lines, ask you, Are you still in "darkness," or have you received Christ as your "light"? When you pass into eternity, will it be for you "a leap in the dark," or "a leap in the light"?

I beseech you, most affectionately, not to put these queries from you. Answer them honestly

before God. If you cannot reply, "To me death would be a leap in the light," turn to Jesus now. Trust Him, as you read these lines, and your eternal salvation is sure. "I am come a light into the world, that *whosoever believeth* on Me should not abide in darkness," may well win the confidence of your heart towards the blessed One who speaks, and who

"Suffered in the shadow
That we might see the light."

Yes, He tasted death that we might live; endured the darkness, that we might enjoy the light; and sustained the judgment of God, that we might be freely justified. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Again, "But now once, in the end of the world, hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation" (1 Peter iii. 18; Heb. ix. 26-28).

Trust Him then, simply, my reader; and then when called hence, whether by falling asleep in Jesus, or, better, His coming in the air for His own (1 Thess. iv. 13-18), to you and to me, through infinite grace, it will be

A LEAP IN THE LIGHT.

W. T. P. W

THE POSTMAN'S AWAKENING.

THERE was quite an unusual chatter amongst the postmen that morning as they were preparing their letters for delivery. What could the topic be that was so engaging their attention? Generally it was something in the world of pleasure, or politics, but this occasion was the exception to the rule.

A young postman of seventeen had made confession that Christ was his own Saviour, or, in other words, he had been converted, and, as this was passed from one postman to another, until the whole staff of nearly forty had heard, you may guess that his was no coveted position to be the subject of the ridicule and laughter of his associates.

However, the only effect it had upon W—— was to draw him nearer to his Saviour, asking that he might witness a bold testimony, and from the outset he proved the promise—"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. xiii. 5), and that Christ was the friend "that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. xviii. 24).

Let me now tell you how W—— was brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and may you, dear reader, be led to the same point. His home training, as far as Christianity was concerned, was a poor one, with parents and relatives unconverted and attending no church or chapel, so, apart from a short time at Sunday school, W——

followed suit. Week nights were spent freely at music halls and theatres, these places seeing W—— four or five times a week, while Sundays were idled away in walking the streets and lanes. Such was the trend of W——'s life when, one Saturday night, he was given a tract and asked by a friend to accompany him to a gospel preaching on the coming Sunday night. A sneery smile was all the answer then given, but God had spoken to him, so he met his friend at the appointed time, and attended the preaching. This was his first entering of a preaching room since quite a child, yet God proved His readiness to bless him that night, and W—— did not let this golden opportunity pass.

The preaching over, his friend took him to his home, where together for two hours they talked over the important matter of being prepared to meet God. "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos. iv. 12), and the immediate necessity of it; "Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2), were scriptures pressed on him, and, as the time wore on, it was plain to see that the once careless and thoughtless young post-man was deeply convicted of SIN and that a great struggle was going on in his heart.

Being a great lover of pleasure Satan tried to hold him back with the thought that he was but young, and there was plenty of time to be saved in after years. Then God's Spirit brought home that His appointed time was NOW, and poor W—— felt that real decision, one way or the other, must be made

that night. Another portion of Scripture was read which settled the question. What was that? you ask. None other than those searching solemn questions asked by Christ Himself, to which no man has ever been able to give a satisfactory answer, nor ever shall while time lasts: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26).

I shall never forget the sight of the next few moments. W——, who a few hours before was so regardless of his perilous condition, as a sinner on the brink of an eternal hell, now with bowed heart and bended knee was telling God of his state as a repentant sinner and owning Christ as his Saviour, who paid his penalty by His cruel death and awful judgment on Calvary's Cross. Did Christ receive and bless him? Ah, yes. And, dear reader, though you perhaps have wandered far and long, and are beginning to think all hope is gone, yet Jesus is still saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

Reader, may you put Him to the test, as this young postman did, and prove Him to be able to fill you with peace and joy. Although reproached by fellow-creatures yet may you delight to confess His Blessed Name. "For *whosoever* shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13).

A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE.

SOME years ago I had occasion to pass daily a long row of colliery houses.

I was much impressed as I thought of the need of the souls who lived in those cottages ; and often prayed for them, that God might awaken them to see their danger, because of their sinful and guilty condition, and lead them to the knowledge of Christ.

What could I do to help them in this connection was my next exercise.

It was suggested to my mind that I might at least present a gospel book to each house.

So after counting the houses, I brought with me, next day, a sufficient supply.

But being in charge of horses, I could not myself deliver them. So I called a boy and asked him to leave a little book in each house.

It was some time before I heard anything of how the books were received ; or if God had used them to the blessing of any. But at last the grateful news was conveyed to me that one soul had got saved through reading the book that thus came into his hands.

He was an ex-soldier ; lived alone ; and was an exceptionally wicked man. He was a good worker ; but his hard-earned wages were regularly

spent in the public-house, And being of a quarrelsome, combative temperament, his fights with his companions in sin were frequent.

When the boy went round with the books, he knocked repeatedly at this man's door without getting any response. He then, boy-like, lifted the latch, and finding the door open he went in and laid a book on the table.

This happened to be one of this man's drinking days. And having roused his fellows, they turned upon him and gave him a good thrashing. In fact, they rather badly used him.

Becoming furious and desperate he left them, and hastened away home, with the awfully wicked thought in his mind that he had best put an end to his wretched existence.

Can any doubt that Satan was making a supreme effort to accomplish the ruin of this wretched, degraded sinner—both of body and soul—for ever?

But wonderful to relate, Another was thinking of him with *thoughts of love and mercy*. Oh, can anything equal the grace of God?

Entering his house, he passed quickly across the floor to accomplish the awful deed. But his eye caught sight of the little book lying on the table, "The Salvation of God." He was arrested. And sinking down upon a chair, he tried hard not to look in the direction of that book, with its—to him—strange title.

But in spite of himself, he glanced at it every now and again. And then the thought took possession of

him—I wonder if the “Salvation of God” can have any meaning for me, or any application to my case?

At last he lifted it, and began to read. This greatly augmented his wretchedness. He was already well acquainted with the *misery of sin*. Now he learned something of the *guilt of sin*, and this by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. Apart from His work in the soul, the sinner has no true, adequate sense of the nature of sin, or of its enormity in the sight of God. For the sake of its pleasures, though the pleasures of sin are but for a season (Heb. xi. 25), he waives every other consideration, and though often warned, pursues his self-chosen way.

At first this man, as he read, seemed to see nothing but that which exposed his state and condition before God. Then there came, from the depths of his soul, a cry for mercy. Soon he was led to see, that the “Salvation of God” was for him—bad as he was. What a discovery it was to him when he learned that the Son of Man came into the world to “seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke xix. 10), that “Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. v. 6), and that believing on Him he was “justified from all things” (Acts xiii. 39).

Obviously what I have written could not have been known unless he had with his own lips told it. And this is just what happened.

Not far from where he lived a few Christians met together in an empty house, which they had fitted with forms; their object being to encourage one another and to wait upon God in prayer.

To their amazement, and also to their joy, this hitherto godless man walked in and took a seat.

On this particular occasion, they one after another related how God had awakened them and led them to Christ, producing in them "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our friend also rose and asked permission to tell what God had done for *his* soul; and he then related, to their great delight and joy, what I have endeavoured to bring before the readers of the *Gospel Messenger*. How well may we sing!—

"Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding;
Ransomed souls the tidings swell;
'Tis a deep that knows no sounding,
Who its length or breadth can tell?"

Perhaps the eye of some one may scan this page who has also gone far astray in the paths of vice and sin. Friend, there is mercy for you! Yes, even for you! You may have thrown a loose rein on the neck of your lusts; lost all regard for decency and moral rectitude; thrown off all domestic restraints; and above all, have disregarded the claims of a thrice Holy God. Let me say to you with all the earnestness I can command—

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you farther go;
Can you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?"

OH, TURN TO JESUS! HE RECEIVETH SINNERS.

THE TICKING OF A CLOCK.

"The ticking of a clock is certainly not the least mysterious and solemn of sounds. We seem to hear our life audibly running out, drop by drop, into everlasting nonentity, monotonously, incessantly, inexorably dwindling ! These moments, these incognitos of eternity, enter into our existence, flash one glance on us, and are gone ere we can stretch forth a hand to detain them. The next in succession may possibly bring us a missive announcing the death of some one whom we dearly love, or inform us of our ruin, or that of a kinsman ; and then our life can never again be what it was before. In any case, 'Time is receding, Death advancing,' and its catastrophe nears apace, when after a longer or shorter struggle we disappear from sight, and the doctor whispers gently, 'All is over !' Thenceforward we have bid adieu for ever to earth, where Time purled like some tiny rivulet, or flowed by like a steady river ; we are sped where the æons of true Time, of which ours is but a type and emanation, unroll in the mind of God, an ocean without either shore or bottom ; sped where the spirit well nigh forgets it has ever been mortal."

PROF. F. BETTEX.

FRIEND, as you sit in the quiet of your own room, or house, or cottage, and hear your clock unceasingly ticking, just consider that each tick marks a stage in that journey which you are travelling towards—**ETERNITY**. Remember, each tick marks an advance on the road towards that boundless ocean without a bottom and without a shore. Remember, that you cannot possibly help it. All the money possessed by the most wealthy millionaire in the world could not arrest the progress of time for even a second, or purchase a stopping-place on the road to **ETERNITY**.

As you listen to that clock, it may be in the silent hours of the night, let its unceasing tick, tick, tick, lead you to ask yourself this question, Where

shall I spend my eternity? Oh, it is a solemn question! We almost tremble to pen that word ETERNITY—that ocean without a bottom, and without a shore—with its tremendous consequences of eternal bliss or eternal woe.

Just listen again; tick, tick, tick—who can tell how many more ticks and the doctor will have said the fatal words, “All is over”?

Thank God the loving voice of Jesus is still heard; still He speaks and pleads in accents of divine grace and love, that blessed word, “Come.” To the sin-burdened sinner He says, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”; and “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

F. G. B.

RELIGION, NOT CHRIST.

“**W**HAT do you think about religion?” asked a girl of her brother as they sat together one Sunday evening.

“Religion,” he replied. “Why, I think it is a thing which is only between ourselves and God, and which we should not mention to any one.”

“Well, but do you ever *think* anything about it?”

“Of course I do, but you have no right to talk to me about it. It is a very solemn thing.”

“Do you ever *think* what it is to be a *Christian*?” she again questioned.

“Well, I suppose we *are* Christians.”

"No, indeed!" she exclaimed; adding, "I wish I were one though, and I shall never be satisfied until I am."

"Then," said he, "I suppose that is what you are thinking about at nights, when all sensible people have gone to sleep, reading and keeping your candle burning. You will be setting the house on fire some night."

"But it seems to me such a deeply important thing," she urged.

"Well," he concluded, "if you are going to turn religious, you had better go away from home for a change. It is no use to stay here to get like this."

He carefully avoided the unpleasant subject for some weeks, and then it was again brought up by the sister asking, "Have you thought any more about being a Christian?"

"Why, what do you mean?" he exclaimed. "What am I doing that is wrong? If I am not going the right way, I don't know how it will be with a good many others. I don't see what more God can require of me. I never get drunk, nor cheat, nor swear, nor anything like that."

"No, you do not, but you are *not a Christian*."

H—— was well aware that he was held up, by those who knew him, as a pattern of all that was commendable. It was therefore very galling to be quietly and earnestly told that he was *not a Christian*, and that by one who knew he said his prayers night and morning, attended church, and partook of the sacrament most regularly.

"Then I suppose I cannot be a Christian without being a Methodist, shouting and bawling about. If there is one lot of persons on earth to be detested, it is those people who set themselves up to be religious."

The more he thought of the matter, the more indignant he became, and for weeks he remained in this angry and perturbed state of mind.

"You may *have* what you like, *do* what you like, or *go* where you like, if only you won't turn religious—*anything* but *that*," he said to his sister one day.

Her heart sank, for to become religious, or, as the thing shaped itself in her mind, to get prepared for death, was now her one longing desire. Utterly ignorant of God's way of salvation, she had for a long time been vainly trying to get peace with God by her own efforts and prayers. Gradually, however, she was brought to see that she could only be saved by Christ's atoning death on her behalf—that on the ground of that great redemption price, paid on Calvary's Cross, God now offers full forgiveness of sins to every one who as a sinner turns to Him for it. This at last she did, trusting Christ as her Saviour, and simply resting on God's word, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15), and that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

When she confessed this glad news to her brother, telling him how happy she was, he looked at her curiously, and then broke out with, "Oh, it's the weather. There has been a long, hard, black frost,

and now there is a change, and the days are mild and sunshiny. I have often felt happy myself like that."

After much persuasion he was induced to read the Scriptures for himself. "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. iv. 12), and truly it proved to be so in this instance, for as he read on, chapter after chapter, light from its inspired pages broke into his dark soul.

"The Spirit began to strive with me," he said (in the account of his conversion which he wrote down at the time).

"I saw I was lost, and a *great* sinner. I saw, too, that my being such a good example to other young men, and my attending church, and taking the sacrament were things altogether apart from the question of my soul's salvation, and then I saw that Jesus Christ had come to make atonement to God for me as a sinner.

"Then, while reading Numbers xxi. 9, I was impressed with the fact that the bitten Israelite *looked away from himself* to the serpent of brass in order to be healed, and it showed me that I must *look away from myself and my feelings* to Christ in order to be saved! But I did not get full peace with God until I read that verse, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' I believed that His blood had cleansed *mè* from all sin. And knowing that I was saved myself, I had a great desire to bring others to trust in Christ as their Saviour." And God gave him his desire, and used him in the conversion of many.

Have you, my reader, ever faced the question, Am I a Christian or am I only religious?—having the lamp without the oil.

F. A.

"LET US NOT BE WEARY."

STATIONED at Portsmouth, an officer in the British Army, he seemed as hopeless a case for conversion as could well be.

Offered a gospel tract one day, as a gentleman, who would not insult a man doing good, he accepted it.

There it lay in his desk for three years.

His regiment was moved to South Africa. One day, recovering from a fit of drunkenness, he came across it, read it, and was instantly converted.

His subsequent life—Christ-like and self-denying, testified to the great change that had taken place. When he was passing away to be with Christ, a brother read him a hymn about heaven. "Don't read to me of harps and crowns of gold," he cried, "*I want to see HIM.*"

"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9).

Go on, tract distributor, take fresh courage and go on. The world is deadly indifferent. Ninety-nine tracts may be received with scorn, and treated like waste paper, but the hundredth tract may be used of God. Go on. The Lord encourage and reward you.

A. J. P.

"AFTER MANY DAYS."

RETURNING home from a survey I met a minister of the Dutch Church whom I knew as a dear believer years ago in another part of the Colony. We had a journey, by cart, of sixty miles before us, and, naturally, we arranged to make one party for the sake of fellowship. Before reaching a house at which the minister must call, he told me the owner was one of a family of a pious Huguenot's children, all God-fearing but this one, who had become a backslider from the faith through reading sceptical works.

It was supposed his bitterness toward God and towards the old faith of his fathers was owing to heavy losses sustained by an extensive and disastrous forest fire, that burnt a new house he was building, and other property. I was told he was discourteous even to rudeness towards ministers, refusing to listen to them on spiritual matters. But, my friend said to me, "You may be able to speak a word that God may bless to his restoration."

The owner of the house, Mr D——, was very fond of speaking English and always glad to meet educated Englishmen, having found them to be either tolerant or politely indifferent to all religion.

I was introduced to Mr D—— and his sister as a civil engineer and surveyor, and my host—making the most of my brief stay—began to enlarge upon the broad views of Bishop Colenso and other of his favourite authors.

While apparently politely listening to his railing against the love of God, &c., I was actually praying that I might be used of God for his recovery. To justify his railings, and by an object lesson show me that God was *not* "love," he took me outside to see his half-burnt new house. He told me how he and all his family had been earnest and faithful Christians, and "this," he said, pointing to his ruined residence, "is the way God treats those who serve Him!"

He continued to tell me how he barely escaped with life by sitting for many hours in a dam, with his head just out of the water.

I thanked God "in my heart we were alone, so I asked him had the fire actually killed him where would his soul have been at that very moment? The question staggered him. I continued, "If God were *not* love your soul would now have been in hell, instead of having breath given you to rail against the God who has spared you." I followed this up with a testimony of my own conversion, and my most perfect knowledge that there was a God and that that God was *love*. He would forgive all the past, He would save him now from a more terrible loss than a few bits of property.

This wholly unexpected charge seemed to stun him. He returned to the house silent and dazed. I, too, now felt that silence was golden, and left, with the silent prayer that the Holy Spirit would do His own work.

Thirty-two years after this it pleased the Lord

to bring me once again into this locality at a very critical time. Some wandering religious teachers had produced a deal of trouble by declaring that, if Christians did not leave the Dutch Church and submit to be duly baptized by them, they were hopelessly lost. Ministers of all denominations, past and present, were consigned to perdition at every service. Dear saints were terrorised. The fervour and amazing effrontery of these teachers drove simple-minded believers into a frenzy of doubt and distress. My visit]was most timely. By calls from house to house, Bible readings, and public services, I was successful in restoring calmness. The power of God's Word rightly divined, exposed effectually the errors that had so nearly ensnared a very large number of the residents of the district—much to my joy.

The result was a cordial invitation to every home. At one farm, the daughter of the house informed me, at the conclusion of a Bible reading, that her uncle, having heard my name, would be glad if I paid him a visit; promising that she herself would guide me over to her uncle's home. We walked across the following afternoon, and how great was my surprise to find myself once more in the same room with the same host and his sister that I had been introduced to thirty-two years ago. The room and its furniture seemed unchanged, but oh! what a change had taken place in my infidel host of former years, how different his greeting. I found in him the faith of a child. He was indeed "born

again," and his love for the Word of God was, to me, quite pathetic.

We had a glorious time of Bible reading and prayer together, and enjoyed, to the full, happy fellowship with the Father and with His Son, the Lord Jesus. It was a sweet foretaste of that union of God's children that is to last for eternity.

So "after many days" the seed sown was bearing fruit to the glory of God. How real is the work of God in the human heart such examples show forth.

H. L. S.

WHICH ARE YOU?

I PROPOSE to look at four different men in Scripture, representing four different states.

THE SINFUL MAN.

THE FORGIVEN MAN.

THE WRETCHED MAN.

THE MAN IN CHRIST.

THE SINFUL MAN.

That all men are sinful the hard, grinding, bitter school of experience soon teaches. All save the wickedly blind or obstinately wilful must acknowledge man's utter depravity. Hard indeed are the ways of transgressors against the laws of pure morality. These are the laws of God. To infringe upon them must inevitably bring suffering upon the transgressor. The law courts, prisons, and asylums

proclaim it beyond doubt. All the disorder in this world is due to sinfulness.

"All unrighteousness is sin." What is not right is wrong. What is wrong is not right. All wrongdoing is against the laws of God, and therefore against the God who gave those laws.

When David sinned against his fellow-man he sinned against the laws of morality, and he was made to suffer for it. In the bitterness of repentance he said: "Against Thee and Thee **ONLY** have I sinned and done this evil in **THY SIGHT**" (Ps. li. 4).

Nothing is known of Peter's moral character until he exclaimed: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 8). He was well-nigh overwhelmed by the Divine majesty of Jesus the Son of God, whose searching light shone into his darkness and made him feel in such desperation—it was the desperation of a man who felt himself lost.

When sin oppresses the conscience it makes the proudest heart quail. The hardest and boldest of infidels have been brought to their true bearings when sin's oppression has been felt. Conscience is a tremendous factor in man when the light of God awakes it from its slumbers. Under its heavy lash Joseph Hume, the infidel historian, died so miserable that the nurse never wished to be in attendance at such another death-scene.

All this has been the result of sinfulness. Sin is the indulgence of the proud will and lustful passions of man against the will of God. Sooner or later sin finds us all out. When felt and judged in the

presence of God, we are soon made to know and feel the blessedness of

THE FORGIVEN MAN.

The gospel is for every creature. Forgiveness is therefore now proclaimed to all men irrespective of their class or condition. When the awful pressure of our sinfulness against God is felt, we turn to God and prayerfully seek His forgiveness. Our very necessity makes us truly in earnest about it.

No one ever realises the peace and joy that flow from the knowledge of forgiveness until there is the true and hearty acknowledgment of our sins against God. This is often much more felt in the heart than expressed in mere words. God knows the heart and reads all the sorrow that is felt there.

God offers forgiveness freely without conditions or merit on our part. We are never asked to do anything to obtain it. "It is not of works lest any man should boast." It is all through the finished work of Christ, who suffered for our sins. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). The whole truth of the gospel of God is contained in this verse.

After the resurrection of Christ from the dead His chief apostles, Peter and Paul, made it known everywhere. Paul says: "To you is the word of this salvation SENT." It is sent from God, and the message is simple. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS."

Peter says: "To Him give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS" (Acts x. 43; xiii. 38).

What can be grander or more simple than both these statements. Their very grandeur lies in their great and charming simplicity. All who believe God's testimony ARE forgiven. God says so. Who dare gainsay His Word. *Believing and being forgiven are indissolubly found together. They cannot be divorced.* John writes to all the family of God and says: "I write unto you children because your sins are forgiven for His Name sake" (1 John ii. 12).

Peace is the sure result of KNOWING we are forgiven for His name's sake. *We simply rest in the knowledge that God has forgiven us, and go on day by day in perfect peace.*

THE WRETCHED MAN.

There is a vast difference between forgiveness and deliverance. *Forgiveness has to do with what I have done. Deliverance is in regard to what I am.* Very deep and needful, yea, wholesome lessons are learnt after forgiveness is known. These lessons humble us, and sometimes bring us to the verge of despair. We no longer look at our forgiven past, but we look inside to get some good out of the flesh. We also trust it, but only to get heart-broken and greatly disappointed. In this state our distress arises from what we discover ourselves to be in the light of God.

It is thus that the bitter cry is forced from our

lips, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" No sooner does the cry of helpless despair come from us than the Deliverer presents Himself to our faith. Deliverance is found "in looking outside to the Delivering One. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We also learn that all that we are is judged and set aside by God in the death of Christ. "Our old man is crucified with Him" (Rom. vi. 6). Under the best culture the flesh cannot be improved. It remains unchangeably the same, and will to the end of time. Hence the importance of that word in Romans viii. 3: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh (the helplessness and badness of the flesh), God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

Not only has God set aside man in the flesh in the death of His Son, but now, as risen out of death, Christ has entirely superseded the Adam man. As we believingly take in God's thoughts about all this, we enter upon a new day in our soul's history—a day of cloudless joy. We then arrive at what it means to be

A MAN IN CHRIST.

If I am a man in Christ I am no longer a man in the Adam fleshly state. This point ought to be clear at least. I could not be in Christ and in the Adam life at the same time. All who are in Adam are in spiritual death and under the condemnation

of God. All who are in Christ have passed out of spiritual death, and they are now in the life of the risen Son of God, who in glory has become our righteousness. We are always regarded by God as in that life which is spotless and perfect, and suitable for the paradise of God, or the third heaven. It is perfectly at home there.

So Paul says: "Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God" (2 Cor. v. 5). And also, "Of such an one will I glory [the man in Christ], yet of myself I will not glory but in mine infirmities" (2 Cor. xii. 5). Marvellous language!

When we, in the power of the Holy Spirit, lay hold of this it lifts our souls into a new region. It is then no longer a question of self, but of what God has made us in Christ, and of what Christ is to God. We are then enabled to live continuously in the sunshine of God's perfect and unchanging love. Our souls are at home, and thus at perfect rest in the presence of Divine and perfect holiness. We truly rejoice in Christ Jesus, and confide no longer in the flesh. We joy in all that God has revealed Himself to be in Christ for our present and eternal blessing. That is the joy of realised reconciliation and nearness to God, in the light of all that He is in Christ to us. This never changes. We may fail to live in the enjoyment of its great blessedness; but whether we enjoy it or not it is unchangeably ours in Christ to enjoy. Nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 39).

A GREAT DECISION.

AT the close of a gospel service in the West of England, I invited any present who were anxious and troubled as to their soul's salvation to leave their names and addresses behind, so that I might call upon them in their homes and help them if I could.

As a friend gathered together the hymn-books that night, he found lying on one of the seats a slip of paper upon which was a woman's name and address. "There is somebody anxious to see you," he said, as he handed it to me.

The next afternoon at three I was at the address given, but was told by the maid that the lady was not at home, but was visiting her sister who lived in the same road. I went to the house and found her alone there, her sister having gone out shopping. She was surprised to see me, and inquired as to the reason of my visit. I had to explain to her that a slip of paper had been picked up at the close of the gospel service on the previous evening, bearing her name and address, and that I had presumed that she wished to see me. She acknowledged that she had been at the meeting, and had heard the invitation mentioned, but denied that she had left her address behind, or had wished to be visited. "I know who has done it," she said, evidently displeased at the affair.

"Well," I said, putting the paper into her hand,

"perhaps you can tell me whose the handwriting is?"

She looked at it and exclaimed, "Why, it is my own writing, but I do not know how it can have got out of my possession!"

"Neither do I," said I, "but I believe that God's hand is in this matter. May I come in and talk with you?"

Somewhat reluctantly she allowed me to do so, but we had no sooner seated ourselves than she said; "I do wish that you could induce my sister to attend the services. She is not a good woman, and she never goes anywhere."

"Well," I replied, "we must try and prevail upon your sister to come with us, but what about yourself—are you a saved woman?"

"It's my sister that I am troubled about," she said. "I do wish something could be done for her."

"I hope we may be able to do something," I again said; "but what of yourself—are you not troubled about yourself?"

Just then the sister walked into the house, and seemed surprised to find a stranger there, and I had to explain that I had called to see her sister, and would take the opportunity of inviting her to the gospel meeting. As she did not look at all like a person who would attend a week evening service, I suggested that the following Sunday evening would be a good time for her to come. Her answer to my suggestion was a most emphatic "No." As emphatic a refusal as ever I received.

"Well," I said, "I think that you are wise in not promising to come to the service on Sunday evening, for long before then you may be dead, and—lost for ever; had we not better say Friday night instead?" She did not answer so readily or emphatically this time, and it was evident that the shot had gone home. Still, she declined to make any promise for Friday. I said, "The Book says, 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' You had better not put off even until to-morrow, but come and hear the Word of God to-night." She did not reply, and I said to her sister, "You will bring her to-night, and may God bless you both."

There they sat, side by side, in the gospel meeting that night, each of them listening with great interest to the lovely story of the Saviour's death and resurrection; of the precious blood of Jesus that can make the worst of sinners fit for the presence of God, and of the hearty welcome that awaits every man, woman, and child that will come to Him.

The preaching finished, we turned to Charlotte Elliot's hymn, than which none more suitable for anxious sinners was ever written in our English language—

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me;
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

I said, "I will repeat this first verse to you, my friends, leaving out certain words in it; and if you

are anxious to come to the Saviour put in the missing words."

So I read—

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for——"

There was a brief pause, and then from the corner where the sisters were sitting there came clearly and distinctly the word "ME." It was the bad sister who "never went anywhere" who had said it. Yes, said it with her whole heart.

"Thank God!" said more than one in that audience; and I turned back and repeated the lines again—

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for——"

Then we heard a duet, and in our ears, who loved the Lord and sinners for His sake, it sounded most sweet.

Both sisters put in that missing word. The bad sister and the one who thought she was good enough, together they took the sinner's place for whom the blood of Jesus was shed.

Then I continued—

"And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God——"

"I COME," they said, and others in an undertone joined in the same blessed decision, making music in the ears of heaven and in ours.

It was a definite and never-to-be-regretted decision, and they found that He to whom they came was

delighted to receive them, and to keep them, to never let them slip from His all-powerful hand, but to be their Lord and never-changing Friend in time, and their joy for ever.

That is the story. 'It interested me greatly at the time. May the telling of it interest the reader, and more, if unconverted, may he make the same decision that those sisters made in that happy gospel service.

J. T. M.

"WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

(Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.)

A DEEPLY interesting question indeed!

Night it is, and ever has been since He who was the Light of the World was crucified and cast out of it.

The night has lasted long and still it lingers.

There have been some glints of heavenly sunshine, and hearts have been enlightened all the world over by its exquisite rays, but day has not dawned on the world itself. Darkness prevails much as ever, and even the very regions where those heavenly rays have shone—those fields, for instance, where the apostles and early servants of our Lord Jesus Christ laboured so successfully, are mantled most by the pall of Mahomet, whilst in those where the gospel has been more or less clearly proclaimed there is a return to little more than a "civilised heathenism."

This can be learned from missionary reports from, say, S. America and other places. Semi-darkness has settled down where light had arisen. In point of fact, Christendom is largely corrupted and sadly fallen.

Hence the pertinence of our query.

It is night. "Watchman, what of the night?"

What are the portents? Is there the probability of dawn, and of light and day, or what?

What think you, reader? Cast your eyes abroad; take a correct view of the general state of the world; do not allow your vision to be over-affected by any partial and passing emotion; but have regard to the common trend of thought and action. Is vital, living, energetic Christianity in the ascendant? Is the truth of God all-powerful? Are the minds of men generally under the sanctifying influence of the Spirit and Word of God? Are these holy principles really apparent in the various departments of life, or, does that which is the direct antithesis of the teachings of Christ not very largely prevail on all hands?

That the grace of God works in individuals is true, but the question itself admits of but one answer.

What of the night? It is true to its character; it is dark, morally and truly.

A glance at the prophecy concerning "the last days"—these days—in 2 Timothy iii. is verified to the letter. Men are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

God is increasingly slighted in order that the will of man may have no check or bridle; and this

unbridled will of man will develop until it is fully personated in "the man of sin," who opposes himself against all that is called God.

Fearful apostasy! How dark the night; how swift the doom!

And what says the watchman?

"The morning cometh." Good, indeed!

What heralds its approach?

The Morning Star! "I am the bright and Morning Star," says our Lord Jesus. When that Star appears the Church (all who are Christ's) is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, all, thank God, together, and to be for ever with Him. They pass into everlasting day: their long vigil is over, their eternal rest has come, their cup of bliss is full.

But what of those who are not His, those who preferred the ways of sin and of unbelief?

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"The morning cometh!"

What then?

"And also" (the day we would, of course, say, but he adds) "and also the night." That is, there is the long night, a brief transient morning, followed, not by day but by night, and by judgment.

Christendom! take thought.

But is no Sun of Righteousness to rise with healing on His wings? No bright millennial day?

Yes, but those wings shall not be extended until the besom of destruction has swept the corrupted earth and prepared the way for the coming and glorious King.

The awfully serious question to-day is: How are the eyes of men and women to be opened to these events? They won't accredit them!

Nor did those on whom the flood came. "They knew not till it came," and yet they had been warned and forewarned, but what cared they? I tenderly appeal to you, dear reader, to awake. It is high time to do so.

The accomplishment of these events may be nearer than you think.

How terrible, how awful, to be found unprepared for them.

What an endless night for you! Oh! Fly now to the Lord, the living Saviour in glory.

He bids you welcome.

J. W. S.

"ALL IN BLACK AND WHITE."

I HAD been having a talk with some young believers at the close of a gospel meeting. The Lord was working very graciously and blessedly, and those young men and women had just been recently converted. It was a great joy to pass on to them passages of Scripture which the Lord had made the means of help and blessing to one's own soul.

Standing a little to one side, a big strong man stood evidently listening attentively to all that was said. He had been coming to the meetings, and

listening well, so I made free to ask him—"Are you a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Then you are entitled to know that God has granted to you the forgiveness of all your sins."

"Oh, yes," he answered.

"You are *quite sure* about that?" I next queried.

"Yes."

"Now tell me what makes you *sure*?"

"I have it all in *black and white*," he said, evidently meaning that he got his assurance from the Scriptures.

Now, let us leave the man—as I am not able to say much of him—and let us consider his answer—"I have it all in black and white."

It is a mistake very commonly made by young believers to look within, to scrutinise their feelings and experiences, in the hope of finding something encouraging—something to rest upon.

The result is, such souls have not settled peace; they make no progress; and they are sorely buffeted by Satan, who in this way gets immense advantage over them, and he is not slow to use this advantage in harassing and making them miserable.

Murray M'Cheyne used to exhort young believers to take ten looks at Christ for one at self. The ten looks at Christ are all right enough; or rather, it might be said—give Him one long, steady, constant look. Whilst gazing on that blessed, living, glorious, and glorified man in heaven, the Holy Spirit will

unfold His beauty and His preciousness to the soul, and fill it with rest, satisfaction, and joy.

The one look at self may work a lot of mischief, if that look be with the object of finding satisfaction there. This is impossible. The apostle Paul says in Rom. vii. 18, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." But notice, he does not from that fact conclude that he is not a Christian! That, it is to be feared, is the conclusion many a young believer comes to, when he looks within and sees the flesh there, as bad as ever it was. Then will it ever improve? Never. So make no mistake about that. We are responsible to ignore it and to judge it. And the Holy Spirit is given to us to make us superior to its working, and this He does by engaging our affections with Christ.

But, it may be asked, "What, then, is the true ground of assurance?" The Scriptures. The precious Word of God. The testimony of the truth as to man as a sinner, when it is received, makes a man miserable and wretched, and fills him with fear and trembling before God. This may be described as *sad tidings* concerning man. Then there is the testimony of the gospel—God's *glad tidings* concerning His Son—telling how "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED." Telling how Jesus died to make atonement, to bear the judgment due to sin, and thus to satisfy God's righteous requirements, and accomplish redemption. Then next we have the same testimony—the testimony of

God's Word—to the one, and about the one, who *believes on Jesus*. I will just refer to what that testimony is in John iii.

Of course the testimony is the same throughout the New Testament, and one may say the Old Testament also.

In John iii. 14, 15, we read, "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"; ver. 16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but *have* everlasting life"; ver. 18, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"; ver. 36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Do not these precious Scriptures make the believer SURE that he has eternal life? There it is in "black and white."

Dear young believer, lay hold of the solid, certain ground of assurance here given to you by the Lord, and let your doubts and fears be tossed to the winds.

"Oh, take, with rejoicing, from Jesus at once
The life everlasting He gives ;

And know, with assurance, thou never can'st die,
Since Jesus thy righteousness lives."

TRYING, OR TRUSTING.

“**E**LLIE, how dare you say such a thing?” said Mrs S—— in a grieved tone to her daughter. “No one *can* know it.”

“I can see Ellie now,” she said to a friend long afterwards, “as she stood there in the doorway with the tears in her eyes. ‘*Mother, I am as sure I am saved as that I am standing here now,*’ and though I felt so vexed with her, how I wished I could say it too.

“You know,” continued Mrs S——, “we had been talking about it all the morning, for I was too miserable to think of anything else. Ellie was trying to help me by telling me about herself, but I thought it was such *great* presumption for her to say she was really *saved*!”

But on what was Ellie’s assurance based? Solely on God’s Word. Which is the greater presumption; to gladly believe and rest on that Word, or to doubt it? It says, “He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And *this* is the record, that *God hath given to us eternal life*, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son *hath* life, and he that hath not the Son of God, *hath not life*. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye *may know* that ye have eternal life” (1 John v. 10-13).

A year or two previously a young friend had

spoken to Ellie of the Saviour, "Who came into the world to *save sinners*." A regular church attendant, a communicant, and a Sunday-school teacher, she thought she was answering fairly well already to what she imagined were God's requirements. But as the momentous question was pressed on her again and again, indifference gave place to resentment, followed by real anxiety, as she saw that her rejection of Christ as Saviour ensured her a lost eternity. Then in simple faith she turned to Him, saying, "Lord Jesus, I believe Thou hast died and shed Thy blood for me, and I take Thee at Thy word."

While Ellie, thus trusting in Christ alone for salvation, was going on her way in peace, without a doubt as to her soul's eternal safety, her mother was *hoping* to gain heaven by endeavouring to lead a good religious life. What hopeless work she found it as each succeeding year, entered upon with renewed efforts and resolutions, left her still a stranger to peace of mind and rest of conscience. She did not see that until she had the motive power of God's grace in her heart, such a task was impossible. His Word declares, "They that are in the flesh [not yet born of the Spirit] cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8), be they ever so religious and commendable.

But gradually Mrs S—— was learning what was expressed in the well-known lines —

"Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and Thou alone."

That it is "*not of works*, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9); but that we "have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. i. 7). In a word, that it was not what *she* could do, but what Christ by His atoning death and blood-shedding *had done for her*, that must save her. Still, the idea that there must be more fitness on her part, that she must be more *deserving* of God's salvation before it could be hers, still clung to her.

However, one evening Ellie found her mother at the supper-table alone, the tears of soul-misery coursing down her face. Ellie repeated every verse she could think of which set forth God's way of salvation, but it was all in vain—nothing seemed to bring any comfort to poor Mrs S——. At last she thought of a simple illustration. "Look here, mother," she said, taking up her mother's supper plate, "this plate represents *you*, and this piece of bread on it represents *your sins*. This second plate is to represent Christ on the cross. Now look," and Ellie took the piece of bread from her mother's plate, and placed it on the second plate, and then removed it altogether. "Now, mother, where are your sins?"

"*Gone*," said Mrs. S——, gazing at the empty plates.

"*Where* are they gone?"

"Why, Christ bore them on the cross," she exclaimed, as the precious truth at last dawned on her, that "*His own Self bare our sins in His own Body on the tree!*"

The tear-stained face now beamed with happiness.

"Oh, to think that God has saved *me!*" was her constant exclamation of thankfulness.

"Then am I saved *by my believing* certain truths about Christ?" some one may inquire.

I am saved by *Christ alone*—by His atoning death and blood-shedding on my behalf: but by believing it, I *appropriate for myself* what He has done for me.

The *water* which the hand conveys to the lips is the *source* of refreshment, not the *hand* which conveys it.

It was now Mrs S——'s great desire to tell every one within her reach "*God's way of saving us,*" as she expressed it. "They are as much in the dark about it as I was myself, thinking that if they only lead good religious lives they will be all right."

Reader, are you trusting to a good religious life, or are you saved by Christ alone? F. A.

FRAGMENT.

It is of immense importance for the young convert to at once boldly confess Christ. The Lord always helps such. He shines upon them, and fills their hearts with "joy and peace on believing." To make a clean break with the world and let it and all your friends know that you are fully on the Lord's side, spells power, progress, and victory. Half-heartedness is a huge mistake. Those who go in for that always rue it eventually. They have just enough of Christ to spoil them for the world, but too much of the world to let them fully enjoy Christ. W. T. P. W.

DIVINE OPENINGS.

“Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon Him ; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son ; in Thee I am well pleased.”
—LUKE iii. 21, 22.

(1) HEAVEN OPENED ON JESUS.

THIS scripture presents to us a very wonderful scene—a man on the earth on whom heaven is opened. Supposing the heavens were opened again now, and you became conscious that the eye of God rested on you, that He was close to you, how would you feel, my reader? Do you think God could speak of you, as of this blessed One here, as “well pleased” with your ways? God’s delight in Jesus was attested by the gift of the Holy Ghost. He was the seal of the Father’s delight in the perfect humanity and spotless ways of that lowly, praying Man. The Holy Ghost came on the Lord Jesus without blood, without redemption. The believer gets the Holy Ghost now as the direct result of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is the seal of certain redemption, as having been cleansed by His precious blood.

There had never been anything up to this moment, in the history of man, to equal this scene. The birth of Jesus was wonderful, and a messenger *from* heaven might and did announce His birth;

but now the heaven is *opened*, as He emerged from the water, and the voice of God, the Father, is heard saying, "This is my beloved Son ; in Thee I am well pleased." He was the only sinless, holy, perfect, blessed man in this scene, of whom God could say, "In thee I am well pleased." Oh ! the Christian's heart is refreshed by the sight, so unique, but so perfectly comely and fitting. There is no "hear Him" at this point, as in the transfiguration on the Mount. Why? Because His moral worth and blessed words ought to have gained Him every ear, and it is taken for granted that He would be listened to. Further on in the gospel, the Father's voice is again heard saying, "This is my beloved Son," but adding emphatically, "hear Him" (Luke ix. 35).

Jesus was about thirty years of age. Time—the true test of all—had been given to show what He was. Here was One of whom the world was utterly ignorant. God's Son was in their midst, and they knew Him not. Here it is no question of a man coming, and testifying to Him, as John the Baptist had already done, but the Father of that Son speaks, saying, "This is my beloved Son."

Reader, what think you of Him? Can you answer and say, "This is my beloved Saviour." It is a sad thing if you cannot.

Having seen thus *heaven opened* on the Son of God here on earth, I will now point out to you a few other things in the Word of God that are opened ; and I trust, as the result, that your heart may be opened, for if your heart be not opened to

receive Christ, hell will yet open its mouth to receive you.

(2) AN OPENED BOOK.

In Luke iv. Jesus is seen, in the power of the Holy Ghost, led into the wilderness, there utterly vanquishing Satan, morally, by dependence and obedience. Thereafter "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read" (ver. 17). He begins at home, where He is known. "And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when He had *opened the book*, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And He closed the book."

Now the passage, from which this is a quotation, goes on thus: "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and *the day of vengeance* of our God" (Isa. lxi. 2). But look at the grace of Christ; the moment He gets to that comma—and for the unsaved sinner there is really nothing but a comma between him and hell—He closes the book. If the Lord were to now open the book, it would be all over with you, unsaved reader, for, "the day of vengeance" come, "the acceptable year of the Lord"

has ended. Now is the "acceptable year of the Lord"—the day of grace, of mercy, of pardon, and salvation; when the Lord again opens the book, it will be "the day of vengeance," and then, where will you be?

When Jesus came to this comma, why does He not read on? Because He says, as it were, the day of judgment is deferred, put back, while grace utters her lovely messages. How long is the acceptable time called? *A year!* But it is "*the day of vengeance.*" Judgment will come in a moment, when you are not thinking of it. Judgment is short and swift—a day suffices for it. Now is a year of grace, and will you, therefore, trifle with it? I beseech you not to.

Does a "broken-hearted" one read this? God sent His Son to heal your broken heart. Are you a "poor" sinner? God sent His Son to enrich you with all the blessings of the gospel. Have you been a captive to sin and Satan? Jesus came "to preach deliverance to the captives." Oh! it is worth while to have one's heart broken to know what it is to have Him bind it up. Would Mary and her sister have been without those four days at Bethany? "Oh, no," they would say, "our very sorrow and misery and necessity gave Him an opportunity for showing what He was. We saw the tear in His eye, we heard the words of comfort from His blessed lips, we saw the work of power of His hand; no, those days we would not have been without."

Christ came, He says, "to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind." Christ opens everything. Are you blind? He opens your eyes. Are you in prison? He opens the door and sets you free. Are you in the grave? He unlocks its hold, and lets you out. What could man do for Lazarus? Lay him in the tomb. What could Jesus do for him? Call him out of the tomb, and then say, "Loose him, and let him go." It is life and liberty. This is the gospel. Do you know it? Have you been healed, delivered, set free? This is the day in which Christ can bless you, in which the Lord can receive you—it is "the acceptable year of the Lord," and it still goes on.

I love to think it was the Lord Himself first came to preach these glad tidings. The listeners were interested for a moment, and "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (ver. 22). But presently, when He began to touch their consciences, it was another thing. God must reach the conscience, for while you learn that He is good, you must also learn that you are utterly bad; while you learn that "God is love," you must also learn that your heart is full of hatred against Him. If you learn the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, you must also learn that He is the truth too. Thus, though the people wondered at His grace, they could not bear the truth, so they "rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong"

(ver. 29). Awful exposure of their heart's hatred! What does He do? "He, passing through the midst of them, went His way" (ver. 30). What was His way? It was a way of divine mercy and goodness to man in every conceivable condition. Did He meet hungry men—He fed them; blind men—He gave them sight; leprous men—He cleansed them; deaf men—He opened their ears; dead men—He raised them. Whatever the need was, He met it. That was His way. He was the Healer, the Helper, the Blessor, this gracious Son of God.

At length men got tired of being ministered to by Christ, when, along with His grace, the truth as to man and his real state came out, and they made up their minds that they would not bear His presence any longer. They wanted, and plotted, to get rid of Him. This is what men did with this blessed One. They cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." Tired of His presence, they put Him on the cross. Perfect love and goodness personified was in their midst, and they could only say, "Away with Him!" When He was presented to them as their King, they cried, "We have no king but Cæsar," mocked Him with a crown of thorns and purple raiment, and then, having stripped and nailed Him to a tree, they gambled for His garments beneath His eyes! Who put Him on the cross? Men; men with hearts like yours and mine. Yes, and our sins nailed Him there. Of this expression of perfect goodness, concerning whom God said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"

men said, "He is guilty of death," and they put Him on the cross.

Look at the awful hate and hardness of the heart of man. Dying, and—as they thought Jesus was—dying of thirst, when one more tender than others would have given Him something to drink, the rest said, "Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save Him." Seeing Him suffer, they say, "Let Him suffer; give Him nothing to assuage His burning thirst." And He died! And does God at once take vengeance for the murder of His Son? No; God takes that moment, as it were, to say, "I will put away everything that could come between you and Me." He rends the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom. That which stood between God and man, is taken away by God. That death of shame and agony the Saviour suffered, at the hand of man, was the actual means of putting away the very sin of those who crucified Him.

(3) OPENED GRAVES.

A work was at that moment wrought by Jesus that opened the grave itself. Nature was, as it were, more tender than the hearts of men. "The earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the *graves were opened*; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose" (Matt. xxvii. 51, 52). What took man into death? Sin. What took man out of death? Redemption. The graves were opened the moment the Saviour died. Before even Christ's own grave

was tenanted, God opened the graves of the saints. Christ has robbed death of its sting, the grave of its victory. By dying, He has annulled death? How do I see that first? By an opened grave. The whole question of sin has been settled by the cross of Christ; and the opened grave and resurrection of the dead are God's testimony to His estimate of the value of the work of Christ, and now the believer is associated with a risen Christ.

(4) OPENED UNDERSTANDINGS.

The Lord rises from the dead, the work of redemption accomplished. The proof of redemption is in the opened graves—*opened graves* the moment He died, and *empty graves* the moment He is risen. The day the Lord rose from the dead, He took His place amongst His own loved ones, said, "Peace unto you," and "then *opened He their understandings*, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 45).

(5) THE HEAVENS OPENED TO US.

But the work of Christ opens other things besides the grave, for, having ascended into heaven, and sent down the Holy Ghost, that blessed Spirit of truth indwells the believer; and we read of Stephen, that "he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see *the heavens opened*, and the Son

of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 55, 56). Heaven was opened then to a saint to look up and see Jesus at the right hand of God—to see a Man in the glory of God. A Man has gone in there to represent the believer in the glory of God, the Man who took his place, and bore his sins on the cross.

(6) AN OPENED HEART.

These blessed tidings, about a risen and glorified Christ, the Holy Ghost loves to spread; and Paul, led of the Spirit, in Acts xvi., finds himself called to Europe to proclaim them; and at Philippi, by the river side, "a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, heard us: *whose heart the Lord opened*, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" (ver. 14).

Has the Lord ever opened your heart, my dear reader?

This woman heard and believed, and then took her stand out and out with the Lord's servants; for "when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, *come into my house*, and abide there. And she constrained us" (ver. 15). This woman opened her heart to the Lord, and opened her house to His servants. Her heart was the Lord's, and her house was His too.

Christ opened everything; opened heaven, opened the book, opened eyes, opened graves, opened understandings to understand the Scriptures, opened

hearts and houses—and can you have a closed heart still? Oh! listen to this, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and *open* the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” (Rev. iii. 20). Now *you* have the opportunity of opening. It has been the Lord opening hitherto. Is your heart still shut? Look then at Revelation iv., “Behold, a door was opened in heaven.” The Lord has there come, and called up His own saints; and so what John sees open, the foolish virgin of Matthew xxv. will find shut.

If you refuse to open your heart to the Lord, there is yet another scene that concerns you. In Revelation xix. 11, heaven is opened again, and Christ is seen coming out to “judge and make war”; and then, in chapter xx., certain “books were opened.” The book of the history of your life down here is opened by the hand of Jesus, and what does He read of you? Born in sin, lived in sin, died in sin; born in sin, lived an unbeliever, died an unbeliever. And lest there should be any doubt upon this point, He turns to His own book—the book of life; He looks down His register for your name, to see if your name is recorded there. Alas! it is not there. Oh, what a fearful thing for you! Will you not turn to Jesus to-day? Will you still shut your eyes to everything that He has opened? If so, you shall yet see two things—you shall see the Lord when He opens the heavens in glory, and the books in judgment, and you shall see what may well fill

you with dismay, for you will behold, and descend into

(7) AN OPENED HELL,

when the prophet's woe is fulfilled on the careless pleasure-loving worldling, according as it is written, "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands. Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge; and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and *opened her mouth* without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Isa. v. 11-14).

What a description of the worldling and his end! The gospel is disregarded, its effect not considered.

Unsaved reader, you should ponder these verses. No wonder hell has enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure. Countless crowds of Satan's dupes are hurrying into it. Forget not, my friend, that though there are ten thousand roads into hell, there is not one road out of it. Do you mean to spend eternity there? God forbid! Come to Jesus, just now, and get saved.

WAITING FOR HIM.

BEFORE the Benevolent Asylum, North Melbourne, was demolished, I had some very edifying converse with an aged saint who was somewhat impatient to quit the body. She was a Mrs Paton, and spoke in the Scottish dialect. The following was part of our conversation :—

Patient.—"I'm weary waitin' for Him. I thocht He wad hae come for me yestreen. But He didna. I then looked for Him this mornin', but He didna come. But I'm thinkin' He's no' far off."

Visitor.—"Bide a wee. His ain time will prove the best. I am glad you have no fear in saying good-bye to a world in which you have spent so many years."

Patient.—"Why should I be frichted? Can I no' say: 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me'? Instead o' bein' frichted tae gang awa', I'm weary waitin' on my Saviour tae tak me oot o' this."

Visitor.—"I think He is at hand, and will meet you at the entrance of the valley, and will accompany you right through it."

Patient.—"Oh, bless His sweet Name, that's a comfortin' thocht. I've heard that it's a dreich and eerie glen tae gang intae. But if He meets me at

the mooth o' the glen, I'll hae His cheerfu' company
a' the way through."

Visitor.—"Yes." And here I whispered in her
ear the lines—

"And thro' that vale I'll walk with thee,
And, as we walk, thou'lt lean on Me,
Until we reach our Home above—
Oh, I will comfort thee, My love!
Belov'd, redeem'd, and now caress'd—
'I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!'"

Patient.—"That's it; that's it. Whit mair dae we
need but the company o' Death's Conqueror? But
I'm unco' sleepy. I'll jist doze a wee!"

I left her, as she dropped into a gentle slumber.
Next day I visited her, to find her much weaker, and
anxiously awaiting her Saviour.

Patient.—"I'm no' awa' yet! I wonner whit's
keepin' Him? Dae ye think He'll be lang?"

Visitor.—"Oh, He's coming, and coming to say to
you, 'Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come
away!'"

Patient.—"Ay, ay! He'll mak' me bonnie wi'
His ain beauty. Oh, but I am weary waitin' for
Him! But I'm sleepy. Sae, guid nicht!"

Visitor.—"Should I not see you here again, I
shall know where to find you."

Two days afterwards I revisited her ward, to find
a new patient occupying her bed.

HE HAD COME!

J. U.

THE DOCTOR'S END.

DR MIDDLECHIP, of Coventry, had a large practice amongst the poor, by whom he was greatly beloved. The kindness of his heart and the openness of his hand endeared him to all.

Philanthropy is good so far as it goes: and God Himself has shown the largest beneficence as the Almighty Creator and gracious Redeemer.

But mere philanthropy of itself will not fit a sinner to stand righteously and without terror in the presence of a holy God any more than the lack of it, which was tellingly shown in the deathbed scene of this eminent physician.

Like many of his own cult he acknowledged a supreme being, behind and above all he saw in nature, yet not until he was in his sixty-first year and in the real embrace of death was he brought in humility to own and submit to His righteous claims.

He had not first sought the kingdom of God, nor entered it, like a little child, in the consciousness of the child's helplessness and in its charming simplicity.

The pride of an educated, prosperous man needs a lot of breaking before he can come to this point in his own mind and heart.

He had been brought up in a Sunday school amongst Christians, where, doubtless in early days, he heard the Word of Life pressed home in spiritual power on his tender youthful conscience. "Except ye be

converted and become as little children ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven."

Conversion effects a mighty reformation in character, particularly in some people, but every reformed person is not necessarily a converted person. Many a merely reformed character, who, to some folks, seemed to be converted, has gone back like the dog to his vomit, or like the sow that was washed—answering to reformation—to her wallowing in the mire. The mire suits her swinish nature from which, though washed, she was never changed.

The doctor had seen many enter the baptistery confessing their faith in Christ. But how far he was definitely affected by these things is not distinctly known, except to God.

His private life we can only cast a veil over. That the Supreme Judge of all mankind knows best. His life of worldliness was open to all. We often forget the scripture which says, "Some men's sins are open before hand, going before to judgment, and some they follow after" (1 Tim. v. 24).

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." All of Adam's race, whether physicians, scientists, or paupers, are included in this short, terse statement of a great and solemn fact. Every honest conscience closes in with its verdict. No one can throw a Pharisaic stone at another and say, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou." The sin-distressed publican's prayer befits us all, and would be truly comely in the lips of the most exalted sovereign of this world.

The doctor was amongst this number of short-comers. But never did he confess it openly and sincerely until he knew for certain that his end could not long be delayed, a complication of diseases having begun to do their deadly work in his constitution.

The first expression of his need and confession of his sinfulness was, on Monday, the 18th November, when he was heard by his Christian wife to pray with evident depth of feeling, "God be merciful to me a sinner." More than twice she heard him repeat this most expressive utterance, which goes right to the heart of things.

It would be interesting to know how many bold and daring infidels have used this prayer, when the tremors of death have suddenly seized upon them.

For several days there was evident proof of the Holy Spirit's work in his conscience and heart. It was not mere fear of death that moved him to pray thus. He was far too brave a man to be so affected or show cowardice.

When we say this we do not mean to imply that fear is not an element in true conversion.

"The fear of death took hold on me,
I grief and trouble found."

This has been the case, in all ages, in the experience of all classes of men, who have been brought to the verge of death and seen the judgment of God in front of them. Paul was moved to persuade men because he realised "the terror of the Lord" in his own soul. And the man who was made conscious of

it, under Paul's preaching, if he did not flee from it to the open arms of Jesus, as the only refuge, would at least tremble, like Felix the Roman judge, under its scorching, withering rebuke, as his sins of incontinence, corruption and unrighteousness were made to stand vividly before his guilty conscience.

But sometimes, on a death-bed, people have been wrought upon by mere fear of the consequences of their sin, and then have made a flimsy kind of confession of Christ, without any real work of God in them. Then a sudden and unexpected change has come for the better and it all has passed away, like the early morning cloud when the sun arises in all the vigour of his warmth and power.

On the Thursday morning the doctor's brother called to see him. They had not spoken on friendly terms for years. He raised his hand and said to his brother, "Let bygones be bygones." His brother kindly asked him if there was anything he could do for him, to which he answered in the negative. He then said, "But there is One above that can forgive and forget. I want you to seek His forgiveness ere it be too late. He says, 'Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.' And 'I, even I, am He which blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own name's sake, and will not remember thy sins.' When God blots out our sins, for His own name's sake, they disappear and are never seen."

This was the first genuine evidence that a real work of God had been wrought in him. He had now realised God's forgiveness, which had chased

away the fear of the eternal consequences of his sins, and brought peace to his troubled soul. As a consequence he forgave his brother and besought him to seek God's forgiveness, which he himself had obtained, and of which he was now the happy possessor.

There cannot be any real happiness, in view of death, until God's eternal forgiveness, for Christ's name sake, is enjoyed in the conscience and heart. "Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" is the sure result when it is truly known.

Besides, it is impossible to enjoy the marvellous relationship of a child in the Father's love, or the love of the glorious Person of God's blessed Son, until the conscience is cleared by His precious blood. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," are wonderful words.

Mere resignation to death is sometimes the cunning of the old serpent, the devil, come, as an angel of light, to blind people to their lost state in God's sight. He thus rocks them fast asleep in the cradle of false security on the verge of eternal perdition.

On the same day the doctor said, to his dear Christian wife, with much feeling and emphasis, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." This greatly brightened her assurance of his reality.

On Friday and Saturday he was constantly repeating verses of holy Scripture that he had learned in

his youth. These were now, by the Holy Spirit's power, made the support of his faith, as he was about to pass through the solemn throes of death.

Though he had a keen intellect and much reasoning power, great natural vitality, and courageous fearlessness, yet he had become so child-like in his spirit that he was often heard to repeat those lines of the child's hymn—

“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child,
Pity my simplicity,
Let me love and cling to Thee.”

And has not Jesus said that, “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise”?

Jesus, the blessed Saviour of sinners, had now become his trust, refuge, and only Friend. He was often heard to ejaculate, “My Lord and My God.” This was worship in the highest sense.

On Saturday he often said exultingly, “I’m going to be with Jesus, I’m going to be with Jesus. I am so happy, I am so happy. You know, and I know, that I shall meet you, I shall meet you all in heaven.”

On Sunday morning he exclaimed several times loudly, “I love Him [Jesus], I love Him. I love Him, and I know He loves me. ‘He loved me and gave Himself for me. We love Him because He first loved us.’”

The mighty love, that gave itself on Calvary for him, had now lighted up his soul, dispelling the darkness of death, and his death-bed was changed into a

scene of life, joy, and praise. It was the foretaste and the beginning of God's eternal day, where no night, nor crying, no pain, and no sorrow shall ever be.

The closing scene was deeply affecting to the medical attendant, the nurse, and three others, who witnessed it. All said they had never beheld the like before.

It was on Monday, the 25th, that he passed away to be for ever with the Lord. But ere he entered His presence, in spirit, he loudly exclaimed, "I see Him [Jesus], I see Him." And, as if the Lord was about to embrace him, and enfold him in His loving arms for ever, he raised both his arms, though in great weakness, and said to the Lord, "Take me! Take me! Oh! take me now."

Shortly afterwards he was "absent from the body and present with the Lord." Immediately before he passed to be with Christ he looked at each one in the room and gave each a smile of recognition. That showed the fullest consciousness, and that there was no weakness in that strong intellect.

The gain to him must have been far greater than my pen can describe. "To die is gain." Who can refute this inspired statement from the pen of the mightiest force for Christ that ever lived on earth. For Paul to depart from the gloom of his prison life was "far better."

Who could say that all this was a mere "will-o'-the-wisp" or a delusion? If a delusion the hardest-hearted and most obstinate infidel ought to pray that there might be many such delusions to enable

sufferers to triumph over the worst of all sufferings, the darkest of all hours, and the greatest of all enemies.

What but the most arrogant and depraved ignorance could doubt its intense reality? Who that ever witnessed such a scene—which is by no means uncommon—but must swallow their pride, bow submissively, and say that there is reality in Christianity.

Christianity is not a system of dead ceremonies and the formal repetition of prayers, but a present joyful knowledge of the living glorious Person of the Son of God, who suffered for our sins but now lives, as Man, on the throne of God.

His love, when truly believed in and enjoyed, is the most uplifting, ennobling force in the universe. It was the whole strength of Paul's life, in suffering, testimony, and martyrdom, as of Madam Guyon, Pascal, Bunyan, Luther, Calvin, John Knox, and all the martyrs who perished in the flames, or suffered in the dungeon on the cruel rack.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. v. 14, 15).

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

P. W.

THE MOST IMPORTANT CLAUSE.

MR J. PIERPONT MORGAN, the American financier, the multi-millionaire, is dead.

So recently as 4th January of this year he made his will. The disposal of such vast sums of money and such priceless objects of art as he possessed, doubtless caused him much thought. His will consisted of about 10,000 words and contained thirty-seven articles.

But we are left in no doubt as to what Mr Morgan considered to be the most important clause in his will, nay, the most important affair in his whole life.

He made many transactions—some affecting such large sums of money as to disturb the financial equilibrium of the world—yet there was one transaction that evidently stood out in Mr Morgan's mind as of supreme importance.

His will opens with the following simple, yet dignified, words:—

“I commit my soul in the hands of my Saviour, full of confidence that, having redeemed it and washed it with His most precious blood, He will present it faultless before the throne of my heavenly Father.

“I entreat my children to maintain and defend, at all hazard and at any cost of personal sacrifice, the blessed doctrine of complete atonement of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ once offered, and through that alone.”

In the matter of his soul's eternal blessing his vast wealth was as powerless as the beggar's poverty. In this he was as dependent upon mercy as the dying robber at Calvary.

And, methinks, this testimony is far more wonderful than any other writing Mr Morgan has ever penned. May it have a voice to the tens of thousands who will read it.

Observe that Mr Morgan had no belief in the new theology. The Lord Jesus was for him a personal Saviour. He evidently agreed with Martin Luther that Christianity is a matter of personal pronouns, for he spoke of

"MY SAVIOUR."

Dear reader, have you yet appropriated the Saviour thus? Ought else is of no avail.

Then, further, note that Mr Morgan did not indulge in a pious hope that he might be saved. He could look back to a moment in his history when as a poor lost sinner he trusted the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour, so that he could say of the Lord in connection with his soul—

"Having redeemed it and washed it with His most precious blood."

He took the happy ground of positive assurance. For this he had the authority of Holy Scripture. The Apostle Peter could write to believers, "Ye **KNOW** that ye were . . . redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19). The apostle John, likewise writing to believers, penned

these peace-giving words, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us FROM ALL SIN" (1 John i. 7).

What a sure and certain trust Mr Morgan had when he passed into God's presence, resting, as he did, on God's Word! Can you do the same, my reader?

Mr Morgan bid his children "maintain and defend at all hazard, and at any cost of personal sacrifice, the blessed doctrine of complete atonement of sin through the Lord Jesus Christ once offered," and then he added the significant words—

"And through that ALONE."

It reminds us of Joachim II., Elector of Brandenburg. His ambassadors were about to proceed to the religious disputations of Worms in 1540. He gave them their final instructions: "*See that you bring back that little word 'ALONE': do not dare to return without it.*"

Both parties were prepared to confess that salvation was to be received "through faith in Christ Jesus," but the Reformers added the little word "*alone*"—salvation "*through faith in Jesus Christ ALONE.*"

But shall we call it a *little* word? It really is a *big* word, *big* in meaning, *big* in importance.

How Mr Morgan's closing words ring with the triumph of assured conviction and truth! At all cost this was to be maintained. Aye, if every penny of his vast millions had to go this must be maintained. He valued this far away and above all else. And well he might.

His millions might give him power on this earth for a few brief years, but were without avail to give him what he prized above all—salvation, redemption, “complete atonement.”

Thank God these are His gifts. The poorest is as welcome to their possession and enjoyment as the richest, and the richest needs them just as much as the poorest. Poor indeed would Mr Morgan have been without these possessions; with them he possessed “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” besides which his millions were paltry and insignificant. Grace alone will suit the needy sinner. Ponder well the following passage of Scripture. It alone completely sustains Mr Morgan’s statement as to what he found, through trusting in Christ. “*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast*” (Eph. ii. 8, 9). You may find the same blessing and solace, if you trust the same Saviour, on the same terms.

Of all the important transactions the great financier entered upon, surely the greatest satisfaction was his when he could sing:—

“’Tis done, the great transaction’s done,
I am my Lord’s and He is mine;
He drew me and I followed in,
Charmed to confess thè’ voice divine.
Happy day! Happy day!
When Jesus washed my sins away.”

Reader, has this great transaction taken place in your history yet? If not, do not rest till it has.

THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

SOME years since I was passing early one morning down one of the thoroughfares of Edinburgh, when I noticed numbers of people hastening rapidly in the direction in which I was going. The cause of the unusual stir I had no need to inquire, for just then the road made a bend, and full in view was a large crowd gathered before a house on fire. Sheets of flame leapt out of the windows, and dense volumes of smoke were rolling forth from the first floor.

Technically speaking, the burning house, itself the centre of a row, was "a first flat," and, fortunately or not as the case may have been, the tenants were out at the time. For the sake of my readers who are not acquainted with the "flat" system of building houses, I may say that the house in question, and two above it, entered from the street by a stair common to them all, each house having its own door opening into the stair at various levels. This being so, ingress to or egress from flats No. 2 and 3 can only be had by passing the door of No. 1, which really answers to the drawing-room floor of an ordinary house, the ground floor being usually, as in this case, a shop.

Drawing near the scene, I saw at a glance what was the state of matters. Neither fire-engine, fire-escape, fireman, nor fire-ladder were as yet at hand, while at the open windows of flat No. 2

stood two females, an aged woman and her daughter. Their dishevelled state and general attire told that from their slumber they had been awakened by the cry of "Fire," only to find the floor beneath their feet in flames, their house filled with choking smoke, and the common stair, by which they sought escape, a miniature crater through which it was hopeless to attempt to pass.

Baulked in their efforts to leave by the stairs, at the windows they now appeared in company, uttering distressing shrieks of fright, and imploring help from the people beneath. A fearful agony was on the face of each as they cried, and looked in vain for help from below. True, the help of firemen and ladders had been sought, but they were long in coming. At such a time each moment seems an age!

It was a touching sight as, side by side, they stood — themselves utterly helpless — while the devouring flame below seemed only to mock their agony, and with lurid blaze ever and anon leapt madly forth and up, from the windows directly beneath them, as though it would gladly devour them where they stood, or drive them back to suffocation. The breeze was fresh, and the snow-white hair of the terror-stricken mother was waving wildly in the air, a strange contrast to the black smoke and lambent flames around. Altogether it was a weird and painful sight.

Just then a cheer rang forth from the crowd, and, looking higher than the women, I saw that

some kindly workmen had, by another common stair, managed to get on to the roof, carrying with them a slender rope. To fasten it round a stack of chimneys—fortunately in a direct line behind the open window—was the work of a minute or two, and then, giving the rope a coil, and a well-directed fling over the eaves of the house, right down in front of the terrified, and now surprised women (for they expected no help from *above*), fell their only way of escape. Loud hurrahs greeted the providers of this way of salvation, while cries of “Lay hold of the rope,” “Come down by the rope,” indicated plainly to the unfortunate pair what they were expected to do. A way of escape having been provided by others, they were expected and urged at once to avail themselves of it. How right, and how simple this judgment; do you not agree with it, reader?

Quick as thought, I saw the women lay hold of the rope; but now the question arose, Who should go first?—in other words, who had faith to trust this slender means of safety? From where I stood I could note an altercation as to who should first avail herself of it, and some minutes I think must have elapsed, while encouraging and hastening words rose thickly from below—“Make haste”—“Don’t waste time”—“You may safely trust it,” &c. &c. At length the mother gained her point—she was stout and heavy, it might not sustain her; the daughter was thin and fragile, she might safely trust it. A mother’s love, I doubt not, was under

and behind all—a love only eclipsed by a Saviour's. The daughter took the rope in both her hands and got on to the window-sill. The crowd held its breath. The rope was pulled on first, to see if it held on above. All right. The thirty-five or forty feet beneath was looked at. The rope was long enough, and it was strong enough, and yet she lingered. I saw the reason why; when just about to launch away, doubts and fears evidently rose, and by the heels of her boots she clung to the raised sill. This lasted a moment, and then, with instinctive love, the mother gave her a push, and fairly forth she swung.

Descending too rapidly, her hands "fired," and, while still some distance from the ground, she let go the rope and fell. Fearing this event, some strong men had gathered underneath, and into their arms she tumbled, receiving no harm whatever. The mother, encouraged by her child's success, and learning by her fall not to be too hasty in her descent, now committed herself to the trusty rope, and, hand under hand, coming slowly down, was soon by her daughter's side, right thankful for the rope from above.

At the time, and since, I have often thought how this scene illustrates the state of man as a sinner, and the dealings of God with him in grace. Man has sinned, and his sin has placed him in a position of imminent danger. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). This word includes you and me, dear reader,

Further, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). And again God speaks thus, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). As to what this judgment is which overtakes the *dead*, 'we are left in no doubt whatever. Hear God's testimony, "I saw *the dead*, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 12, 15).

Here we are told the final doom of unbelievers. They have no life suited to God. "Dead in sins" delineates their time condition. "Eternal life, the gift of God," they cared not then to accept; hence their eternal condition corresponds to their time state. Solemn truth! The actions of life bring forth fruit for eternity. Read what follows: "But the fearful (*i.e.*, cowards—those who are afraid or ashamed to trust and confess Christ), and unbelieving (those who are avowed infidels and scoffers, though outwardly moral and well-behaved—and is it not notable that these two classes should head the list?), and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: *which is the second death*" (Rev. xxi. 8). I know men scoff at these solemn words of God. This

does not make them less real or terrible, but only manifests the folly of the human heart, which refuses to believe God's testimony as to its present guilt and godless state, and future equally godless condition for eternity, and despises the way of salvation which God in His grace has provided.

The women I have written of were in as much danger while asleep and unconscious of it, as when fully alive to their critical state. Is your case different, oh unsaved reader? Not one whit.

But perhaps you bow to God's Word, and seeing your guilt and sin, tremble in view of "judgment to come." It is well with you if so, and better still if you are willing to take God's way of salvation. He it is who alone can save. He has, so to speak, let down a rope *from above*, long and strong enough to meet any and every sinner's case, no matter how many or heavy his sins may be. Christ is God's way of escape from the lake of fire, and if you would escape the due reward of your deeds, my friends, you must trust to Him.

"Lay hold of the rope," said the crowd, preaching a suited gospel to the women. "Lay hold of Christ," say I. "This is My beloved Son, hear Him," says God the Father. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. Come unto Me," says Jesus. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," says John the Baptist. "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," says the Apostle John.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," say Paul and Silas. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," says Peter, the fisherman. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," says John the Evangelist. "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," says Isaiah, the prophet. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him," says David, the Psalmist-king.

What a cloud of witnesses to His worth! He has come down to save—it has all come from His own side—and is it not strange that sinners will not trust Him?

Dear reader, if you still have your heels hooked on to some window-sill of feelings or hesitancy, oh, let me give you the push just now that shall cause you simply and sweetly to trust the Lord Jesus.

Fear not that you will fall. He will hold you up, the rope will not break; and His grasp of you—when once you commit yourself to Him—will never unloose; and He will land you in glory as the fruit of His work on the Cross for you.

"Look to Jesus, look and live;
Mercy at His hands receive;
He has died upon the tree,
And His words are, 'Look to Me.'

*Come to Jesus, come and live ;
He has endless life to give ;
He from sin will set you free ;
For His words are, ' Come to Me.'*

*Rest in Jesus, there repose,
Shelter find from all thy foes ;
Let His name be all thy plea,
For His words are, ' Rest in Me.'"*

W. T. P. W.

THE WIDOW'S PRAYER.

MANY years ago there lived at Hull a Christian widow, a laundress, whose only son became a very successful missionary in India. The story about him is not a little remarkable. The boy, though very carefully brought up in the fear of God and the knowledge of His Word, was at first very thoughtless, wilful, and indifferent. His mother, however, was deeply concerned about him, and she prayed earnestly and constantly for his salvation.

One night her heart was much drawn out for him. After the lad had gone to rest, she went up quietly to his room, and, kneeling at his bed whilst he slept, poured out her soul with special urgency that the Lord would change his heart. James knew nothing about this ; and yet, the next morning he awoke with a strange impression on his mind. He felt as

if God had been speaking to him in a way that he could not account for. This conviction grew stronger, as time went on, until he became a very decided believer in Christ. He joined the Sunday School, at first as a regular and attentive scholar, and afterwards as an intelligent and devoted teacher.

In time he was appointed superintendent of another school in Hull. The vicar, struck by his unusual zeal and capacity, engaged him as a Scripture reader in a very rough district, chiefly inhabited by Irish Roman Catholics. There he evinced so much skill and patience in dealing with the Romish controversy that, eventually, he was recommended to the Committee of the C.M.S., to be trained at the College for foreign service. At the end of three years' training he was ordained and sent out to India, and placed at the head of the mission at Calcutta.

We cannot here trace out the history of his labours amongst the Hindus and Mohammedans; enough to say that he was signally blessed in his work, and that after many years he passed to his rest, having received many seals to his ministry.

But we especially desire to call attention to the fact that all these important results are due, under God, to the believing, persevering prayers of his devoted mother. What an encouragement is that to Christian parents, not to despair of even the most careless and wayward children. Mrs P——'s experience was in some respects similar to that of Monica, the mother of the saintly Augustine, in the fourth century. Her son, in his earlier years, was

drawn into paths of vice and error, but was at last brought in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ through her prayers, teaching, and example. In her deep anxiety she consulted Bishop Ambrose of Milan. After she had laid open her trouble before him, he said, "My good woman, do not despair, the child of so many prayers will never be allowed to perish." So it proved, and that once reckless youth became one of the brightest lights of the Church in those days, and through succeeding ages.

How sadly true it is that the brightest smiles and the bitterest tears arise from parents' hearts.

Many years ago a clever, intelligent young man was sentenced to death for murder. When his mother went to see him in the prison, he said to her with very undutiful harshness, "Oh, mother, if it had not been for you I should never have been here." She plaintively replied, "I am sure I never told you to do anyone any harm." With sharp emphasis he retorted, "But you never told me to do any good."

How true it is, in all departments of human life, in society, in families, and in individual experience, that, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and that, if we sow to the Spirit, "in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

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

A VOICE FROM THE COAL-MINE.

FROM the moment that sin, with its attendant train of evils, entered this world, God has been pleased to address Himself, in various ways, to His creatures, with a view to their blessing—that “blessing,” *which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it* (Prov. x. 22).

That the simple presentation of Christ as “God’s salvation,” by means of “the Word,” applied to conscience and heart, by the Holy Spirit, is God’s *normal* way of making Himself known, appears unquestionable; but there are other ways in which His voice is heard. God speaks with no uncertain sound, in the whirlwind, the tempest, the cyclone, the devastating scourge of disease, the volcano, the earthquake, the railway smash; in disasters on land and sea, loss of health, reverses in business, afflictions, bereavements, and many other ways. Why? To arrest *you* on your downward course, poor sinner; and to open your eyes to the fact that the Almighty God of heaven and earth is interested in *you*; and that, instead of being your enemy, He is *most favourably disposed towards you*.

Why should you allow yourself to be duped and befooled by the devil into a lost eternity, when God in mercy has preserved you until now, and “salvation” is still within your reach?

Reader, *you had a dream*. In the still hours of night you saw yourself arraigned before the “great

white throne." You saw the books opened, and another book was opened, "the book of life"; but you saw with alarm that *your* name was not enrolled in *that* book; in guilty fear you listened to that dread indictment and sentence: "Whosoever was not found written in the 'Book of Life' was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). How your spirit *quailed* in that dazzling light. Oh, the agony of your soul as you took in the terrible situation, that you were "weighed in God's balances and found wanting" (Dan. v. 27), and that an eternity of endless misery was your portion. But in the midst of your deep anguish you awoke, and how glad you were it was only a hideous dream.

Stay, friend, it was a voice from God to *you*. Listen, "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and *keep back his soul from the pit*" (Job xxxiii. 14, 18).

Awake, careless one, slight not God's warning voice; if a *dream* caused you such concern, *what must the actual reality be?* Flee *now* to Jesus, the sinner's Friend, learn this—that the death of Christ on the Cross has settled the question of sin for ever, to God's entire satisfaction, and the heart of the blessed God is now free to dispense grace, "*through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ*" (Rom. v. 21). We say it with all reverence, that

it is *due to Christ* that God should *forgive* and *justify* every poor sinner who puts in his claim for acceptance on the ground of what *Jesus* has done (Rom. iii. 25, 26).

Another voice comes to us, loud, and deep, and solemn. May it awaken an echo and response in the conscience and heart of every reader of these pages. A sudden calamity lately visited a North of England mining village, striking terror into many a heart, and plunging a whole community into anguish and bereavement. The afternoon of Tuesday, 16th February 1909, will be long remembered by the stricken mourners of West Stanley. About 3.40 P.M. a terrific explosion was heard, followed quickly by another; and a blast of flame from the workings, which rose high above the pit shaft, was the first intimation of the disaster. Instantly the meaning of the sign was read, and a cry of terror went out from the men at bank: "The Busty Pit's fired."

The winding gear remained in position above the shaft, but a mass of timber fell in, and the shaft was closed. The second, the "Lamp Pit shaft," was also damaged, and both ways into and out of the pit were blocked. From every pit, in the surrounding circle of north-west Durham, battalions of willing workers were quickly on the spot, equipped, and in readiness for the work of rescue. After a partial clearance of the shaft had been effected, a cage was lowered down the pit, the under manager being in charge, accompanied by a party of shaftsmen; but as the

"skeats" had been damaged by the flames, and the shaft otherwise rendered unworkable, the progress of the explorers was very slow.

When the first rescues were effected, in the early hours of the Wednesday morning, some twelve hours after the explosion, hope spread through the crowd of anxious watchers around the pit head. But the hours sped by, and those who had kept vigil throughout the night, hoping for the safety of some loved one, sank into the depths of despair as the day advanced. About seven o'clock, joyful news reached the watchers that twenty-six men had been brought to bank alive; but rescues after this were few and far between, and night came again with the total standing at thirty-three.

Well-earned praise has been bestowed upon a brave "overman," by whose presence of mind and forethought the lives of twenty-six men in the Towneley seam were saved. After the explosion, he endeavoured to persuade the men not to rush to the shaft bottoms, where the air was impure, but to remain "in bye," where a supply of pure air was more certain. Those who took the deputy's advice were saved, while the others, following the natural instinct of rushing to the place of exit, hastened to their doom.

What an object lesson for reader and writer is this. A well-tried and trusted man was the deputy; no novice was he. He knew where the point of safety lay; and it was the wisdom of those men and boys to obey him. There is One, and *only*

One, dear reader, who can be safely trusted to carry us in triumph through the intricate mazes of a world that lies in the "wicked one"; and *that one is Jesus*. He has proved His competency and willingness to undertake our case from start to finish; and can save *to the uttermost* all who come to God by Him (Heb. vii. 25).

But to return to the pit: drearily the hours passed along, as the dread duty was carried on through the night. The heartrending scenes that accompanied the work of identification at the pit head will never be erased from the memory of those who witnessed them. Hopes, revived by weird sounds far down the pit, that other breadwinners would be restored to their families alive, were excited, and dispelled, to be raised again, by hasty preparations on the part of the doctors for the reception of another survivor. But it was not to be. The last living soul from the dismal depths had been brought to bank.

Passing over the events of the next succeeding days, we learn that the total number of the victims was 168.

We can well understand the village of West Stanley being bathed in tears and enshrouded in sorrow, many a household having been deprived of its breadwinners. Loving hearts and tender ties have been sundered at one fell sweep. Broken-hearted mothers and wives, young and middle-aged, mourn the loss of husbands and sons. Fatherless and weeping children are asking in vain for those whose familiar faces

they will never see again on earth. Oh! the havoc and desolation that death has caused in this world. May God in His rich mercy bind up these broken hearts, and give every stricken mourner in West Stanley to know, as a present and living reality, the sympathy and love of a Saviour God.

But, reader, it is the voice of God to you and to me. One hundred and sixty-eight lifeless bodies, which were full of life and vigour, now sleep quietly under the sod, awaiting the resurrection: when soul and body shall be re-united; and when each individual shall find his appointed destination. All who, in that company, had put their trust in Jesus are *now* "absent from the body, present with the Lord." They are "with Christ which is far better" (2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 23). Are *you* ready, if it should please God to summon you swiftly into His holy presence?

Friend, do not trifle away the day of mercy. Sooner or later "God's reckoning day" with you will come. God has decreed that every knee shall bow to Jesus, and that every tongue shall confess to Him, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 9-11). Many are doing so to-day; will *you* not join that happy number? and, even now, in the midst of a death-doomed world, help to swell the heavenly chorus of the redeemed, "*unto Him, who alone is worthy.*"

G. F. E.

"MILK WITHOUT MONEY."

“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.

I WAS on an evangelistic tour through the north of Ireland, accompanied by a beloved fellow-labourer in the gospel. Being announced to preach at the town of L——, on the 14th September, two routes to our destination lay open to us—a long detour by rail, or a direct drive of about twenty miles, on an outside jaunting-car, over some verdant mountains. Taking the wise advice of our host of the previous night—a beloved brother in the Lord—we chose the latter, and being well furnished with little gospel books for the journey, we started. My friend sat one side of the car and I the other, and all along our journey we scattered our precious gospel seeds, giving them to walkers, jerking them to riders in vehicles, and now and then jumping off, as our stout nag toiled up the hill, and handing them to rustic cottagers, and sun-burned reapers in the fields of golden grain which, on all hands, waved under the balmy zephyr breezes of the loveliest day I ever saw in Erin's isle. I am thankful to say our tracts were welcomed on all hands ; and

one feels sure the fruit of this happy service will show up, in the day of the Lord, in the persons of some precious souls blessed through these little silent messengers.

The sun began to get very hot, and quite naturally, after two or three hours of this sort of work, we became rather thirsty. We had come on no very drinkable water, so, spying a little house where I knew there would be a cow or two, I asked our driver if he thought I could get some milk there. Receiving an affirmative answer, I ran to the door, which was open, and knocked. This brought out from the innermost apartment a sedate but pleasant-looking female, evidently, I should judge, the mistress of the primitive establishment. Looking at me, as much as to say, What do you want? but not speaking, I courteously said, "Will you be good enough to sell me some milk?"

She paused a moment, and then very firmly replied "*No!*" following up this decided negative with a pleasant smile, and "but I will *give* you some," putting as strong an emphasis on the "*give*" as she had placed on the "*no*."

So saying, she turned back to her little dairy, while I turned to my friend, who had come to my side, saying, "Now, that's the gospel, is it not? God *gives*, but He will not *sell*, salvation." We had a most delicious draught of cold sweet milk, for which we most truly gave her thanks, accompanied by some little gospel books, and a few words about God's blessed Son and His great salvation, which

was as free to her, by faith, as she had made her milk to us, and then resumed our journey.

Then, and many a time since, I have pondered over this scene as a lovely illustration of God's way of dealing with souls who really want salvation. We did not know, and therefore did not count, on the bounty of the one we appealed to. And so it is with man. Not knowing God, he knows not the grace and love of His heart; and, though needy, and owning it too, fancies he must bring an equivalent to God ere he can get from Him that which he needs. If you, my reader, are of this mistaken class, may God open your eyes to see His way of salvation. His grace provides it, and not your works of any kind. There are two good reasons for this. First, God is too rich to sell salvation; and second, man is too poor to buy it. Hence you must get it as a gift, if you are to get it at all.

The quotation I have made at the head of this paper shows this truth very simply. The "thirsty" are invited. And are not you among this number? You certainly are, if you have not yet found Jesus, for "your labour," whatever its nature, "satisfieth not," our verses say. Thirst is a craving which the suited fluid alone can satisfy. Now the thirst of an anxious soul is really for God and His Christ, though very likely it could not put it in so many words; but the Lord Jesus, who knows the heart well, says, "Whosoever drinketh of this water [the well of this world] *shall thirst again*: but whoso-

ever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John iv. 13, 14). Precious words! But not more precious than true. Again, He says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John vii. 37); giving also this sweet assurance, "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst; . . . and him that cometh to Me I will in *no wise* cast out" (John vi. 35, 37).

Now, dear anxious reader, are not you invited? Do not these glorious words of the Saviour encourage you to come to Him? They ought to, if they do not. Listen again, "*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*" "But," you say, "how can I be sure it means me? Perhaps I am not thirsty enough, not anxious enough, for salvation." Very likely; no one ever was as anxious as he should have been, considering God's view of sin, and the awful danger of the unsaved sinner. But the point is not the *measure* of your anxiety, but the fact of your being "thirsty" or willing at all. If so, hear the word of the Lord: "*I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. . . . Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*" (Rev. xxi. 6, xxii. 17). What charming words! "*I will give . . . freely.*" That is God's side. "*Let him take . . . freely.*" That is your side. God gives; all you have to do is to take what He gives.

"What must I bring?" say you. Nothing!

Come to Jesus as you are. "He that hath no money" is the invited one. You have no equivalent for that which God dispenses, so you are bid to come and buy "without money and without price." Why "buy"? Because it supposes a person in earnest. When a person goes into a shop to "buy" an article, his very presence there shows he really wanted it, or he would not have gone to the trouble of entering the mart. Buying implies direct dealing between two parties. This is the very thing God wants. He wishes you brought into His own presence in real desire to have salvation—the water of life—Christ. You come. What then? You find all is a gift. How simple!

What earnestness is with God, when thrice in this one verse He says "Come!" I cannot refrain from quoting it again, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, *come* ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: COME ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." How blessedly falls that heaven-born word on the ear—Come! *come*! COME! Who could refuse such grace? Come as you are; come in your sins; come in your guilt. Come in your distress; come in your sorrow, your want, your woe, your misery, your helplessness, your nothingness, your poverty, your hardness of heart—yea, exactly as you are, as you read these lines. Only come, come to Jesus, and you will be received, blessed, forgiven, cleansed, and saved on the very spot.

More, you will be made the possessor of a new life, for, He adds here, "Incline your ear, and *come unto Me*; hear, and your soul shall live." This, too, is a gift, as is all else that the soul receives from God; for it is written, "The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

Rest assured, if you come in any way but as a simple receiver, you must be rejected, as was Cain. Did you never notice that the Lord Jesus said, "It is more blessed to *give* than to *receive*" (Acts xx. 35). This being so, who is to have the more blessed place, you or God? Let one speak who knew well this truth, "Without all contradiction, *the less* is blessed of *the better*" (Heb. vii. 7). Now, then, what do you say? I will tell you what I say: "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift*" (2 Cor. ix. 15).

W. T. P. W.

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

(To those who have believed that faith in the Bible and the God of the Bible does not harmonise with the modern scientific spirit, the following testimony from a distinguished physician and surgeon should be of great value.)

I HAVE, within the past twenty years of my life, come out of uncertainty and doubt into a faith which is an absolute dominating conviction of the truth, and about which I have not a shadow of doubt. I have been intimately associated with

eminent scientific workers ; have heard them discuss the profoundest questions ; have myself engaged in scientific work, and so know the value of such opinions. I was once profoundly disturbed in the traditional faith in which I have been brought up—that of a Protestant Episcopalian—by inroads which were made upon the book of Genesis by the higher critics. I could not then gainsay them, not knowing Hebrew nor archæology well, and to me, as to many, to pull out one great prop was to make the whole foundation uncertain.

So I floundered on for some years trying, as some of my higher critical friends are trying to-day, to continue to use the Bible as the Word of God, and at the same time holding it to be of composite authorship ; a curious and disastrous piece of mental gymnastics—a bridge over the chasm separating an older Bible-loving generation from a newer Bible-emancipated race. I saw in the book a great light and glow of heat, yet shivered out in the cold.

One day it occurred to me to see what the book had to say about itself. As a short, but perhaps not the best, method, I took a concordance and looked out “Word,” when I found that the Bible claimed from one end to the other to be the authoritative Word of God to man. I then tried the natural plan of taking it as my text-book of religion, as I would use a text-book in any science, testing it by submitting to its conditions. I found that Christ Himself invites men to do this (John vi. 17).

I now believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of

God, inspired in a sense utterly different from that of any merely human book.

I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, without human father, conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; that all men without exception are by nature sinners, alienated from God, and, when thus utterly lost in sin, the Son of God Himself came down to earth, and by shedding His blood upon the cross paid the infinite penalty of the guilt of the whole world. I believe he who thus receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour is born again spiritually, as definitely as in his first birth, and, so born spiritually, has new privileges, appetites, and affections; that he is of one body, with Christ the Head, and will live with Him for ever. I believe no man can save himself by good works, or what is commonly known as a "moral life," such works being but the necessary fruits and evidence of the faith within.

Satan I believe to be the cause of man's fall and sin, and his rebellion against God as rightful governor. Satan is the prince of all the kingdoms of this world, yet will in the end be cast into the pit and made harmless. Christ will come again, in glory, to earth to reign, even as He went away from the earth, and I look for His return day by day.

I believe the Bible to be God's Word, because, as I use it day by day as spiritual food, I discover in my own life, as well as in the lives of those who likewise use it, a transformation, correcting evil tendencies, purifying affections, giving pure desires, and teaching that concerning the righteousness of God

which those who do not so use it can know nothing of. It is as really food for the spirit as bread is for the body.

Perhaps one of my strongest reasons for believing the Bible is that it reveals to me, as no other book in the world could do, that which appeals to me as a physician, a diagnosis of my spiritual condition. It shows me clearly what I am by nature—one lost in sin and alienated from the life that is in God. I find in it a consistent and wonderful revelation, from Genesis to Revelation, of the character of God, a God far removed from any of my natural imaginings.

It also reveals a tenderness and nearness of God, in Christ, which satisfies the heart's longings, and shows me that the infinite God, Creator of the world, took our very nature upon Him that He might, in infinite love to His people, redeem them. I believe in it because it reveals a religion adapted to all classes and races, and it is intellectual suicide, knowing it, not to believe it.

What it means to me is as intimate and difficult a question to answer as to be required to give reasons for love of father and mother, wife and children. But this reasonable faith gives me a different relation to family and friends: greater tenderness to these and deeper interests in all men. It takes away the fear of death and creates a bond with those gone before. It shows me God as a Father, who perfectly understands, who can give control of appetites and affections, and rouse one to fight with self instead of being self-contented.

And if faith so reveals God to me I go without question wherever He may lead me. I can put His assertions and commands above every seeming probability in life, dismissing cherished convictions, and looking upon the wisdom and ratiocinations of men as folly opposed to Him. I place no limits to faith when once vested in God, the sum of all wisdom and knowledge, and can trust Him though I should have to stand alone before the world in declaring Him to be true.

H. A. K.

THE FIVE CARD SHARPERS.

A FRIEND of mine was coming on a train once when five of the nine in the carriage began to play cards ; they were evidently sharpers, and before long challenged others to play with them, but all declined. At last they turned to my friend and said, "We can see by your face that you fully understand the game ; come, take a turn."

"I did know the cards once," he said, "but it is so long since I played that I forget."

"Nonsense !" they said, "you could win all our money, if you only tried."

"Perhaps that would not be very much," he replied ; "any way, I will not attempt. Five of you are enough for your game ; we will look on."

As they still pegged away at him, he at last said, "Gentlemen, I tell you I cannot play ; but there is one thing I can do."

"What is that?" they asked eagerly.

"I can tell fortunes."

"Capital! Will you tell ours?"

"Yes, if you wish it. But I warn you it may not be very flattering."

"What card do you want?"

"The five of spades, please," and it was handed to him with expectation of great sport.

"I shall require one other thing, if you don't mind," he further said.

"What?" they asked a little impatiently.

"A Bible."

They could not produce one.

"No, but you had one once," said the fortune-teller, "and if you had followed its precepts you would not have been what you now are. However, I have one," and to their dismay he produced it.

A pistol would hardly have been a more unwelcome object. But the fortune-teller began: "Gentlemen, you see these two pips I have laid at the top of your card? I wish them to represent your two eyes; this one in the middle, your mouth; and these other two, your knees. Now, in Revelation i. 7 I read, 'Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him.' The speaker is the Nazarene, once red with blood for sinners like you and me; and with your eyes, that then see Him, you will have to stand before Him to be judged. That is the future of your eyes," he continued.

"Now concerning your mouth and knees, let me read Philippians ii. 9-12: 'Wherefore God also hath highly

exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' From this I foretell that your knees will bow to Jesus, and your tongue that used to carelessly say, 'Gentle Jesus' and 'Our Father,' will have to confess that He is truly Lord of all. Yes, your eyes will see Him, and when you see Him, your knees will grow weak, and you will fall before His majesty."

They got more than they bargained for; but he gave them some more: "Gentlemen, that is only the first reading of this card; now for the second, if you please. These five spades represent five actual spades that are already made, and may, ere long, dig the graves of you five sinners, and then, if still unsaved, your souls will be in hell, crying in thirst for a drop of water and you will wish you had never been born" (Luke xvi. 19-31).

The five card sharpers were getting more and more fidgety; but it was useless, for they could not get out, as the train would not stop until it reached Reading.

"Gentlemen," continued the fortune-teller, "you may escape this terrible future, and my fortune-telling not come true, if you will do what I did, and perhaps I was the worst of the six. My eyes saw Jesus dying upon a cross for me, in my stead, bearing my doom. I thanked Him. My tongue confessed Him Lord, and my knees bowed to Him in lowly submission.

If you do this, I can foretell the very reverse of all I have said. I have told your fortunes as I promised, and if I am right you ought to cross my palm with a shilling apiece, but I do not wish your five shillings; I will be content if even but one of you will promise to trust the Saviour, whose blood cleanseth from all sin."

They would neither pay nor promise; but, as the train pulled up at Reading, they tumbled out as if the carriage had contained a smallpox patient, leaving my friend in possession of the "five of spades." "Stop," he cried, "here is your card," which he tossed after them.

Recently walking near his home at Shepherd's Bush, London, my friend was accosted by some one saying, "Good evening, sir."

"It is a good evening, if all your sins are forgiven," was the rejoinder.

"Yes, and I am glad you are still at it," replied the stranger.

"Still at what?"

"Telling fortunes."

"That is not my line."

"Well, you told mine more than ten years ago."

"I think you are mistaken," said my friend.

"No; anyone who has once seen you can never mistake you."

He then recalled the ride from Oxford.

"Ah! I remember, and you left like a lot of cowards, without paying the fortune-teller."

“I am your payment. Your words have come true of three of us ; the three spades have dug three graves. The other one I saw at Reading a few days ago ; he is anxious to be saved from the fortune you foretold, and is attending religious meetings ; indeed, as I parted with him I said, ‘ Sam, don’t forget the five of spades.’ ”

“ And what about yourself ? ”

“ When you saw me in that railway carriage, I was downright miserable. Mother had just died, and I had been with her shortly before. Calling me to her bedside, she had said to me, ‘ William, kiss your mother, and I leave you this scripture—“ Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him ” ’ (Rev. i. 7). You will realise that, when you quoted those very same words, it seemed as if my mother rose up and frowned upon the cards. The text followed me, but I drank, and drank, and drank again, though continually I heard ‘ Every eye shall see Him.’ At last I went to California, for the gold diggings. As soon as I landed, having nothing to do, I stopped to hear some singing ; the singers formed a little procession, and I followed to a mission. When the young man got up to speak, he gave out as his text those very words, ‘ Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him.’ It was more than I could stand ; and that night I bowed my knees in submission, saw Jesus as my Saviour, and with my tongue confessed Him.”

That “ one ” was good cheer and good payment for the fortune-teller.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13).

"The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6).

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

ANON.

"DOUBLE."

THE Lord Jesus Christ has finished the great work He came from heaven to carry out on this poor little sin-stained earth. This was to make *known* His Father's thoughts of mercy, of salvation, of eternal life and joy, and all the love that had to be told out in words and deeds, because He *is* love.

At the beginning He could say, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," and at the close, "It is finished." "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John xvii. 4).

He wants everybody to understand *what He has done*: to consent heartily to it: to accept the appointed way: to leave out every other way, or thought, or question, and to receive without delay the great blessing thus presented in unmistakable love. It is hoped that the following true story may help some young reader to understand a little better God's way of salvation, and to say, "Thank God it is so simple!"

I was only a small child, but well do I remember the morning on which they told me my mother was "gone to heaven." Amidst my grief I kept wishing that Jesus would be my Friend, as I knew He had been hers. I concluded that if I were "very good" perhaps He would be.

One year, as the season of Advent came round, a very solemn sermon was preached in our village church, on the Lord's coming and the judgment day, when people would be judged, according to their works, before the great *white* throne, and the Judge would have to say, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." This much of the sermon fastened itself on my mind, and the terrible scene, as I vividly imagined it, of the passing of all things *away from God*, so distressed me that I lay most of that night trembling in my bed. After some hours I slept a little, but awoke weeping at the sight (in my dream) of that awful white throne and the strict, holy Judge sitting on it, and found myself wailing in childish agony, "I thought He *would* have been my Friend! I suppose I am a miserable sinner; *how can I ever have Him for a Friend?*"

When I grew older I went away to a boarding-school kept by Christian ladies near London. One of these ladies was especially kind, and seemed to notice that I was often serious and had been weeping. She thought, of course, that I was homesick, and bright cheery words were gratefully received, but the soul-trouble was untouched. One day she told me it made people happy "to trust Jesus." To

which I replied, "I do want to be happy, but I don't understand *how* it can be." This dear lady, though full of concern and sympathy, seemed unable to explain, and the words "trust Jesus," or "trust in Jesus," conveyed no distinct meaning to my young mind. When the rest were gone to church Miss W—— would often ask me to come with her to hear some evangelical preacher elsewhere. But the sermons were long and mysterious, and after listening anxiously for some message that might *suit me*, and feeling worn out with disappointment, I *added to my sins, as I thought*, by falling asleep.

One day while preparing some translation these words lay before me in the lesson-book: "God hates sinners." "That I cannot translate," said I, "for I don't believe it is true." This thought was so strongly pressed upon me that I dipped my pen and covered the dreadful words with ink.

When the book was handed to our governess she looked rather grieved at the black patch, and turned quickly to the owner: "What is this, Ellen? this is not like your book?"

"But I really could not write those words, Miss Gordon."

"What are the words? O—h! I see. Well, dear, I think you are right."

I wondered. "Does *she* understand? Is *she* a friend of Jesus?" But she said no more, and I never heard her mention His name.

About this time a young lady from Sweden arrived amongst us. She was the daughter of wealthy

Jewish parents, and was now cast out from home and friends because she had learned to love the Nazarene. I watched her with reverence, and soon loved her for her gentle words and ways. She said the Lord Jesus was always comforting and helping her, and finding her friends. I was too shy to speak of my need, but it raised fresh hope in my soul to see her happiness, even in her time of sorrow. She loved her parents and her home, and to have had to leave all, had given her deep pain. But JESUS, once the despised and rejected, was now known and loved, and she had decided that He must be her Lord. Her word had been, "He that loveth father or mother *more than Me* is not worthy of Me" (Matt. x. 37). She now thought Him worthy of all the homage, all the loving obedience of heart and life: and as she followed Him, her heart was strengthened and her way made plain.

I was now passed on to a ladies' college in the country. Here amongst a large number of young ladies, I noticed a few who I thought might be Christians. They were unselfish, straightforward, kind, and I saw they could be trusted. Every Monday evening these girls would disappear for at least an hour. Upon inquiry, I found they were in the habit of joining the English governess (who was a young Scotchwoman, by the by) in her little bedroom at the top of the house, to talk over school and personal matters, and to pray for themselves and for the blessing of others. They asked would I like to come? I replied, "I would, to listen, but not to

take part." To this they rejoined, "Oh, yes, do come, dear, and do exactly as you like. If you *want* to pray or talk about anything, you can be quite free, you need not mind us." So I went.

The little meetings were held in the dusk. The darkness seemed to help. They felt they could speak more freely, and time was precious. What took place was just the overflow of hearts who knew the Saviour, and longed that their school-life might be used in some way to pass on this happiness to others.

In the spring of this year came the announcement of a confirmation service shortly to be held by the Bishop. I was fifteen, so *it was time* for me to take my place with others, as a responsible member of the Church of England.

My distress knew no bounds, and could no longer be concealed. Miss B——, our English governess, joined me in a quiet part of the garden, and, linking her arm in mine, said, "I can't bear to see you so sad, dear; can you tell me what it is? Is it the confirmation?"

"Yes," and again the tears would come.

"*Why*, don't you wish to be confirmed?"

"Oh, Miss B——, I know I'm a miserable sinner, and I *cannot* be a hypocrite 'before God and all the people.'"

"Poor child! I quite understand," and she went on to show me how God had provided for the sins to be removed, all having been borne by Jesus, the Lamb of God, a "full, perfect, and sufficient Sacri-

fice," and if I would turn away from myself and my sins, and come to Jesus, I would lose my misery and find Him a perfect Saviour. *Then I might truly* "follow Him all the days of my life," by His grace.

"Remember," said she, "He loves us, and wants us to be comforted. 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people,' was my text this morning." As we hastened in for the history class, she said, "You will just have time to rush away and bathe your eyes." I did so; and also hastily glanced at the words of comfort in Isaiah xl. 1, 2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Passing into the classroom at the same moment as Miss B—— she whispered to me, "If I were you, Ellen, I would not mind the history to-day. I will pass you by. Shall I? And see if you can get right away in your thoughts to the Saviour, while we talk about the history."

I pressed her hand, and took my place as usual.

She kindly excused my silence to the rest of the class; and I soon forgot everything else, and pondered over the "Sufficient Sacrifice," which God Himself seemed to tell me had paid "*double*" for all my sins, and He wanted me to be comforted, and to know that everything was "accomplished," and the "iniquity pardoned."

Light from heaven shone into my heart, bringing such a sense of relief and comfort that my soul was

filled with wonder and loving reverence, as I felt I was for the first time in the presence of my Saviour. How I wished that history class would last longer, that I might not be disturbed. Other duties, however, now pressed on.

On the first opportunity, Miss B—— again joined me in the garden, asking, "Well, how is it? Is the cloud lifting?"

"Miss B——," said I earnestly, "*can* it be so simple?"

"Yes, simple indeed for us, though costly to Him who gives it. So simple, just to yield full consent to God's way, just to receive the great gift from His own hands." Need I say that wonder, love, and praise filled our hearts as we rejoiced together, and all the mercies, joys, and blessings seemed to me "double" for many a day after.

Dear reader, are you feeling the burden of your sins? Let me beseech you to turn away at once from yourself and from all your helplessness, to this all-sufficient Saviour.

"Thousands have fled to His spear-pierced side,
Welcome they all have been, none are denied.
Weary and laden, they all have been blest,
Joyfully now in the Saviour they rest.

Come, then, poor sinner, no longer delay,
Come to the Saviour, come *now* while you may;
So shall your peace be eternally sure,
So shall your happiness ever endure."

MARAN-ATHA (THE LORD COMETH).

DO you realise, dear reader, that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"? If you are a student of history you may reply that "Gregory, who lived in the sixth century, thought it imminent in his day, and Martin Luther has left on record, in his letters, that he thought the days in which he lived so evil that the Lord's coming could not be long delayed."

Nevertheless, there are marks of the last days, foretold in Scripture, which we cannot but see characterise the present time, in a way that has never been before.

First, there is the hope of Christians. Go where you will, you will find the hope of the Lord's quick return animating many of them.

I went into a shop recently and the worthy man who served me told me the Christians whom he knew were thinking much of the Lord's coming, desiring to be ready for Him. You will notice, if you have access to such things, that the notices of coming conferences constantly refer to the Lord's coming. But a few months since thousands of Christians were found together in different parts of the world praying for the Lord's coming. In Christian homes this forms the topic of conversation. Two Christians stood by the sickbed of one very dear to them. When they parted, the one said, quoting a well-known hymn—

"How will our eyes to see His face delight,"

and the other answered—

“What hallelujahs will His presence raise ?
What, but one loud eternal burst of praise?”

Secondly, there is the condition of the world. We read in 2 Timothy iii. 2-4, “That in the last days men shall be lovers of themselves, . . . boasters, . . . disobedient to parents, . . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.” I pray you to read the whole passage, and see if you could find anywhere a more accurate description of the age. It has passed into a common, if flippant, jest, that “Parents obey your children” is the way we put it nowadays, and I need not stay to prove to you that men love pleasure more than God ; indeed, I think your own conscience will tell you how true it is of yourself. So low has man fallen !—man who was made in the image of God.

Thirdly, there is the testimony of prophecy which assures us the end is fast hastening on (see Dan. ii.). The great empires, symbolised by the mighty image which startled Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams, have come and gone. The iron of authority is “mingled with the seed of men”; as a lately deceased politician said, “The people must rule.” But these are the days in which the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be moved.

Again in the eighth chapter of Daniel, in which is the story of the wonderful vision that was vouchsafed to him, a definite time was set for the sanctuary to be cleansed, referring no doubt to the temple. As is well known, the site of the temple is, and has

been for hundreds of years, in Gentile hands, and it is computed that the time set in the vision must be very nearly expired ; at the longest it might be a few years, at the shortest it could be a question of months ; the reckoning cannot be determined with absolute certainty with our present knowledge. Christians, however, know from Scripture that the Lord's coming for them must precede His coming to reign, as they will then come with Him, and they gather from Ezekiel xl.-xliii. that the sanctuary will be ready for Him when He comes.

Consider well, then, my reader, if the Lord's coming be so near, how is it with your soul ? Children of Christian parents, I most earnestly appeal to you. How will the Lord find you ? You are not ignorant of these things. All that is herein set down has been long familiar to you. I desire to write in the solemn consciousness that these might be the last words I shall ever pen, and I ask you, Has the Lord Jesus no claim upon your love and loyalty ?

We read this morning Mark xiv. : how He sorrowed in Gethsemane's garden, how He was alone at the judgment seat, mocked, smitten, spat upon, how He gave His life upon the cross. Many of you believe you were converted as little children, yet have you grown up to be men and maidens and have hardly bestowed a thought on Him ; you would go to heaven because He died for you ; and meantime you care so little for Him, you give Him nothing ; as far as you are concerned there is no earth-rejected Christ to whom you owe everything.

History and public opinion alike reprobate the memory of a man who has betrayed his king or his country, but it seems to me that earth has seen no fouler treachery than that in which many habitually live. These are hard words, but my whole soul recoils from the selfishness that I see around, and alas, find in my own heart, that would receive every good, for time and for eternity, at the pierced hand of a once crucified Lord, and then live here to please self and too often to deny Him. How often are we like Peter in the denial, but, not like him, humbled and weeping over it?

May God make these things terribly real to our hearts and consciences, that in the thought of our Lord's shameful cross, and in view of His speedy return, we may gladly give Him the little bit yet remaining of our lives here, for His name's sake.

B.

THE CONVERTED PUBLICAN.

IT was on a lovely summer's evening, some years ago, that I and three friends walked from Great Yarmouth, on the Norfolk coast, to a village some three miles distant, to hold an open-air preaching.

The villagers came out in good numbers to listen to the preachers, as they sought to make known to them the way of life. For, dear reader, the fact is,

that, as born into this world, we are all "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and are found on the "broad road that leadeth to destruction." Death and judgment are in front of us, and, if we are wise, we shall lose no time in fleeing "from the wrath to come," leaving the broad road, and seeking the narrow way that leadeth unto life.

It is written, "few there be that find it." Do you not wish to be amongst that few? If so, let me faithfully and lovingly entreat you not to let this present opportunity pass away. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1). Death may suddenly arrest you. The Lord Jesus says, "Surely I come quickly," and if not prepared to enter heaven with Him, you will be left behind for judgment.

Now, in this little village of C—— lived a publican, who kept a public-house on the main road that passed through the village. A very interesting man he was, rather advanced in life.

He attended these gospel preachings and soon became a very earnest listener.

On our second visit we called at his house and took tea there. We found him exceedingly anxious about his soul's salvation, and had some very profitable conversation with him, after which he again came to the open-air preaching.

On our third visit we found him very busy fastening up a gate in his back premises, which was a public entrance to the gardens in which refreshments were served. Upon inquiring of his wife what he

was doing she said he was nailing up the gate to prevent persons coming in, as he did not intend opening his house again on Sundays. This was on a Saturday afternoon.

And why was this? The fact was he had yielded his heart to Christ and now wished to live to and for Him. What a marvellous change. Indeed it was. The Lord Jesus Christ had spoken to his soul through the gospel he had heard, and now, like the Thessalonians of old, he had turned to God, from idols, to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.

He was now rejoicing in Christ as his Saviour. So happy was he that in the night season he would lie awake praising the Lord for His great salvation.

Now his dear wife could not make out this great change that had come over him. Not understanding the joy and peace that now possessed him, but thinking that he had taken up with some new and strange doctrine, she remonstrated with him. To this he, in his great simplicity, replied: "My dear, if you believed what I believe, you would feel as I feel." This is doubtless a most simple argument, but it is an incontrovertible one, for it was founded upon an experience divinely wrought in his soul. And so it is with all who truly believe in Jesus as their Saviour, and know Him as the One who died for their sins, and was raised again for their justification.

Dear reader, do you *know* Him thus? If not, why not? And if not, let me beseech you not to

lay aside this little periodical without first lifting your heart to the Lord Jesus, saying,—

“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.”

Receive Him as your own precious Saviour. Then, like this dear converted publican, peace will flow through your soul like an even river, and mercy like a flood.

E. M.

OUR COMING LORD.

FAR as is east from west, are sundered wide
Thou and thy sins ; no whelming tide
Of righteous condemnation e'er shall roll
O'er thee, *believing sinner*—*Christ has died*
To save thy soul.

Has died—and lives to show the work complete ;
Kneel, kneel adoring at the feet
Of Him, Jehovah—Jesus Christ—the Word
That was, is, shall be ! With Hosannas greet
Our coming Lord.

Coming to judge the earth and all therein,
With us—the bride He died to win ;
Caught up in mid air to His loving breast,
No more vain longings ; ah, and no more sin—
’Tis peace and rest.

E. H. P.

"WHICH LINE ARE YOU ON?"

"**Y**OU don't think he'll get better, Doctor, do you? I'm sure I don't; he seems like dying to-night."

"While there is life there is hope in a fever case, so we must relax none of our efforts," was my reply.

The sick man had brought, in 1870, a delicate wife from New Zealand to see a noted physician. On arriving in Edinburgh, he found that death, at too early an age, had just swept the illustrious man from the land of the living, and then himself contracting typhus fever, his condition on the fifteenth day quite warranted the remark just given. The speaker was a kindly but shrewd lodging-house keeper, who had offered to the worn-out wife, and nurse of the sick man, to relieve them for a little, wait my midnight visit, and receive any directions I might give, while they got a rest.

Much interested in the welfare of his lodger, he was rather cheered by my reply, and readily took my orders. Seeing this, I added, "Whether he live or die is very doubtful, and all will depend on the nursing of the next twenty-four hours; but any way, I can tell you this, that Mr A—— is ready to die. He is a true simple believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, has long rejoiced in the knowledge of the Lord, and of a present and eternal

salvation; and if he depart, it will be to be with Christ for ever.

"Oh, yes, sir, I am sure he's ready to die; he's a very good man," was the rejoinder.

"And I hope you are ready too, my friend," I said, turning to him, "for typhus fever is an ugly occupant of a house, and is no respecter of persons."

"Well, as to that I really can't say; in fact I don't think anyone can know that he is ready in this life."

I did not stop at the moment to point out to him the contradiction of his two last speeches—in one breath assuring me that he was sure the dying man was "ready," and in the next asserting that no one could know he was "ready" while here. It is worthy of notice, however, that this curious condition of matters is very common, when you begin to apply any special truth to a sinner's conscience. Perhaps, my reader, you feel there is safety (it is only fancied safety) in generalities, and therefore avoid personalities and individualising. But let me assure you, that you must individualise yourself, and find out really where you are.

"Then, in plain language, you are not yet saved?" I went on.

"No; I could not take it on me to say that," was his reply.

"I see. But if you are not yet saved, have you found out that you are lost?"

"Lost? Me lost? No, God forbid! I shouldn't like to think I was lost."

"Well," I argued, "that is strange. You are not saved, and you will not own that you are lost."

"Certainly not. Of course I am not as good as I ought to be—no one is—but I am respectable and religious; that is, I go to church now and then; and though I can't say I'm saved, I shouldn't at all like to think I was lost. Because a man is not saved, it surely does not follow that he is lost."

At this moment the shrill whistle of a railway locomotive, about to move in the Waverley Station near by, disturbed the midnight silence of the air.

"What is that?" I exclaimed, hoping to shunt him to a subject which would just illustrate my point.

"That is the whistle of a railway engine."

"So I thought. By the way, can you tell me how many lines there are on a well-conducted railway?"

"Two, of course."

"And what do you call them?"

"The up line and the down."

"Exactly so. Now tell me, did you ever see a man with one leg in an *up* train and the other in the *down*?"

"No, of course not, and I never expect to. If a man is on the rails at all, he is either in the up, or in the down train; he can't be half in one and half in the other."

"I quite agree with you; and now I would just ask, Which line are you on? You are either an

unbeliever or a believer. If still an unbeliever, you are in your sins, and steadily going on your way towards death, judgment, and the lake of fire—the awful terminus of the down line. If, on the other hand, you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are certainly on the 'up line, and soon will find yourself in the glory to which the Saviour's blood brings every redeemed sinner at last. Now, be honest with yourself, which line are you on?"

The appeal laid hold of his conscience, and after a moment's silence, during which I saw he was convicted, he replied, "I admit your illustration is very apt; I never thought of it in that way before, but I must see to the matter in future."

Whether the Spirit of God used this to his awakening and conversion, I cannot say, as I did not meet him again, but my patient through mercy recovered.*

And now, my reader, let me ask you, "Which line are you on?" It is the merest evasion of the truth, and the veriest folly, to say you cannot tell. If your lips will not utter the truth, let God's Word witness against you.

* It will interest the reader to learn that in August 1911, just forty-one years after this incident, I again met my patient in Sydney, N.S.W.; a hale man, a hearty Christian, and a fervent preacher of the gospel. We had for three months most happy fellowship in divine things, while I found that he had scattered thousands of this little tale, in which he figured so unconsciously. His labours are now over, for on 11th April of this year (1913) he passed joyfully away to be "for ever with the Lord."

Did not David say, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me?" (Ps. li. 5). Are you other, or better, than the sweet Psalmist of Israel? But, again, he testifies, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God. *Every one* of them is gone back; they are *altogether* become filthy; there is *none* that doeth good, no, *not one*" (Ps. liii. 2, 3). He convicts *himself* of sin in the first passage, *you* and *me* in the second. How solemn!

Hear another witness. What says Isaiah? "But we are *all* as an unclean thing, and *all* our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we *all* do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (lxiv. 6). This testimony is tremendously solemn as to the natural state of everyone.

Again, hear the words of our Lord Christ, and He spoke to a most respectable, religious, and morally excellent man, when He said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh. . . . Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Ye must be born again*" (John iii. 6, 7). What an inexorable "must" is that! It applies to the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the moral and the immoral, the religious professor and the careless scoffer, to prince and peasant, peer and pauper. It embraces all, and excludes none, from the necessity of the new birth; and it is manifest that all are yet on the "down line" who

have not been born again by the Word and Spirit of God.

But, further, the Lord says to Nicodemus: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is *condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 17, 18). Now nothing can be plainer than this. The man who has not truly and really believed in the Son of God, who has not, in other words, been "born again," and turned to God through faith in Jesus, is "*already condemned*." He is not on trial, and the state of his soul an open question. The trial is over. The verdict is given. The unbeliever is "*condemned already*." The Judge has spoken. The only thing future, is the execution of the sentence—death; and "after this the judgment"—the lake of fire for ever, "the second death."

The testimony of Scripture then, my reader, is clear as to the line you are upon, if still an unbeliever. You are already a lost sinner, and as such you are treated and addressed by God, in the gospel. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*," is the glorious news which Jesus Himself first proclaimed, and which the Holy Ghost yet carries forth. As an evangelist, it is my joy to tell you this. You are lost, but Christ came for such as you. He came "*to seek and to save that which was lost*." Now, I beseech

you, let Him save you. If He does not save you now, He must execute judgment on you in a day not far distant. Which shall it be? Will you have salvation, or judgment, from the hands of Jesus? "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Friend, I urge you, with all the energy of my soul, to open your eyes, see that you are on the down line, call a halt on the spot, turn to Jesus just now, and join that blessed company of saved sinners, who, having believed simply in the Son of God, are "not condemned," and "shall not come into condemnation," but "have everlasting life," and are consequently, through grace, on the "up line."

Just listen simply to the words of the blessed Lord, and believe what He says, "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 the down line to the up] from death unto life" (John v. 24).

In view thus of the Word of God, any honest soul can tell, with the greatest certainty, its real spiritual whereabouts and direction. So I beg you, my beloved reader, just look this matter full in the face. If you are not yet Christ's, do not lose a day without turning to Him. If His, through grace, seek to serve and follow Him faithfully.

Reader, "Which line are you on?"

Passing onward, quickly passing ;
 Yes, but whither, whither bound ?
 Is it to the many mansions,
 Where eternal rest is found ?
 Passing onward—
 Yes, but whither, whither bound ?

Passing onward, quickly passing,
 Nought the wheels of time can stay !
 Sweet the thought that some are going
 To the realms of perfect day :
 Passing onward—
 Christ their Leader—Christ their way.

W. T. P. W.

THE CITY MAN'S FLIGHT.

HE was not always a city man, for in his early days he had assisted his old uncle with his flocks and herds and cattle. But to become a city man was evidently his ambition ; and it is not to be wondered at that our restless race should prefer town life with its variety and excitement to the routine of rural districts, in spite of their quiet beauty and peacefulness. It has been said, "God made the country, and man made the town," but God dwells alike in both, and His presence may be surely felt, bringing blessing and power in the one, as in the other.

Our story is of a man in far-off lands, and of a far-off day ; of the Chaldean city of Ur, in Mesopotamia,

and of Haran, upwards of nineteen centuries before Christ, where we first read of Lot, and his uncle Abram, and his aunt Sarai. Ur was not far from the head of the Persian Gulf; and these three persons, necessarily 'accompanied by a large retinue and household, journeyed by slow degrees northward some thirty miles, through Assyria, to Haran, between "the great river" of Asia—the Euphrates—whose length is 1500 miles, and the river Chebar. Abram "went out, not knowing whither he went," because God had said, "Get thee out": strengthened by the promise of the Almighty, as true to-day as then, "I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing" (Gen. xii. 2).

Their destination, however, was not to be Haran, but the Land of Canaan, promised as their inheritance, so, when Terah had died, they moved on.

A first settlement seems to have been made near the oak groves of Shechem, more familiar to us as Sychar or Nablouse, between thirty and forty miles to the north of Jerusalem, where, it will be remembered, our Lord discoursed to the woman of Samaria. Famine then drove them southward, and although those were days of difficult travel and transit, when roads were bad, and caravans moved slowly, they proceeded even to Egypt, remaining there apparently for about two years. Then they returned to the "land of promise," to Luz, or Bethel, where the aged patriarch once more erected an altar, and "called on the name of the Lord" (Gen. xii. 8).

There occurred the great choice! Lot and his

uncle had both become "very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold," and "flocks and herds and tents." Their respective servants quarrelled—probably about supplies of water, always so difficult to procure in sufficiency in the East. Abram might, quite justly, have selected what land seemed best to himself, leaving inferior pastures for his nephew: but with princely generosity he said, "Let there be no strife between us. . . . Is not the whole land before thee? If thou wilt take the left, I will go to the right: if thou go to the right, I will go to the left" (Gen. xiii. 8-9). So Lot—rapacious, covetous, and mercenary—*chose for himself*, and without a word of apology or regret, went eastward, to the "well-watered plain of Jordan," and soon "dwelt in its cities," spite of their godlessness, though at first he only "pitched his tent toward Sodom."

The era of agricultural life is over! Lot is now a prosperous city man. Alas, however, he seems when he quitted the shelter of his uncle's home to have left the religious influences which should have moulded his life. He selected his dwelling amongst the "wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly," and in a brief space of time it was proved that "evil communications corrupt good manners."

Four or five years elapsed, and then kings from far eastern lands swept down on Sodom and Gomorrah, raided the cities in this, the first-recorded war; and they "took Lot and his goods and departed." "Served him right," perhaps you say; but have you never acted in like manner? It may be that you are

from some country home, and now in the city! The father's God, the mother's Bible, the Lord's day with its holy memories of prayer, are forgotten or crowded out of mind. "They that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Sam. ii. 30), says God. It may be you have found it so, and begin to realise that "a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. xiii. 20), and that "the way of transgressors is hard."

But "Abram the Hebrew" heard of the misfortune and adversity of his nephew, and at once went off to the timely rescue—returning good for evil. With his small force of 318 he hastens to the bold headlands of the north; and, like an avalanche, bursts on the sleeping foe below him, effecting immediate universal panic, confusion, and wild rout. The hale and vigorous octogenarian—the God-fearing chieftain—rescues the time-serving citizen, the "Mr Worldly Wiseman" of the Bible. So may it be our happy privilege to follow in the steps of Abram and Christ, and go after captive men, and bring them back to liberty and life!

Lot, however, had not had enough of the city! Back he goes to Sodom,—attracted as the moth is to the light, round which it flutters gaily, until overcome by the fascination it plunges into the flame, to its ruin! In fifteen years he has become one of the city officials. From "walking in the counsel of the ungodly, and standing in the way of sinners" (Ps. i. 1) it is a short step to "sitting in the seat of the scornful." We next find the city man "sat in the gate of Sodom" (Gen. xix. 1), one of the judges or

magistrates, in the place of the greatest concourse. His career, spiritually, was downwards, ever downwards.

One night two strangers, evidently angels in disguise, appear at his door. Hospitably he offers to entertain them. These men, unknown to him, were sent by God to warn him of impending doom: "because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous. The Lord hath sent us to destroy this place," said they, therefore, "whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out. . . . Arise, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity" (Gen. xviii. 20; xix. 13-15).

The Apostle Peter tells us that "just Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked" (2 Pet. ii. 7), but his words and his testimony seem to have been in vain. Familiar intercourse with sinners is full of danger! For the reef of rocks is often hidden, and a man is practically lost when, like Lot, the world is in his heart, and his heart is in the world! His life's practice did not harmonise with his lips' teaching, and he was read through by his fellow-citizens, who, naturally enough, despised earthliness and inconsistency in one who professed to be God's servant.

None but the wife and two daughters even sought to escape: "he seemed as one that mocked to his sons-in-law!" (Gen. xix. 14). Lot's was a dwarfed life—dwarfed in power and influence; his lamp had almost gone out, instead of his light shining brightly amidst surrounding darkness. Impoverishment comes

surely, sooner or later, to all who fail to put God first! "The fire of the Lord" fell on the Cities of the Plain; Lot's wife disobeyed the command—"looked back" to her worldly possessions, now in flames, and "she became a pillar of salt." From his daughters sprang the Moabites and Ammonites—two of the most troublesome races with which God's people had, in later times, to deal.

But to us, as to Lot, "the Lord is pitiful and of tender mercy." The *work of a lifetime* may be "burned up" as wood, hay, stubble, and yet the soul be saved! God's purpose is not so. He has high ideals for His children. His thoughts and ambitions for us are of a high type. He would not merely have us "flee from the wrath to come" to the One Refuge and Saviour—Christ Jesus—"whose blood cleanseth from all sin," but, here and now, by His spirit working within us, to whom our wills should be subjected, we may lead *a complete life*, receiving a blessing from which nothing shall be lacking! Then only will our influence be felt in ever-widening circles, our "light shining before men," as we pursue the path of holy separation from the world. Earthly honours, distinctions, riches, will hold only a subservient place, as in all things, and at all times, by His grace, we "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and determine "that in all things He may have the pre-eminence."

C. T.

THE KEEPER'S BROTHER.

DEAR EDITOR,—I sent you a paper for *The Messenger* some thirty years ago, called "The Keeper's Conversion." This you were good enough to insert in the number for October 1884.

With your permission I will quote a few of its sentences, and make an addition to them, which will, I am sure, interest yourself and many of your readers.

"'If the gun goes off and I am killed I'll be damned,' was the rapid thought of a young gamekeeper, as his foot stumbled on the fence he was just crossing, whilst he held, in his hand, a gun loaded and at 'full cock.' '*Lord, have mercy on my soul,*' was his immediate and awfully earnest prayer. . . . After falling he found that the muzzle of the gun had sunk into the ground and that the dreaded explosion had not taken place. Unhurt, he rose from the place of his fall, but he rose a saved man. . . . Some time after the above, at the close of a gospel meeting, another young man remained for the sake of private conversation. He was anxious, convicted, and desirous of peace with God. A few words of Scripture, applied by the Spirit, chased the doubt away. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,' settled every soul-difficulty with him. 'Have you been long anxious?' I said to him. 'Yes, for some time, and the only man that ever spoke to me

about my soul was my brother,' said he. That brother was the keeper. . . . And so the circle increased, for no sooner did this second soul get everlasting life than he too, in like manner, announced the fact to another brother, who with several others of the same family were reached by saving grace as well. And this has been one of the far-reaching effects of the keeper's conversion. What a joy."

So much for these effects up to the date of that paper. But thirty years have nearly fled since then, and, thank God, they still continue.

"I would be glad if you would speak to my son," said to me a man, who had come, with his son and daughter, five long miles, to a gospel meeting only last Sunday.

"Gladly," I replied.

The daughter had recently been converted; the son was anxious. On returning home after this meeting the son confessed to his father that he had, in faith, turned to the Lord and was saved. All glory to God.

And who was the father?

He was the brother of the keeper, and who, thirty years before, had found peace in believing, and that, most strange to say, in the same place—a volunteer hall—where the son had now, through the rich grace of God, found the same Saviour.

There was not, of course, any charm in the mere building, but there was great interest in the coincidence itself after the lapse of so long a time.

Next evening I had the pleasure of seeing the

family of the keeper's brother all together at another gospel meeting. I spoke to the parents as to that which had happened. All they could say was: "We are so thankful."

Their hearts were filled with gratitude to God for the saving grace He had first shown to themselves and then to their children. And so the stumble on the fence thirty years ago, and the loaded gun and the keeper's fall, and his rapid prayer and God's immediate answer in saving grace, have resulted in a long and wonderful series of conversions to God.

What encouragement! May we see more of such gracious operations of God's Spirit.

Your readers will pardon me, dear Editor, for reproducing, in part, an old paper, in order to furnish an explanation of that which is new.—I am, yours faithfully,

J. W. S.

THE FISHERMAN'S DREAM.

"God speaketh once, yea twice. . . . In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Job xxxiii. 14-16.

A VERY remarkable instance of God's speaking in this very way to a man, leading him to repentance and self-judgment, and causing him to turn round to Christ, as a living Saviour, was narrated lately by a servant of the Lord's, in nearly the following words:—

"It was at the close of a gospel mission which I had been holding in the town of W—— in Yorkshire, that I met a fisherman who told me how he had been turned to God. 'I was out in a yawl,' he said, 'with three of my mates. A sudden squall came on, and the boat was capsized. My three mates were all drowned, but I was rescued. A fortnight after this terrible event, I was in bed one night with my wife, when I dreamed that the devil came to me and said, "Get up, William, put on your clothes, and come with me." In my dream I was forced to obey. I got up, put on my clothes and went with the devil. He led me down, down, down, till we were at hell's gates.

"There he paused, took a huge key from his girdle, and put it into the lock. I heard the scrunching of the key as it turned in the lock. The gates flew open and I looked down into the flames of hell. There I saw my three mates, and even as I looked in horror they screamed out to me, with a terrible shriek that resounded far and wide, "Don't come here, William, don't come here!" The shriek awoke me. I started from my bed in an agony of fear. Cold perspiration streamed down my face. "Whatever is the matter with you, William?" my wife said. I told her my dream, which appalled her.'

"This was the turning point in the fisherman's history. He recognised that he had been snatched from a watery grave by God. That he had been spoken to in the night seasons by a dream sent by

God. That he had been given one more opportunity on earth of fleeing for refuge, for everlasting salvation to the Son of God, who had died for such as he and who had said: 'Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.' He came and was received."

Reader, if you come to Him, He will receive you.

This true account of the fisherman's dream is but another illustration of the truth which the Lord's own words give us in Luke xvi. 27, 28, in which He describes the earnestness of a lost soul in hell, that those he had known on earth should not share his terrible, his eternal destiny.

That man also seems to say: "Don't come here, don't come here," as he cries to Abraham—"Send him to my father's house for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them lest they also come to this place of torment."

We hear oftentimes of prayers for the dead. Such a thought has no place in Scripture, but in Luke xvi. we do get the dead praying for the living, and testifying, from the very abyss of hell, to the necessity of repentance, as this one, who had had everything for this life, but nothing for eternity, importunes in his misery, "send," for "if one went unto them from the dead they will repent."

"Behold *now* is the accepted time; behold *now* is the day of salvation."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

REVELATION, OR REASON: WHICH SHALL I FOLLOW?

A REPLY TO A SCEPTIC'S LETTER.

THERE is a Creator. *God is. Creation and our own existence bear witness to this*, in fact, Holy Scripture itself does not contemplate the possibility of anyone being such a fool as to say, in his heart, there is no God, with all the evidences to the contrary.

Scripture does say in Psalm xiv. 1, "The fool hath said in his *heart*," not, there is no God, but "no God." That is, he does not want one, and why, because man, as man is, dislikes authority and restraint, and *likes* to do his own will.

Men and angels are *creatures*; men are fallen, sinful creatures, and so are some of the angels too. God made man *upright*, "but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. vii. 29). Of the angels it is said, "And the angels *which kept not their first estate*, but left their own habitation" (Jude, ver. 6).

There is no mercy for them, *but for man there is*. They were not tempted to sin, but were lifted up with pride (1 Tim. iii. 6). Man was tempted to sin, and God has shown him compassion (John iii. 16). And yet man constitutes himself an enemy of God!

Genesis ii. 16, 17.—Man in innocence was placed upon earth in responsibility. Has God no right to do this, and create a man of this order? Man as he

now is, a fallen, sinful creature, is still responsible, and to God, his creator.

Rom. i. 18-22, Exodus xx., Luke x. 25-28.—Man's responsibility has reference, *primarily*, to two things—Creation and the Law (the ten commandments).

Let man answer to his responsibility and all would be well.

But man, every man, has broken down in both, and is therefore without excuse (*Rom. i.*, latter part of chapter); and guilty before God (*Rom. iii. 19*). Thereupon in the same chapter the gospel of God concerning His Son is developed, and the lot now of everyone who *hears* is determined, and for eternity, by their attitude towards God's testimony concerning His Son (*Mark xvi. 15, 16; John viii. 24*).

Even from the first (after sin had entered into the world as it now is) this was foreshadowed, for the types always spoke of the necessity of death intervening before man could be in relationship with God. Sin had brought in death and judgment. We must either undergo the judgment ourselves, or see our sins blotted out through having been undergone by another for us (*Luke xxiv. 25-27 and 44-48*).

In creation God's power was displayed. In redemption His love was manifested. At the Cross His hatred of sin and love for the sinner were evidenced.

If God permitted sin and Satan to do what he has done and is doing, He has, nevertheless, made unheard of provision for the sinner. Then why take offence and grumble at this?

Not in Creation but only in Redemption could God *fully reveal Himself*, and *that* was His object and desire.

Who will dispute God's right to have such a glorious object and desire—and why complain?

If man will only *submit* to God, own his sinnership and take refuge in the sinner's Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, God's blessed Son, who came here to do the will of God and accomplish redemption, bearing *all* the punishment of *all* the sins of every sinner, who will receive Him as their Saviour and Lord, he not only escapes the consequences of his sins, but enters into an order of blessing in Christ, far and away beyond anything that was the portion of our first parents in innocence.

Lamentations iii. 38-41.—What exception can be taken to this? For many years I was a poor *foolish* sceptic, but the moment came when I realised the folly of allowing my sinful heart and corrupted mind to reason, seeking with my *finite* powers to solve the mysteries of a self-existent God, of creation, of sin and Satan, and of redemption, which are not finite, but infinite questions.

Facts were put before me—they are stubborn things. At the time I read somewhere, "Never let what you *do* know be weakened by what you *don't* know: stick to what you *do* know."

This has been my guiding principle ever since.

I found out and owned that I was a guilty, unclean sinner in God's sight and in my own, and I pity the man who refuses to take this ground, for each one

of us has a history, a secret history anyhow, of *thoughts*, desires, motives, and ways that, in many cases, is a disgrace to his very manhood, and in every case an outrage upon the throne of God. Who could bear the exposure?

I found out, too, that I needed a Saviour, a substitute who could, in virtue of His own intrinsic holiness, answer to God for me, and rescue me from Satan's power.

I found out that Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, suited me *exactly*; and that I was as welcome to Him and His work upon the Cross, as to the air God has given me to breathe.

I heard the wonderful story, I believed it, I bowed the head and worshipped, and passed from death unto life and am never coming into judgment (John v. 24). My one desire now is to live *for Him* who died for me and rose again (2 Cor. v. 15). It may be a poor argument, but is an effective one. If the sceptic be right, in what way is the believer worse off than he? While, if the believer be right, woe to the sceptic. I prefer to have two strings to my bow.

I am sometimes asked, "How about the heathen?" I answer they will be judged on the footing of Creation (Rom. i.), and of conscience (Rom. ii.), which every human being possesses.

I can confidently leave them with God, whose Son has so infinitely glorified Him with respect to sin. Besides, Scripture assures us that the Judge of all the earth will do right (Gen. xviii. 25). *And I*

believe this. As stated in my paper, "Truths of Holy Scripture which admit of no Argument," the *vital* thing for each 'one is to take account of things as we find them in this world (ourselves included), and to act accordingly, leaving much that may appear mysterious in abeyance until another day ; meantime making the written Word of the living God a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path (Ps. cxix. 105).

The Bible is our only *sure* guide. Those who say it is not are always marked by a large measure of ignorance of what the various books treat of, and of how it all hangs together as a consistent whole.

Its positive proofs are all in itself. The sun needs no light to see it by. The man of intelligence produces human infidelity. The man of imagination will give us human superstition coloured over with the haze of antiquity, for fear what it is should be too clearly seen. Both give me man. The Scriptures *alone* give me God, and *they* probe man's conscience, as nothing else does. Fulfilled and un-filled prophecy, apart from anything else, prove conclusively the truth of Scripture. If this is called in question, the burden of disproving it lies with the objector. Take, as one among many instances, the past, present, and future history of the Jewish people.

God the author of good, and Satan, the author of evil, self, sin, and, as a necessary consequence, disease, pain, misery, and death, are all in evidence, and so is the Word of God, spite of all man's efforts to get rid of it.

The believer has to take his part in all the ruin ;

he is not removed *out* of it when he trusts God in Christ, but he is lifted *above* it, and sustained *in* it, and God even uses it to draw the believer nearer to Himself. I asked an agnostic once, "Why cannot a horse do a sum in arithmetic?" - He answered, "Because he is a horse." I then asked, "Why cannot a man solve many of the mysteries that trouble him?" He hesitated, so I answered my own question, "Because he is a man."

Mysteries there are, no doubt, and not a few, but it is only pride of heart that refuses to bow to God because of them. I have said to the sceptic—"Explain the air you breathe, if you can; you know you cannot, then be consistent with your creed and cease to breathe it and suffer the consequences." But, oh, no. That would never do.

Another thing, after a long experience of nearly forty years, I have found that, I don't say in all, but in a very large percentage of cases, objectors to the Bible and of the revelation of God to man in Christ, are those whose lives will not bear inspection, and that infidelity is largely only a cover for wickedness of some sort or another.

Where this is not the case, I have found it has been *foolish* pride of heart refusing to bow to a higher power, and of seeking to measure the infinite by what is after all only finite.

There can be no greater folly, especially if it is remembered that the finite powers themselves that man possesses have been corrupted by sin.

Another has said, "None but God can deliver

from the pride of human pretension. But the haughtiness which excludes God because it is incompetent to discern Him, and then talks of His work and meddles with His weapons, according to the measure of its own strength, can prove nothing but its own contemptible folly. *Reason* is ever drawing conclusions. It may INFER that there MUST BE, but it can never say THERE IS. God IS, and reveals what IS. Man can never rise above that which is CAUSED. The reason is obvious, because he is CAUSED himself. The universe is not a *producing cause*, it is itself a creature acting by a law imposed upon it."

Beyond question the *greatest* mystery of all is the Cross of Christ—the necessity *for*, and the fact *of* it.

In the Cross I see the One who in His own Person was the Everlasting God (Isa. ix. 6), humbling himself—the only One of *all* greatness making nothing of Himself for my soul—the only One who commands all, becoming a servant for the very vilest.

Man could die for a benefactor, perhaps, but he is not capable, in true, simple-hearted love, of unostentatiously dying for an enemy. God's becoming a man to do it silences the heart, and creates by the sovereign title of love a new order of feeling.

How is it possible, therefore, to allow a single thought that would cast a slur upon the *perfect goodness* of the God who gave His Son to die?

I interpret every difficulty now in the light of Calvary. Depend upon it, for Scripture says so, the time is coming when all iniquity shall stop her

mouth (Ps. cvii. 42), and not only so, but everything that hath breath will praise Jehovah (Ps. cl. 6).

The riddle of the universe will now soon be known, and then, at the name of Jesus (Jehovah the Saviour) every knee will bow, of heavenly and earthly and infernal beings, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the *Glory of God the Father* (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

THOMAS OLIVER.

"I'VE FORGOTTEN, I'VE FORGOTTEN!"

A GENTLEMAN was calling on a merchant in Glasgow, and during the conversation the gentleman suddenly dropped down into a chair that was near. The merchant saw from his face that something serious had happened, so he told his office boy to run for the doctor. When he arrived he recovered a little, and was heard to say over and over again, "I've forgotten, I've forgotten!" They asked him what he had forgotten—was it some matter of business he had forgotten, or did he want to see his lawyer? But all he could utter was, "I've forgotten!" The lawyer was sent for, and he entreated the poor man to tell him what it was, till at last he whispered out the sad words,

"I'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT MY SOUL."

How terrible! on the very brink of death to remember everything but the needs of the soul. So, fellow-reader, we beseech you—

Do not forget that you have to live for ever. You will never go out of existence, you will live as long as God. Your body will die, but, like John Brown, your soul will go on for ever though your body lies under the grèen turf.

Men would fain hope that when an unsaved man dies he goes out of existence ; but there is no word of Scripture for this, for " The wrath of God abides on him." It is either for ever in the glory, or for ever away from God.

Do not forget that you are a sinner. You may try to overlook and minimise your sins, and not to think of them : but God knows them all, they are marked in His book, and will be registered against you at that Great White Throne. Oh, sinner, go to God and make a clean breast of it ! confess, take the place of a sinner, and God has pledged His Word to save you.

Do not forget that you are accountable. You have sinned against the clearest light and most faithful teaching. Look back at your Sunday School time, at your mother's prayers. How often you have heard the gospel. How often has the Holy Spirit striven with you ; how often you have rejected the sweet message of Grace, and put it off and off.

How true it is, every one must give account of himself to God. There is no escape from this ; oh ! do not forget this.

Do not forget that you are in danger. Your life hangs by a thread. If that thread snaps you are lost for ever. How many we know have been well to-day and gone to-morrow.

All outside of Noah's ark were lost, and are now in hell (see 1 Pet. iii. 18-20). There was death in every house in Egypt unsheltered by the blood. Man needs a shelter. Do not say, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace, for "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

We rarely hear this danger, this judgment from the Lord, spoken of in these days. But do not let man's unfaithfulness hide the great fact from you, that the world even now is under the just judgment of God (Rom. iii. 19).

But do not forget that you may be saved. Bless His holy name! you can be saved this very moment. If you are not saved you cannot blame God. He has sent His Son, and the Risen Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to convince you of sin and to show you Christ. You cannot blame your mother, nor many a faithful preacher.

There is a Saviour, there is a way of salvation, there is a door open for sinners.

The blood has been shed, the Lord is risen. "Come, for all things are ready!" Why linger?

Take the place of a sinner and claim the sinner's Saviour. And do it now, for God has pledged His Word to save the one who trusts Jesus.

Do not forget that you must live for ever, do not forget that you are a sinner, do not forget that you are accountable, do not forget that you are in danger, and, oh!

DO NOT FORGET THAT THERE IS A
SAVIOUR FOR YOU NOW.

R. T.

PIERPONT MORGAN'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.

THE commercial world of America appeared for the moment to be struck with disaster the other day. The master mind of American finance had gone to his last bourne. For a whole five minutes it looked as if panic had seized hold on the Stock Exchange.

Yet it was not a panic as we are accustomed to think of a panic, which usually ends in a brawl. No, it was one that struck every member into dumb silence. Each uncovered and bowed with reverence.

Fancy the New York Exchange stopped for five minutes! What stopped it? DEATH. Yes, we repeat, death stopped all its locomotion for five minutes.

It would be most interesting to know what were the thoughts of each member of it during those five minutes! Think of the rapidity of thought! Think of how many thoughts crowd upon the mind and rush through it at lightning rapidity!

Scientists have calculated how quickly light travels and how rapidly this planet of ours dashes through space, but science is baffled to tell us how very quickly thought travels.

Dr Johnston, the greatest sage of the eighteenth century, once said that he defied any serious intelligent man to sit down for five minutes alone and

think of death—his own death—without disturbing the balance of his equilibrium.

But death for once, and only once, in America had stopped the busy New York Stock Exchange, and compelled men—serious, intelligent, clever men—to think upon it.

Perhaps never, until the earth shall be convulsed and the heavens be rolled together as a scroll, will such an event take place again in the great American Stock Exchange.

When I read it in the paper I was almost dumb-founded. It put me in remembrance of the first verse of Revelation viii., which says that in the midst of famines, pestilence, thunderings, and lightnings, earthquakes, catastrophies, and convulsions in society such as await it, "There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (Rev. viii. 1).

It will be no time then for men to think, reflect, and turn to God. They shall then call upon the rocks and hills to fall upon them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne of government, which so mysteriously will then cause all these things to come about.

But is Pierpont Morgan, the great American financier, really dead? Was that statement of our divine Lord true of him, "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"? He had ceased to move out and in amongst men. The Stock Exchange would see his face in the flesh no more. But that man who was the living embodiment of force—is he really dead?

Bankers, financiers, and all the commercial world of America and Europe hear his last will and testament. Let it lift up its voice, like a trumpet, and speak to you, as from out the silent grave, and from the unseen world. And those who trust in the sweet light of reason and man's self-reformation, and deny the value of the glorious redemption work of Christ and His finished atonement, effected once for all, as the sinner's only hope, let its voice speak like thunder and declare the death-knell of all your hopes. Let it sweep away your refuge of lies. Let it be the utter silencer of him of whom our risen and glorious Lord has said, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John. viii. 44).

In view of that ghastly victor called death, hear it. In view of the solemn possibility of your own sudden death, hear it. In view of that day for which all other days were made, hear it. In view of that hour when every unsaved man must stand to be judged at the solemn tribunal of the great Judge of all mankind, hear it. In view of the fact that your soul is deathless and that you must exist for ever, hear it. The sun may burn out like a candle, the stars expire in their sockets, but you must live for ever. By the everlasting bliss of the redeemed, and the everlasting sorrow and despair of the lost, hear it.

All ye clergymen and theological students in the Protestant Episcopal Church, of which he was an

honoured member and noted supporter, hear it. Hear it all ye nonconformists who have departed from "the Church's one foundation," the precious redeeming blood of Christ, without shedding of which there is no foundation or remission. All ye editors of religious journals who scoff at that blood, which clears the guilty conscience, and sets the soul at peace with God, hear it.

The final testimony of the master mind of American finance who has received the Saviour's welcome, "Well done," may well impress you, my reader. Ponder his weighty words. Can you echo them?

"I commit my soul into the hands of my Saviour, full of confidence that, having redeemed it and washed it with His most precious blood, He will present it faultless before the throne of my Heavenly Father.

"I entreat my children to maintain and defend, at all hazard, and at any cost of personal sacrifice, the blessed doctrine of COMPLETE ATONEMENT FOR SIN, THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, ONCE OFFERED, AND THROUGH THAT ALONE."

P. W.

"CHRIST SHALL GIVE THEE LIGHT."

"COOK, that gas press is of no use; I have had my wrapper in it for half an hour and it is as wet as ever," exclaimed the housemaid excitedly as she burst into the kitchen where the cook was busy with her culinary arrangements.

"That is very strange," replied the cook in a surprised tone of voice. The maids had recently suffered from colds, which they attributed to the drying of clothes in the kitchen, and to prevent a recurrence of such a complaint the master had purchased a gas press. Cook was full of its praises. "It dries the clothes in no time," she said. On this day the housemaid had been doing some laundrying on her own account, but her trial with the gas press differed considerably from that of Joan.

The cook placed a pudding in the oven and, hastily wiping her hands, followed her neighbour to the laundry to examine the offending press. In an instant she detected the cause of failure.

"O Lily," she said with a smile, "of what use do you suppose the press will be if you neglect to turn on the gas?"

"How very stupid of me," returned Lily. "I did not consider myself capable of such a mistake."

"Lily," said Joan, "that is precisely how you do with God's great salvation, you simply neglect it."

Lily was accustomed to Joan finding, in trivial incidents of daily life, an occasion by which to direct her thoughts to things unseen and eternal; but this circumstance arrested her as nothing before had done. She knew she needed to be "born again," and that the salvation of God was freely offered to her. She fully meant to accept it some day, but——

"There's the bell," she said, and straightway made off. Visitors might have told that their summons were not always answered so quickly, but in this

instance Lily was glad of an excuse to get out of reach of Joan's pointed remarks.

With Joan, religion was not a legal system of duties, beliefs, and restraints, but her heart was living in the sunshine of God's love, and, as the perfume rises from a flower, so her voice rose in many a little snatch of hymn and gave some expression to her true, strong affection for God and her Saviour. One day, while busy at her work, Joan was singing :—

“O happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God !
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.
Happy day ! Happy day !
When Jesus washed my sins away.”

“Do stop,” said Lily, irritably. “I must go to a concert of Scotch songs the very first time I can, just to get these revival hymns out of my head.”

“I am going to sing in a concert myself,” said Joan.

“You sing in a concert ! Where ? When ?” cried Lily in astonishment.

“I cannot just say when,” said Joan, “but I can tell you where. I am going to be one of the redeemed in glory who will sing ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.’”

As the waters wear the stones, so the continual dropping of “fit words” from Joan's overflowing heart caused Lily to see that Joan possessed a spring of enjoyment to which she was an utter stranger,

and a desire awoke in her heart to be possessed of a similar blessing.

One day, while cooking, Joan was learning a hymn aloud :—

"Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts,
Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to Thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood ;
Thou savest those that on Thee call :
To them that seek Thee Thou art good,
To them that find Thee, all in all."

Lily, interrupting, asked—"Do you think that that is really true? I never used to pray, but for some weeks I have been longing to become a Christian, but the more I pray and seek after the things of God, the worse I feel."

This was the first time that Joan had heard Lily express the least desire for spiritual things, and she silently thanked God that He had put such longings in the heart of her neighbour, and besought the Lord to give her words from Himself to say to her.

"Why was I happy when I never thought of God, and how am I miserable now that I am trying to seek after God?" asked Lily, despondently.

For a time Joan said nothing, but kept rolling out her pastry a multiplicity of times. Suddenly she stopped and asked—"Lily, is my kitchen clean?"

Lily looked just a shade disappointed. It had taken her a great effort to speak of her distress of soul, and she expected that she would at least have

elicited Joan's sympathy. She looked at the burnished steel of the grate, on the highly-polished dish-covers and spotless dresser and floor. "It is certainly quite clean," she said; "but what a question to ask just now!"

The sun was shining brilliantly through the iron-barred window, and in its rays floated and danced innumerable motes. Joan pointed to the long streak of dancing dust and asked, "If my kitchen is clean, how does all that dust come to be there?"

Lily was silent, and Joan went on—"Just as the sun by its fierce rays has shown how much impurity there is in the house, so the Lord, who is the Sun of Righteousness, has turned the searchlight of His truth into your heart, and has shown you that you are a sinner in His sight."

"I know," answered Lily. "God has let me see how sinful I am; but what am I to do to be saved?"

It was the old cry, the cry of an awakened soul struggling with the darkness of sin, and groping toward the light of life.

"You have simply to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," said Joan, "believe that Jesus died for you, that He bore your sins in His own body on the tree, and that God has raised Him from the dead."

Both girls were strongly moved.

"I do believe all that," said Lily, "but it does not make me feel any better."

"I wish I could explain God's way of salvation," said Joan, "but I am not able to do so; but I tell you what I will do. I will bargain not to take my

night out on Thursday night, so that both of us can get out on Sunday night, and you will come with me to the gospel meeting, and when you hear how very simply the preacher explains the glad tidings of salvation, all your difficulties will disappear." So with the promise of rest of heart to be got in the meeting on the following Sunday, the interrupted work of the day was resumed.

But "God who worketh salvation in the midst of the earth," and "Who dwelleth not in temples made with hands," did not suffer this seeking soul to have any long delay in finding a seeking Saviour. At night, when the toils of the day were ended, Joan was reading her usual chapter before retiring for the night. Lily joined her.

"At home we read verse about round the family," said Joan; "we might do that to-night." The portion of Scripture was the fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians. It came to Lily's turn to read the fourth verse: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them." And the sixth verse: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"This is surely meant for me," she said, "for I am in darkness, and I want light."

She read it over many times, and then Joan, turning the leaves of her bible to Eph. v., asked her to read

the thirteenth and fourteenth verses. "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

"It is God's word to your soul," said Joan solemnly. "Christ shall give thee light."

"I believe it, I see it!" said Lily.

"Then read the eighth verse, 'For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: Walk as children of light.'"

Truly, God giveth not His Spirit by measure unto any, but hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and hath chosen, not the wise, or the mighty, but the foolish, and the weak, and the base, to be co-heirs with His Christ.

Why do you, dear reader, continue to be one of the people who sit in darkness, when you may see great light? Was there an Egyptian groping about in darkness that might be felt, who did not envy the light enjoyed by the Hebrew slaves at that very time (see Exodus x. 21-23).

Any one can see that to neglect such a simple thing as to turn on and light the gas renders a gas appliance useless; may each one see that to neglect God's great Salvation will lead to the loss of his never-dying soul.

"How can they live, how will they die,
How bear the cross of grief?
Who have not got the light of faith,
The courage of belief?"

M. M.

“BOW THE KNEE.”

JOSEPH is a most beautiful and complete type of the Lord Jesus in the days of His humiliation and in the days of His exaltation. The day is not come yet when God will compel men to give Jesus His due; because God has, what Pharaoh had not, long patience, and the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation.

Joseph, you will remember, went out in the guilelessness and love of his heart to meet his brethren (Gen. xxxvii.). They plotted against him to slay him, and at length he was sold to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, the price of the meanest slave. And I need not remind you of Another, who came from His Father's house to see how His brethren fared, and met with precisely the same treatment—"His own received Him not"—and at length for thirty pieces of silver He was betrayed, and sold, and then cast out of this world; not into a dungeon, but into a grave.

It is true loving hands took Him down from the cross, and placed Him in a sepulchre; but wicked hands sealed Him there, and the world hoped never to see Him again; "but God raised Him from the dead." The One whom men slew God raised up.

He came in all the love of His heart; but man had no love for Him. 'I ask you, my reader, Have you any love in your heart for Him? Does He look in and see in you heart affection for Himself?

If not, do not you be the one to judge those who cast Him out in the day of His lowliness and humiliation.

As Pharaoh placed Joseph by his own side in his day, and they cried "Bow the knee" before him (Gen. xli. 40-43), so God has placed Jesus at His right hand to-day, and commands men everywhere to bow to Him. *Every knee shall bow to Jesus*; but God would have you bow your knee—and more, bow your heart—to Jesus *now*. Have you gone down in His presence, delighted to own His value now, delighted to call Him Lord? If not, the sooner you do, the better will it be for you.

The humiliation of Jesus gave Him a moral claim on God for exaltation, and He has exalted Him, and "given Him a name which is above every name." There is no name like the name of Jesus. God has declared that *all* shall own Him Lord—angels, men, and demons—and you may be sure *all* includes you. The demons never owned Him Lord when He was on earth, but the day will come when God will compel them to own Him Lord. And for you, my reader, when is to be your day of owning Him Lord? now, when He is waiting on you in long-suffering grace, or in the day of His power, when you *must* bow? "Bow the knee" is God's word to you now.

Doubtless to many a proud Egyptian noble there was great humiliation in 'having to bow to this Hebrew servant: but the day of famine came, and neither their pride nor their parentage would meet

the pangs of famine. Then they cried to Pharaoh and Pharaoh's word was, "Go to Joseph." And many a soul in trouble cries to God. What is God's answer, as it were? "Go to Jesus." Have you, my reader, the sense of soul hunger? God's word is, "Go to Jesus." Do you say, I know what soul hunger is; I would like to be saved, if I knew how to go to Jesus? Look and see, in this interesting narrative, how they came to Joseph.

He was, according to the meaning of his name Zaphnath-Paaneah, "a revealer of secrets," and "the saviour of the age." And is not this what Jesus is?

Look at Him in the fourth of John, when that poor woman meets Him at the well. Does He not show Himself to her as the revealer of secrets, when He said to her, "Thou hast had five husbands"? Ah! Christ knows all about you; Christ knows every sin; and for those who believe in Him, He has pardoned every one. Knowing all about us, He loved us; and loving us, He came down to save us.

When the woman found He knew all about her, does she fly? No, she stays and talks with Him, and one moment she is a convicted sinner, and the next Christ reveals Himself to her, and she leaves her water-pot and goes into the city, and says, "Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" Instead of being afraid of Him, she calls to all to come and know Him too; and they come and find He is not only the Revealer of Secrets, but the Saviour of the age—the true Joseph.

Have you come to this Revealer of Secrets, this Saviour of the age, yet? Does your conscience answer, No; I have not come to Him yet? Why not, my reader? Perhaps you say in your heart, I do not know how He would receive me if I came.

Let us look at how Joseph received his brethren when they came to him in their need.

“Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt; get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph’s ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt” (Gen. xlii. 1-3). They heard that there was corn in Egypt. They heard that there was deliverance to be had if they could only get it, and they were perishing. They heard there was salvation, and they felt their need, and felt they would like to be saved, but they could not get salvation without going to the saviour. They could not get deliverance apart from the deliverer; they could not get food in their hunger save from Joseph—Joseph the despised one, the one they had hated, the one they had cast out and sold, but the one whom God had raised up to have every resource in his power, and everything that could meet their need.

And you, my reader, do you feel you are in need of salvation? Have you heard of a deliverance which you would like to be yours? Is your soul hungry, and have you heard of “bread enough and

to spare”? Have you heard of salvation that others have known, and would you know it too? Then you must come into living contact with the *Saviour*. It is from the Saviour only you can get salvation. Jesus is that Saviour, and He waits and longs to save you.

Joseph's brethren are in need now, and they come to Joseph; and you must do just the same—come to Jesus.

“And Joseph was the governor over the land, and *he it was that sold to all the people of the land*; and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth” (ver. 6).

They come and bow themselves down to Joseph; and it is a blessed thing when you are compelled, even by your need, to bow to Jesus, for He is the only one who can meet that need.

“And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. . . . And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies. Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. . . . And he put them all together into ward three days” (vers. 7-17).

His brethren did not know Joseph, but he knew

them. He spake roughly to them. They thought he was a hard man. Do you think Christ is an "austere Man"? He will tell you what you are; tell you that you are a sinner full of enmity to God, that there is no good thing in you. People do not like that. They do not like to be shown what is in their hearts.

Joseph deals with his brethren as God does with the sinner, for God must get at our consciences, and must make us feel and know what we have been and are. So Joseph's dealings with his brethren arouse conscience, for they say, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us" (ver. 21).

It is a wonderful thing when the soul is brought to this point, to own itself a guilty sinner before God. God must have reality. Have you, my reader, ever seen yourself thus in the light of God's presence? Has your conscience ever been awakened to cry, I am undone; I am verily guilty?

"And Joseph turned himself about from them and wept." And did not Another greater than Joseph weep over guilty Jerusalem; and not only weep, but shed His precious blood because of the love of His heart to guilty man?

"Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack" (ver. 25). What is the lesson of the money in the sack? That if you are to get salvation, you

cannot buy it. You are too poor to buy it, and God is too rich to sell it. Salvation must be God's free gift, and you must have it as a gift, or not have it at all.

Joseph's brethren come back, and tell their father all that Joseph had said; and Jacob refuses to let Benjamin go down with them, for he says, "His brother is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

But the famine increases. Their need increases; food they must have or die. Judah offers to be surety for his brother, and Jacob is constrained to let the lad go; but he says, "Do this: take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present. . . . And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: and God Almighty give you mercy before the man" (xliii. 11-14).

This is man's way of getting salvation. People think they are going to be saved by propitiating God. They will work and give alms, and what not. But it will not do. No money will buy salvation, and God does not want appeasing. He is *waiting* to be gracious, waiting for the moment when He can display what is in His heart, which is only love.

Joseph's brethren came down again to him, and

when he saw Benjamin he gave commandment that they should be brought into his house. "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house." Yes, the soul wakes up to learn it is guilty, and then it fears the presence of God. But Joseph spake comfortably to them to win their hearts, and they sat at meat with him. "And the men marvelled one at another. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him; but Benjamin's mess was five time as much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him."

Then in chapter xlv. they have to confess their sins. Judah says, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants" (ver. 16). This is the point God would bring us to. Not only conscience making us see our state, but also there is the *owning* of that state. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." So said David in Psalm xxxii., and so must every soul that really turns to God.

In chapter xlv. the wonderful climax is reached. Joseph reveals himself to them. "I am Joseph." The Joseph they had sold as a slave stood before them as a ruler over all the land, but meeting them in all the grace of his heart. He caused every one else to go out, and the guilty were left alone in the presence of the saviour. What a lovely picture of divine grace follows: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, *Come near to me, I pray you.* And they

came near. And he said, I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt" (xlv. 4).

When the work in the conscience is done, then the Lord can come near and reveal Himself. He never comes and reveals Himself till the sinner takes his true place—is angry with himself.

"Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither," he says: "for God did send me before you to preserve life." You have been guilty, Joseph says, but God had a purpose in it.

And man was guilty of nailing the Saviour to the cross: but God had His own thoughts, His own meaning in it all, and that very death, on the cross, of the Saviour, becomes the basis and ground-work, through atonement, of the great deliverance Christ accomplishes for the sinner; salvation for him is the fruit of the sufferings of the Saviour there.

But after all this display of the heart of Joseph to his brethren, and after seventeen years of caring for them, and giving them the best of everything, and rewarding them only love for their hatred, the last chapter of Genesis shows they still did not fully know Joseph.

"When Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive,

I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin ; for they did unto thee evil : and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph *wept when they spake unto him* " (l. 15-17).

All this is like some doubting, fearing, unhappy Christians, who tell me they believe on the Lord, and yet they have not peace. They are full of fears ; they are not sure He has received them and forgiven them : they do not know His heart ; and another thing, they have never had all out with Him. Have no reserves, my reader. Have it all out with Jesus, and do not you be the one to make our Joseph weep ; for the heart of the Lord Jesus feels to-day your lack of trust in Him, after all He has done for you, all the kindness and the love He has shown to you. Wound not then His loving heart by any lack of confidence in Him.

"And Joseph said unto them, Fear not." That is just the way the Lord Jesus loves to comfort the soul. To get the confidence of the heart, He says to the trembling one, "Fear not : I am Jesus."

Joseph says again, "Fear ye not : I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

And that is what Jesus says ; for we are not only sheltered by His blood, but saved by His life. He will nourish and care for each one all the way along. Oh, my reader, believe Him simply, and never wound His heart again by one single doubt.

THE ATHEIST'S TORN BIBLE.

JOHN MOULTON was the proprietor of a "general" store in a small village in New London county, Connecticut.

He was considered to be an honest man, especially when he was obliged to be, but he was an avowed atheist, and regarded himself as amenable to none other than human laws. He despised the counsels and commands of God, and ridiculed the Christian religion and its professors as well.

He would secretly open his store on Sunday for the benefit of a godless, reckless set among the villagers, who met therein behind the closed shutters to *drink, smoke, and play cards*. Consequently, it was not surprising, when his father died and left him, among other things, a handsome Family Bible, that he should at once declare his intention of using its sacred leaves as wrapping paper.

"In the first place," said he, "father made a fool of himself in buying that old Bible; and in the second place, in giving it to me. He gave ten dollars for it. It has never been read—none of any consequence—and it isn't of any account now surely in a literary or religious way. I couldn't sell it in the lump for more than a dollar if I should try, but it will bring me in much more than that if I retail it out by the ounce and pound. Its thick heavy paper is just the thing to weigh up for small and costly parcels."

"I don't believe I should dare to use the old Family Bible in that way, John," said his wife. "It seems, somehow, as if it would be wicked. Besides, it would make talk among the go-to-meeting folks, and some of them are your customers, you know."

"Let the soft-headed hypocrites mind their own business," snapped out John Moulton. "Mine is the only store in these parts, and they've got to trade with me"; and this open reviler of God's Word stripped off the handsome, substantial cover from the old family keepsake, and, putting the mass of heavy leaves under his arm, strode across the street to the store.

It did indeed "make talk" in every house in town, when small parcels from John Moulton's store were brought home wrapped with the awful utterances of Jehovah and the inspired words of Moses and the prophets.

John Moulton, however, was studiously left alone, so far as any controversy with words was concerned, until one evening a God-fearing old farmer from the outskirts of the town, and belonging to another parish, ran into the store to get an ounce of nutmegs. After the storekeeper had placed a leaf from the old Bible in the scales, and, having weighed out the nutmegs, was proceeding to do them up, the farmer called out in an abrupt manner characteristic of him, "No, no, Mr Moulton; no, no! Don't use that to wrap up anything *I* buy here. That won't do at all for *my* nutmegs."

"I have nothing else handy," replied the store-

keeper, with a contemptuous laugh and a coarse jest.

"Hand them right over here then ; I'll put them loose into my coat pocket," and suiting the action to the word, with a grieved, sorrowful look toward the storekeeper and the torn Bible lying on the counter, he turned towards the door. He had proceeded but a few steps, when John Moulton, standing with the rejected leaf still in his hand, and exchanging sly glances with a few of his cronies who were in the store at the time, called after him, "A good many of your brethren and sisters in this vicinity, sir, have had parcels done up in that kind of paper, and you are the first person who has ever objected to it."

And folding the leaf into a small compass, he put it carefully into his waistcoat pocket.

After every customer and hanger-on had left the little store for the night, and John Moulton had finished posting his books, and was arranging his memoranda, he found that folded leaf among other papers ; and smoothing it out very carefully upon his desk, he read it over slowly and attentively.

The leaf spread out before him happened to be the last chapter of the book of Daniel. The hardened infidel read it over more than once, but he did not understand it. His lifelong wilful ignorance of God's Word made this portion of it all the more wonderful, profound, and puzzling to him.

The last verse in particular impressed him : "But go thou thy way till the end be ; for thou shalt rest,

and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (Dan. xii. 13).

He read these words over and over until he seemed to feel them like coals burning into his heart. He sat at his desk with bowed head, pondering upon them, until his wife became alarmed, and crossed the street to the store to see what had detained him. He heard her tap gently at the locked door, and, opening it, drew her in.

Pointing to that last verse, the letters of which now seemed to him to stand up from the crumpled page, he asked her, with trembling voice and blanched face, "What shall *my* lot be at the end of the days?"

"Alas, my husband, that you should ask me such a question, and that I should be utterly unable to help you!" she replied, bending in turn over the leaf. "This verse has marginal references, I see, to Isaiah, and to the Psalms, and to Revelation. Let us look them up," and she turned to the coverless, mutilated old Bible. He knew nothing, and she very little of the order of the books, but, after considerable search, they found that the two first named books were missing. Presently they came to the Revelation, and eagerly read the thirteenth verse of the fourteenth chapter: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

"I have done no works that I could wish to follow me," said the husband. "That is one great proof to me that it is wrong to lead such a life as we do. I

believe the scales are dropping from my eyes. If what little we have now read in the Bible be true, and we should die as we are, should we not be among those mentioned here in the second verse on this page, 'some to shame and everlasting contempt'?"

"I do not know," said the wife again, and weeping now. "But I do believe this is God's Holy Word, and that, even in what there is left of it, we can find out how to live so that we may know how to die."

"We will indeed seek for it, then," said John Moulton, "and we will never stop studying this Bible until we have found out the true way to live and die." And carefully placing the remnant of the soiled, mutilated book in a basket, in which were a few little articles for their own household use, he carried it back across the street to their dwelling.

He was as good as his word. The precious Bible was studied, first the old, torn one, and then a new and perfect copy, until the way of life and salvation was found; and his wife was only too glad to join him in the now sweet exercise of prayer, that unspeakable privilege of mortals, which the Bible so plainly points out and enjoins, and in walking in the heavenly way.

And so that old Family Bible finally accomplished its mission, and all there was left of it, up to the time of that providential protest of the stranger customer, lies to this day, under a newer and handsomer copy, on John Moulton's parlour table.

ANON.

A MUSICAL FESTIVAL—"MAY I GO?"

YOU are invited to a musical festival, in which the solemn mysteries of CREATION, REDEMPTION, and JUDGMENT will form the subject of *popular amusement*; and for the purpose, it may be, of raising funds for laudable objects.

With no cynical spirit, and without any ascetic denunciation against the musical art, allow a fellow-Christian to entreat you to pause before you give your support to, or countenance by your presence, so fearful a desecration of holy things. Singing the praises of the Lord is an act of worship on high, and the privilege of the Church below. That Church is Christ's representative on earth; she is called to be conformed to His character and occupied in His service. But nothing contrary to the Spirit of Christ can glorify Him: the world which hates Him cannot sing His praises, or unite in his worship.

Yet, to this pompous mockery of both, the *world* is invited, and—

"Behold, a thousand sit content to hear
(Oh wonderful effect of music's powers!)
Messiah's eulogy, for Handel's sake."

Let us for a moment imagine the scene: let us anticipatively picture it, crowded with the rank, and beauty, and fashion of the county—a bright concentration of what God's Word designates as the "Lust

of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (1 John ii. 16). Let us imagine the moment when the eye of curious vanity having been satiated with all forms of beauty, and the minds of the intellectual lulled into the treacherous repose of religious sentimentalism; the solemn breathing of the deep-toned organ, and the swell of many voices take up the mighty subject of

CREATION,

and enact in musical rehearsal the mystery of

REDEMPTION,

and burst forth at length with all the full power of harmony, in sounds and words expressive of the thrilling solemnities of

THE LAST JUDGMENT!

Imagine, when all ears are filled with the witchery of sweet sounds—all hearts wrapt in the surrounding enchantment; imagine the full swell of the orchestra suddenly drowned by that voice from heaven, which shall wake the dead, and summon them and the living, not to a *mimic*, but to the *real* Judgment! Where is the witchery of music now? The instruments have fallen from the hands of the terrified performers—all tongues are paralysed, and all hearts quail. And where are the grave and the gay, the noble and the vulgar, the entranced intellectualist and the empty gazer, the sober moralist and the

wanton profligate? Where, where are they all? Cowering in holes and corners, calling for the very rocks to fall and hide them from Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!—for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?

Fellow-believer! would you wish to be in such circumstances when your Lord shall come? Would you like your Lord to find you thus occupied? The one scene is a fearful mockery—the other a solemn reality. The Lord, whose handiwork in

CREATION,

whose mercy in

REDEMPTION,

and whose holiness in

JUDGMENT,

are to be *set to music*, has promised to come again, and for a twofold purpose—to receive His people to Himself, and to execute vengeance on His enemies, fulfilling his own words, “I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John xiv. 3); and those of His apostle, “In flaming fire take 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. 8, 9).

A BRIGHT SUNSET.

“**B**LESS the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” These familiar words fell on my ear, rapidly and repeatedly uttered, as, at noon on Monday, 22nd December 1884, I drew up at a house where I was attending a lady. Another doctor’s carriage, and a cab standing at the door, made me think that something was amiss, and I was left in no doubt that something had happened, as again and again “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” came from the lobby within.

On the floor of that lobby, his head and snowy locks only supported by a pillow, was the speaker, the owner of the house, my aged and valued friend of many years’ standing, Mr B——. I soon learned that he had gone out for a walk that morning, and had just been brought home in a cab, and a passing physician called in.

The frost being keen and the cold intense, we rapidly got the old man, for he was nearly eighty-two, into a bed close at hand, and, surrounding him with hot bottles, hoped that, with other suitable measures, he might get over the deadly chill which was apparent in every member. While thus ministered to, his lips ceased not saying, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” This continued for a little, when he interposed,

"Give me air, air, oh for air!" Fanning him briskly with one hand, I rubbed his icy cold hands with the other, which brought forth, "That's good, that's good, thank the Lord, that's fine. Bless the Lord, O my soul."

Judging that he was capable of replying to my queries, I said, "Open your eyes, Mr B——; do you know me?"

"Know you? of course I do. You are my kind friend, Dr W——. You've come at the right time; the Lord sent you, I am 'sure, and He's taught you just what to do for me. Rub away, rub away, that's fine, and doing me good. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.' Bless Him, bless Him, 'and forget not all His benefits.'"

"Ay, that's right, we can't bless Him too heartily," I replied; "but tell me what has happened; have you had a fall?"

"No, I did not fall; I was just quietly walking over George IV. Bridge when I felt something queer at my heart, so I just slid gently to the ground, and, when I came to, I asked a gentleman who came to me to call a cab and bring me home, and here I am, and you're looking after me"; and "Bless the Lord, O my soul," again rang through the chamber. It was a touching and never-to-be-forgotten scene, for the joyous and praiseful spirit of the old saint was lovely to witness.

After a little while he again said, "Air, air, give me air"; and putting his hand to his heart, added, "What is this heavy weight I feel here, doctor?"

I feel something I never felt before, but my dear wife, just before she passed away, said she felt it. Doctor, I think I'm going to follow her. I think I'm going now, going to be with Jesus, going to see my precious Lord Jesus, who loved me and died for me. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.' I should like to say 'good-bye' to my dear children, but if I can't, never mind. I shall meet them again in glory. I'm only going a little before. The Lord is coming soon, and then we'll meet again. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.' "

His strength now began to fail, he said little more, and, as the clock struck one, he quietly passed away to be with his Lord and Saviour, whose love he had known for nearly half a century here, and will taste for ever on high.

The worshipful departure of this dear old saint reminds one of the patriarch, of whom it is written, "By faith Jacob, when he was a-dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph: and *worshipped*, leaning upon the top of his staff" (Heb. xi. 21).

Reader, could you depart thus? I have little doubt you say, "I would like to." But let me remind you it is of no use joining company with Balaam, and saying like him, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

unless you are numbered with those whom God counts righteous now, by faith in Christ Jesus. As a man lives, so does he usually die. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked."

How different to what I narrated may be your end. Auld Peggie's was different. A Christian friend of mine called, and pressed Christ on her. She put down her pipe, and weighed the matter a little; then, with callous, unmoved face resumed her smoking, as she slowly said, "Na, na; I've lived without Him seventy years, and I can live without Him the rest o' my days." Shortly after she was found dead in bed, the pipe broken on the floor, and her withered arms thrown above her head, as if there had been fearful conflict with some unseen foe.

Will you imitate Cæsar Borgia, who said, "I have provided, in the course of my life, for everything except death; and now, alas, I am to die, although entirely unprepared"?

A dying colonel said, "I would gladly give thirty thousand pounds to have it proved to my satisfaction that there is no such place as hell." Friend, are you going there?

A wealthy manufacturer, hearing of the death of an acquaintance, said, "Is he dead? It is very different with me; for my part I am so engaged in business that *I could not find time to die.*" Scarcely were the words uttered than he fell on the floor a corpse. Sharp work this, my reader; are you ready? You may go next, mind.

A dying queen's last words were, "All my possessions for a moment of time." She had it not, and you may not have another granted to you. How solemn for an unsaved soul!

How terrible to die like Gibbon, saying, "All is dark and doubtful."

Better far be like the one whose sudden and unlooked-for end I have narrated. Another dear friend of mine passed away, saying, "As I may not be able to express myself distinctly by-and-by, I wish now to state that I am in perfect peace, resting alone on the blood of Christ. Oh precious blood of God's Son, which cleanseth from all sin! I find this amply sufficient to enter the presence of God with. 'When I see the blood I will pass over.' Oh, the precious, precious blood of Christ!"

Friend, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," is God's way of salvation. You have only to believe. Works cannot save. Faith in Jesus can. Trust in Him then. Trust Him now, just now, as you read this. Delay is dangerous, nay more, it is the veritable doorway to hell. Millions are there who never meant to be, but died just before they believed the truth. They believe it now, fast enough, when it is too late to avail them. Don't join their company, I beseech you.

W. T. P. W.

“THE WICKED SHALL BE TURNED INTO HELL.”

LET others hold their peace about hell if they will—I dare not do so. I see it plainly in Scripture, and I must speak of it. I fear that thousands are on that broad road that leads to it, and I would fain arouse them to a sense of the peril before them. What would you say of the man who saw his neighbour's house in danger of being burned down, and never raised the cry of “Fire”?

Call it bad taste, if you like, to speak of hell. Call it charity to make things pleasant and speak smoothly, and soothe men with a constant lullaby of peace. From such notions of taste and charity may I ever be delivered! My notion of charity is to warn men plainly of their danger. My notion of taste is to declare all the counsel of God. If I never spoke of hell, I should think I had kept back something that was profitable, and should look on myself as an accomplice of the devil.

Beware of new and strange doctrines about hell and the eternity of punishment. Beware of manufacturing a God of your own—a God who is all love, but not holy—a God who has a heaven for everybody, but a hell for none—a God who can allow good and bad to be side by side in time, and will make no distinction between good and bad in eternity. Such a God is an idol of your own, as really as Jupiter or the monstrous image of Juggernaut—as

true an idol as was ever moulded out of brass or clay. The hands of your own fancy and sentimentality have made Him. He is not the God of the Bible, and besides the God of the Bible there is no God at all.

Your heaven would be no heaven at all. A heaven containing all sorts of characters mixed together indiscriminately would be miserable discord indeed. Alas! for the eternity of such a heaven! There would be little difference between it and hell. Ah, reader, there is a hell! Take heed lest you find it out too late.

Beware of being wise above that which is written. Beware of forming fanciful theories of your own, and then trying to make the Bible square with them. Beware of making selections from your Bible to suit your taste—refusing, like a spoilt child, whatever you think is bitter—seizing, like a spoilt child, whatever you think sweet. What is all this but taking Jehoiakim's penknife and cutting God's Word to pieces? What does it amount to but telling God that you, a poor short-lived worm, know what is good for you better than He? It will not do; it will not do. You must take the Bible as it is. You must read it all and believe it all. You must come to the reading of it in the spirit of a little child.

Dare not to say, "I believe this verse for I like it; I receive this for I can understand it; I refuse that for I cannot reconcile it with my views." "Nay, but, oh man, who art thou that repliest against God?" By what right do you talk in this way? Surely it were better to say over every chapter in the Word "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Ah, reader, if men were to do this they would never try to throw overboard the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. xxv. 46). "*Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*" (Isa. xxxiii. 14). Ponder these lines,—

"Never to thank Him for His love,
 Never to dwell with Him above,
 Never His likeness true to bear,
 Never His glory bright to share,
 And joy at His right hand to miss—
 O sinner! hast thou thought of this?"

Never to hear His praises ring,
 Never with saints above to sing;
 But Christless, in that awful throng
 Who to the realms of woe belong;
 Never to taste of endless bliss—
 O sinner! hast thou thought of this?"

J. C. R.

HOME OR THE FIELD, WHICH?

B. C. 1491. A message reached some farmers in Egypt. Moses—the man of God—warned them that a terrible storm was coming on the *morrow*, such a tempest as had never swept over that land from its foundation.

The message not only told them of "judgment to come," but provided a way of escape. "Send therefore *now*, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the *field*." It urged them to bring them *home* for shelter, for all not sheltered in the *home*, the hail would strike—they should die.

It spoke of—

Judgment *to-morrow*, swift, scathing, deadly,
Salvation *to-day*, free, full, certain,

on one condition only, escape for thy life, *come home to-day*. Why? Because—

Salvation was in the home,
Destruction was in the field ;
Life was in the home,
Death in the field ;
Security in the home,
Judgment in the field.

God's message to you, A.D. 1913, is very much the same—

The field is the world,
Heaven is the home ;
To-day heaven's door is open,
To-morrow the Master may close it ;
To-day you may flee from wrath to come,
To-morrow the storm of judgment may burst.

Now, as then, warning comes before the peril, a way of escape from the cold, icy death-blast, before it does its deadly work. Ere the *morrow* of judg-

ment dawns, before the *day* of vengeance begins, God announces a *day of salvation*.

IT IS TO-DAY.

Yesterday with its possibilities, its lost opportunities, has gone for ever, to-morrow you may never see; escape then for thy life, *to-day, now*, this moment is the only one you can call your own; haste thee to that blessed refuge, Christ Jesus—"a man shall be a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest"—that blessed Man died on Calvary's tree, bared His breast to the judgment, bore it, in order to provide a home and shelter, an eternal resting place for thee.

As surely as the hail, mingled with fire, strewed the field with corpses in Egypt, so surely will grievous hail and fire mingled with blood sweep this land in which we live, for "great hail out of heaven, the weight of a talent," shall fall upon men, and "the plague thereof shall be exceeding great" (Rev. xvi. 21).

Is it possible that a reader of *The Gospel Messenger* shall feel that hail? Quite possible. You will, you must, if left in this world when Jesus comes. Unless you are secure in the arms, and home, of Jesus, ere that storm bursts, it will certainly reach you.

There was one part of Egypt, however, where no fiery stream came, where judgment was unknown. It was the land of Goshen, where God's people dwelt. There is a spot where judgment can never reach us. Has not Jesus said, "He that heareth My

Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment" (John v. 24)?

All who put their trust in Him will be securely sheltered, safely housed in life's eternal home, *before* the storm bursts. Jesus is coming. He will take every poor sinner who has fled to Him for refuge, and plant their feet on the golden street, ere He closes the door, the now open door of salvation.

Tell me which company are you among?

One feared and fled,

The other callously remained.

One hurried all he possessed to a place of safety,

The other simply left judgment's threat unheeded.

Indifference and unbelief marked the one,

Faith and fear marked the other.

Probably those who took no heed said one to another, "Who is this Moses?" Perhaps there were some of the school of modern critics among them, who said, "We don't believe in this Moses, who ever heard of a storm at this time of year? The sky is blue and cloudless, it is the wrong season for rain and hail, quite contrary to the laws of nature; we will risk it."

They did risk it, but no servants came home that night, no cattle were driven to the stall, they were ruined men at nightfall, stripped of all their possessions, but they *believed Moses when it was too late*.

Reader, take care. A morning will dawn when men shall say "peace and safety"; the leaders in

the dailies will proclaim that "all is well," when suddenly, as with a lightning flash, judgment shall descend, and "they shall not escape."

The day of vengeance is coming ; come it will, come it must. Moses warned the Egyptians, Paul has warned us ; in view of it we solemnly warn *you*, urgently entreat *you*, to "flee from the wrath to come."

The day of salvation has been a long one, its closing hours are upon us. The day of judgment precedes a long dark night of blackness and darkness. It is stealthily coming ; escape for thy life ! Look not behind thee, REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE.

The arms of Jesus wait to welcome thee, the home of Jesus waits to shelter thee. Fleeing to Him you are safe now, safe through all eternity ; there is no night there, no night, but one eternal day ; no judgment there—safety, security, light, joy, peace, rest. Oh ! say, will you be there ?

Come with me to two sick beds. In one an infidel is dying, the world to which he clung, the field where all his possessions were, were just slipping from his grasp. His friends listen to the deep moan of that dying man, that neglecter and rejecter of warnings and grace, and as their ears are strained they catch these words, "*I am going, I am going I don't know where !*"

In another room lies a young believer : she has seen an account of this infidel's end, and with a thankful and grateful heart says, "*I'm going, I'm*

going, and I do know where ; I am going to JESUS, His HOME I shall share."

If death visits your chamber to-night, can you say that? You may, you ought to know, whither bound. Sleep not, rest not, delay not, until you find out whether your portion is in the "Home," or in the "Field." Will you depart to be "with Christ," or with those men who heeded not the warning of Moses, if death reaches you to-night? H. N.

PATSY AND THE SQUIRE.

PATSY O'BLANE was a poor ragged boy, living on a wild Irish moor. He folded the sheep, stacked the peat, and dug the potatoes, without hat or shoes, for he owned neither. He also cooked the food and swept the clay floor, while his father herded the cattle of the squire, who owned all the lands and cottages around them. Theirs was a poor dwelling, with its one only window, and with the thatch falling from the roof; but it was *home*, and therefore dear to them.

Dan O'Blane owned one book, the Bible, which he and little Patsy dearly loved, for it had raised them from the dust to be "kings and priests unto God."

One evening, as Patsy sat at the door, with his pet lamb at his side, and his Bible on his knee,

awaiting the return of his father, he heard the loud voice of the blunt but good-natured squire.

"Pat, my boy," he shouted, "leave that great book for priests and bishops to read, and go hunting with O'Rooke's boys."

"Please, yer honour," said Patsy, "I'm forbid o' my father to go wid them same at all, for they takes the name o' God in vain."

"But you can go hunting with them without swearing," said the gentleman.

"Ah, sir, I know it's not asy to go into the fire without being burned," replied the boy.

"Well, my good fellow, what do you find in that great book? With all my learning, I don't understand half of it," said the squire.

"And now, yer honour, doesn't yer own word show how thrue this book is?" asked Pat; "for it says, 'He hath hidden these things from the wise, and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.' There's ye, sir, as rich as the king, and as wise as a bishop, ye aren't *sure* that it's God's Word at all; and here's us, as poor as my lamb Betty, and not much wiser, we belaves every word o' it, and takes it into our heart, and makes it our mate and our drink. So, after all, begging yer pardon, we is richer nor ye. Only last night, when ye and yer company was feasting and singing at the Hall, father said he was amazed at the grace of God that made him and ye to differ. This poor cabin was like a little heaven, sir, yesterday, when some o' the poor people left the foolish mass to hear father read how Jesus came to

preach the gospel to the poor, and to open heaven for them."

"Don't you think Dan would change places with me?"

"What, sir! sell heaven, where mother and the baby is, and give up Christ? Och, no, sir; ye haven't gold enough to buy the new heart out o' poor Dan O'Blane, nor my heart either," answered the boy, folding the Bible to his breast.

"How can these things be?" exclaimed the squire.

"Ye mind me, yer honour, o' the ruler o' the Jews, who crept to Jesus like a thafe by night. He, too, asked, 'How can these things be?' when Jesus told him, 'Ye must be born again,'" said Patsy.

"How can you prove, boy, that a man is *born again*, as you call the change you talk about?" asked the squire.

"Jesus didn't try to prove it to the ruler, sir, nor will I to ye. If ye see a man walking on the highway, ye don't bid him stop and prove to ye that he was ever born, for ye knows he was, or he wouldn't be there alive," replied Patsy. "So when ye see one like father, once dead in sin, now alive and walking in the road to heaven, ye may know he's born again without him proving it to ye, sir."

The scoffer's smile faded from the lips of the gentlemen as he stood before this poor child, who evidently pitied him.

"Pat," he said, "there was a time when I wanted this same faith myself. I had nothing to ask for *here*; but I knew I could not carry my treasure to

eternity, so I wanted something beyond. I asked God that I might believe, but He didn't hear my prayer, as your father said He would."

"Och, sir, but likes enough ye went to God feeling that ye was Squire Phelan, and no mean man; and that it was great condescension in ye to seek His face. But ye'll niver find the Lord so, sir," said the boy.

"How did you go to Him, Pat?" asked the squire.

"Meself is it, sir? Like the poor, miserable, sinful child that I was. 'I'm evil, altogether,' I said, 'and as ignorant as a beast before Thee; ignorant of all that's hooly, but wise enough in what is unhooly. I sin in ten thousand ways, and has no claim on God's pity. If He send my soul to hell,' I said, 'He'll do only right; but it's to heaven I wants to go. Oh, take me, Lord,' says I, 'but it must be *just as I am*, for I can niver make meself a whit better.'"

"Patsy, my boy," said the squire, "you talk like a bishop; but, after all, you are only a poor herd's boy, and may be mistaken in this matter. What would you do then?"

"Och, sir, that *cannot* be, for I have the Word o' God itself, and that can niver fail," replied the boy.

"And how did you bring your mind to believe this first, boy?" asked the squire.

"Sure, I didn't *bring my mind* at all, sir. I just read the words o' Jesus, and belaved them! I was lost, and He died to save me, He found me and bid

me trust Him and follow Him ; and so I did, and that's all I can tell about it."

"And you are quite sure you have a new heart, are you?" asked the gentleman.

"I know it, sir. When I only had the ould heart I hated everybody as war better off nor myself. When I'd be trudging, cold and hungry, through the bog, I'd often see your illegant young sons, and the heir o' Sir Robert, mounted on their fine horses; then the ould heart in me would speak out almost aloud: 'Bad luck to the proud young spalpeens! Why wasn't *I* born a gintleman, and themselves digging, ankle deep, in the bog, or herding the cattle?' And once I mind me I looked after them as they dashed down the hill, wishing the royal grey would toss your heir, sir, over his head, and bring his pride down," added the boy.

"I never knew, Patsy, that there was so much malice in your heart," exclaimed the squire.

"Och, sir, and it's not claned out," answered the boy. "It's as bad as ever; but I've got a *new* heart, and the Holy Spirit, who has shed the love of God abroad in it, and I'll niver shelter an inimy o' Jesus *here* in peace," and the poor boy smote his breast.

"And how do you feel towards my brave boys now, Patsy?" asked the squire.

"How do I feel *now*, is it? Och, sir, but I love the very sound o' the hoofs that brings them forment me. I cries out, 'Lord, love the jewels! Give them every blessing Thou hast to give below, but don't be

putting them off with earthly good ; give them Thy grace now, and after this a mansion better nor the Hall, one that will be eternal in the heavens.' Deed, sir, I loves the whole world now, and I'm just the happiest lad in all Kerry. I don't envy the young prince nor anybody else, but mind my cattle wid a heart full o' blessed thoughts. And, sir, if yer go to Jesus like the poor needy sinner ye are, *not like Squire Phelan*, and belave what He has done for yer, He'll save ye too."

J. D. C.

THE BLUEJACKET'S CONVERSION.

"**W**HATEVER has come over Bill?" "Hello! have you turned religious? Now, stow it!" Such were the expressions directed towards a fellow-sailor in the reading-room of a battleship, as he, for the first time, sought to read God's Word in the company of his shipmates.

What led him to do this, you ask? It was from no passing fancy to be "religious," no turning over a new leaf, but, thank God, it was because he had a few moments before just been brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and wanted to learn more of his Saviour's love.

Let me try to relate to you, dear reader, how this point was reached in W——'s life, and may it have a voice to you, for though you are a sinner, yet God loves you and gave His Son to die for you, so that,

in trusting in Christ as *your* Saviour you might have eternal life (John iii. 16).

W——'s home training was everything that could have been desired, with father and mother both believers in the Lord Jesus. Like many another young fellow, he did not appreciate this, and so sought to get away as soon as possible, eventually entering the Royal Navy. God's watchful eye, however, was upon him, and, though he was far from his parent's supervision, he could not get clear from their prayers, which ascended continually to God, asking for the conviction and conversion of his precious soul.

Should this be read by praying relatives, let it encourage them to pray on. God does not forget the petitions of His children, especially in the blessing of a poor wanderer. They will be answered in His time; meanwhile we have to "continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col. iv.).

God's first voice to W—— was off the coast of West Africa. Whilst walking one of the beams he missed his balance and fell into the shark-infested waters. Through God's mercy he was quickly hauled out of danger—a subdued man, with troubled thoughts as to his soul's welfare as the result, but time soon altered these things, and W—— was again the careless and God-forgetful sailor.

Soon after this he received a letter from his young lady telling him that she had been converted, that once fearing to meet God on account of her sins, she was now quite happy, as Christ had died on Calvary's cross so that she as a sinner might go free. She

also enclosed him a Bible. The effect of this letter was only to lead him to shout out to his mates, "Oh, my girl has turned religious!" Truly "God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish. Who will have ALL men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4).

A year passed on and God spoke again. W—— was now in home waters, and on this occasion he was drawing water by means of buckets thrown over the man-o'-war's side. Suddenly comes a jerk, with the ship's speed, and he was in the water struggling for life. How real eternity was to him in those minutes which seemed hours. God was there, his many sins, and no Saviour. He could almost hear his just judgment, "Depart from me . . . into everlasting fire." Then he was conscious that help was near, and that God had again preserved his life.

Deep conviction now set in, and soon after W—— had the opportunity of going ashore and attending some gospel preaching at Exeter. It was Monday night, the preaching over, and W—— was wending his way to join his vessel, a truly convicted sinner.

What a guilty lost sinner he now saw himself to be, fit for nothing but the lake of fire. The vessel reached, he immediately sought his bunk, and there and then confessed in true repentance to God his sinful vile condition, and in simple trust thanked the Lord Jesus Christ for dying and paying his penalty on the cross. Like a flash God, through his Holy Spirit, sent home the assurance, "Thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke vii. 48), and W——, kneeling

down, asked the Lord Jesus Christ to give him strength and courage to witness boldly for Him.

Then the never-opened, never-read Bible was brought out, and Christ openly confessed. Though fifteen years have passed away it is still the delight of W—— to be found studying its soul-filling subject—Christ. May it be your desire, unsaved reader, to read God's Word for yourself. Be assured that God will bless it for your soul's salvation.

J. H. R.

THE POWER OF THE NAME OF JESUS.

ABOUT two hundred years ago, there was a notorious thief in the South of Scotland, named "John of the Score," who for many years had followed his wicked trade.

One day he met a poor man travelling along the road with two horses, which he took from him by force. The man, upon this, fell on his knees, earnestly begging him, *for Jesus Christ's sake*, to give him back one of them, saying that he had nothing more by which to maintain himself and his family than what he got by his horses. But all was in vain; the thief robbed him of both, leaving the poor man in a very desolate condition.

Not long after, Score became very unhappy without knowing the cause of it, only professing that what the poor man had said (though he was so

ignorant of Scripture that he did not know who Jesus Christ was) lay like a great weight on his spirits. When he was afterwards sought for because of his robberies, he told his sons to shift for themselves, but for himself, he said that there was a restraint upon him, and a something within him, that would not suffer him to fly. So he stayed in his own home till he was apprehended. He was brought to Edinburgh, tried for his life, and condemned to die.

Mr Henry Blyth and Mr William Cunningham, of Boniton, who knew something about him, paid him a visit in prison, setting before him his miserable state, and the danger he was in; the only escape for him, as they told him, being *through the mercy of God, through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ*, when he cried out, "Oh! what a word is that, for it hath been my death; that's the word that hath lain upon my heart ever since the poor man spake it to me; so that from that time I had no power to get out of the way."

Afterwards, being told who Jesus Christ was, and that without Him he could not be saved, he cried out, "Oh, will He ever look to *me*? Will He show mercy on *me*, who for His sake would not show mercy on that poor man, and return him his horses?"

After further instruction, however, a gracious change was wrought in his soul, and at length, before his execution, he attained to such an assurance of his acceptance through Christ that, on the scaffold, he spoke so wonderfully of the Lord's dealings with

him, and that with such knowledge and judgment, as left a full conviction on the minds of many who heard him, that that name which, before he was aware of its worth, had wrought such convictions within him, had availed for his deliverance from wrath and for his eternal acceptance with God.

ANON.

"CAST THY BREAD UPON THE
WATERS."

(Extract from Letter dated 13th November 1910.)

"I HAVE, before now, had placed in my hands tracts of such a nature that I could only liken them to *blank* cartridge, which, when fired at an enemy, would produce no other result than a noise and a puff of smoke: nothing in them that the Holy Spirit could use to reach the heart and conscience of unsaved sinners. But what you so kindly send me month by month are of the ball-cartridge and shrapnel-shell kind, and the Lord is using them here and there in the conversion of the unsaved and the strengthening of the weak ones among the saved.

"One dear lad, to whom I gave a copy of *Gospel Tidings* and 'Two Looks,' after speaking with and reading a portion of Scripture to him, came out very brightly for the Lord a few weeks ago. Another lad

who had read 'A Bright Sunset' decided for the Lord at my Bible Class last Monday week. Last night he walked home with me in order to tell me of his new-found joy. He told me how he had hitherto been trusting to his baptism, confirmation, Church ordinances, &c., but had never seen himself a lost, guilty, and hell-deserving sinner. But now he realised that it was not what *he* could do that would make him right with God, as he had in vain hoped, but his belief in what Christ had done by His finished work, and faith in His precious blood, that had made him right now. He said, '*I never knew my sins were forgiven before.*' '*But,*' I said, '*you know now, don't you?*' '*Ah, that I do,*' he replied, with fervent emphasis.

"Another young man of the Royal Fusiliers, who made a loud profession, but never showed any true sign of being a possessor (though he sometimes spoke at a soldiers' meeting), a little while ago got hold of a back number of the *Gospel Messenger* and read Dr W.'s article on 'Electro-plate Christians.' For many weeks before this he had carefully avoided me, because I could not but ignore all his profession and begin with him at the A.B.C. of the gospel, and he could not stand it. But I prayed for him, and the Lord used Dr W.'s article to shake him out of his false profession.

"A couple of weeks ago this brother publicly confessed in a meeting for soldiers in Aldershot that what I had told him was true, that he had been following a Jesus and serving a God of his own

imagination, but the Lord Jesus Christ and the Lord God of Holy Scripture he had never known until he read the magazine Mr F—— had left in the Soldiers' Home."

May this be an encouragement to many a worker to go on in a service becoming more and more needed, and in which there is still, thank God, much to cheer. The Lord comes quickly. Oh! that we might fully buy up the precious opportunities.

J. M.

THE BELL IN THE SEA.

IT is said that off the coast of Wales a large bell has been placed in the sea to warn vessels against too near an approach to the shoals above which it swings. It is so arranged that at every motion of the waves, however slight, it sends forth its admonishing sound. The inhabitants of a town that lies along the shore, more than a mile distant, may not hear it amid the din of business; or, if they hear, they may not heed it, because accustomed to its unceasing tones, as the ticking or striking of a clock in our room is after a while totally unnoticed. But whether forgotten or remembered, the bell is pealing out its signals of danger or its softer notes, day after day, and night after night, and hour after hour.

Sometimes when the gale has rushed across the bosom of the Atlantic, it rings a wild and rapid alarm; sometimes it almost seems to shriek amid the sullen moanings of the storm; sometimes at the touch of the rippling breeze it tells of gladness, like the chime of marriage bells; and sometimes as the wind is sinking into a great calm, its melody steals over the water like sweetest music. Merchant vessels may speed along the track of trade; tempest-tossed mariners may struggle to gain the port; pleasure parties may sail around it with song and shout; funeral barges may pass it with the remains of the dead; but its voice is never silent, and to all it conveys a lesson, if they have ears to hear.

No one can fail to perceive in this an appropriate symbol of "the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. i. 23). Although too often unheard or unheeded, it is sounding its solemn warnings and its tender entreaties each succeeding moment. Many regard it as the disturber of their peace, but without it the soul would be inevitably stranded and wrecked upon the dark shores of a hopeless eternity. Its most terrific denunciations of the wrath of God against sin are, after all, but the loud alarm of the bell in the sea, when struck by the breaking billows; and the sinner, admonished in love, should lift his heart in adoring gratitude to Him who is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9).

"The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isa.

lvii. 20). But when Jesus arises in His grace and might, and says "Peace be still" to all this uproar, how like "dulcet symphonies" come the assurances and promises of the Word to the believer! From that moment, if faith is in exercise, notes of silvery sweetness are always floating across the waters to delight the child of God. They are heard every morning as he renews his voyage heavenward; every evening as he lies down to slumber, a day's sail nearer home; in every hour of perplexity; in every night of sorrow; in every time of trial; animating, comforting, directing, sustaining him, and ringing out more and more clearly as he approaches "the shining shore." May the Lord lead His people to listen to the word, only to the word, constantly to the word, until they recognise in it His own voice, and yield to His will an unquestioning and happy obedience in all things! "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound" (Ps. lxxxix. 15).

ANON.

THE COMFORT OF THE BLOOD.

"**T**HE blood was my first comfort, and I believe it will be my last comfort. . . . I feel as though the Lord were leading me from earth to heaven, by the steps of the 23rd Psalm, 'The Lord is my shepherd, . . . and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'"

The words came slowly from the lips of the dying man—a doctor—passing away from a loving wife and children, in the prime of life, with a rest and joy in the Lord I have never seen surpassed. A few days later he passed away, with “Bless the Lord” on his lips.

Many physicians are infidels. Why, I cannot say. I would that all such could have seen this dear friend of many years patiently pass through months of weakness, always rejoicing in Christ, and then at the last bear witness to the comfort of the despised blood of Jesus.

Ah! there is no real foundation for the soul apart from the blood of Christ. That blood cleanseth from all sin, removes every stain, purges the conscience, purifies the soul, relieves the distressed and sin-burdened heart, and sets the one who trusts it perfectly free in the presence of God. Death is robbed of its sting, the grave of its victory, and “judgment to come” has no meaning for the one who rests only on that which the Holy Ghost calls “the precious blood of Christ.”

What folly can exceed that which despises God’s only way of salvation—Jesus’s blood? No solid real comfort is found apart from Christ and His blood.

What a portion is the Christian’s! He has a title without a flaw, and a prospect without a cloud.

Infidel, what comfort will you have on your deathbed?

W. T. P. W.

"NOT A CHRISTIAN"

"I WONDER what is the matter with her?" said a young girl to herself as she sat thinking over a great change she had lately noticed in one of her friends. "She seems so different, and never cares to be with us now." After one or two conjectures as to the cause, J—— decided she should go and take tea with her old friend and then try to find out what was really the matter.

F—— received her kindly and seemed pleased to see her. Tea passed over without anything important being said, and then the two girls sat down to sew. But before they sat down F—— slipped quietly away to her room, and kneeling down prayed, "O God! make me say the *right* thing to her, that she may be saved too," and she rose from her knees with the assurance that God had heard her prayer.

They sewed on for some time in awkward silence, J—— thinking how she could find out what had caused the change in F——, while F—— was vainly seeking words to tell of her newly-found Saviour, and of the happiness and rest which had consequently come into her life. It would be her first confession of Christ outside her own family, and she knew it would go the round of her friends at once. Every moment found her growing more uncomfortable, but her heart was going up to God for help.

At last she blurted out, "How sad it is there are so few *real* Christians."

"Do you think so?" said J—— coldly.

"Yes, *I* only know nine."

"And who are they, pray?"

F—— named them, and J—— noticed that her own name was not in the list.

"Do you mean to say that my Aunt A—— is not a Christian?" she demanded haughtily.

"I don't *think* she is," replied F——.

"And am I not a Christian either?"

"No, *you* are not a Christian."

It was enough. J—— immediately arose, folded her work, and prepared to leave. Oh! how hurt and angry she felt! She knew now what was the matter with F——. She had got some of those bigoted religious notions! Well: *she* had done with her for ever! How she wished she had told the groom to come for her earlier. She paced up and down the hall until he did come, and, with a freezing "Good-night" to F——, drove off.

F—— was much distressed. She had lost her friend, but what was worse, she thought that *God had failed her*. Satan whispered, "The wonderful answers you *think* you have had to prayer have all been a delusion—just happened by chance."

But *had* God failed her? Let J——'s own words answer. "What really *roused* me was your saying *I was 'not a Christian.'* As I drove home I felt all wrought up into a sort of feeling I cannot describe, and '*You are not a Christian,*' '*not a Christian,*' again and again sounded in my conscience, mixed up with the thought, '*Is she right? Am I a*

Christian? When I reached home I went to my bedroom. I was convinced that God was speaking to my soul and felt that if I let this opportunity pass, He would never speak to me again. I cannot describe the agony of mind I passed through that night, as hour after hour I knelt by my bed praying, or lay on the floor in anguish of soul. At last I felt that I could do no more. As I knelt waiting to know *how* I could be saved, God spoke to me in the words, 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins,' and then, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin' (Isa. xlv. 22 ; 1 John i. 7). I saw that it was *the blood of Jesus Christ alone* that could cleanse me from my sins, and resting on *that*, peace flowed into my soul. Tears fell, but they were tears of thankful joy, for I knew I was *saved*."

How different had been the experience of the two friends in reaching "peace and joy in believing." J——'s had been what is called a "sudden conversion." She had been religiously brought up, and it would have been much on her conscience if she had retired for the night or left her bedroom in the morning without having read at least a few verses in the Bible ; but till that (to her) memorable night she had never stood before God realising that she was a *sinner*. She had known *about* Christ as the Saviour, but she had never before *come to Him* and trusted Him as her own.

On the other hand, F——, under cover of a light-hearted exterior, had groped on for years, seeking

peace with God by her own efforts, knowing nothing of God's rich provision for those who turn to Him. Certainly she had had a hazy thought that Christ had died on the cross for sinners; but that His death and blood-shedding by its atoning, cleansing power could give *her title* and *fitness* for the bright glory of God's presence, was a truth of which she had not the slightest knowledge.

Alas! how general and widespread is this ignorance of God's salvation—that God, in virtue of Christ's atoning death on the sinner's behalf, is offering forgiveness of sins to every one who, *as a sinner*, turns to Him, and that without merit or work on his part. It is "*not of works*, lest any man should boast."

My reader, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

F. A.

HOW WILL THE LORD'S SECOND ADVENT AFFECT YOU?

NO subject can be more deeply serious to contemplate, for an unsaved person, than the Lord's second advent. Its very nearness, with all that it entails for Christendom, is appalling to those who know what shall take place.

What I mean by being unsaved is, not being born again by the Word and Spirit of God, not knowing

your sins forgiven, and not being indwelt by the Holy Ghost.

Professing Christian reader, you are not a heathen, a Moslem, nor yet a Hottentot. In view of the immediate coming of our Lord let me ask you—Are you truly born from above—the *second-time birth*? Have you passed from death unto life? Are your sins forgiven, and *do you know it*? Are you *consciously* indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, and do you know that He witnesses with your spirit that you are a child, a son, and heir of God?

THE LORD WILL COME IN PERSON.

That the second advent of our Lord to the earth will be in personal majesty and great power and glorious display, the first chapter of 2 Thessalonians makes very plain. That His coming into the air is the immediate hope of all believers, and therefore of the whole Church, is also as plain. When the Thessalonians were converted, by Paul's ministry, they were converted to serve and please God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, who would deliver them from the wrath which shall be governmentally poured out on this world of living men and women.

The reader can turn at his leisure to the Book of Revelation, from chapters vi. to xix., and read a detailed account of God's governmental dealings in judgment, coming upon living people, because of their rejection of the truth of the gospel. Men will be so tormented that they will seek to die, to get

clear of all that will come upon them, but death will flee from them. They will even call upon the rocks and the hills to fall upon them and hide them from the face of God, acting in judgment.

Unsaved reader, should the Lord come to-day, and take His true saints to heaven, you may be amongst the number who will do so. Bethink yourself, and seriously consider your danger.

It is quite possible for people to be interested, in an intellectual way, about prophecy, and be totally unconverted and have no saving interest in Christ.

In a certain town an evangelist was announced to speak on the Lord's second coming and the establishment of His kingdom in power on earth. A lady in the town, hearing of it, sought an introduction to him at his lodgings. She was not long in the room until she began to ask questions on prophecy, whereupon he asked her what she knew about the Lord's first advent.

Did she know and believe that Jesus died for her, and that all her sins were washed away in His precious blood? "No, I do not," was her answer. "Well, madam, so far as you are concerned, if the Lord came now, the door of mercy and God's salvation would be closed on you, and your doom be sealed for ever: God's judgment would be your eternal portion," rejoined the preacher.

The lady left his presence a much wiser but sadder woman than she came.

Death is deeply solemn to an unconverted man or woman. But all deaths are not sudden and

altogether unexpected. Very often God allows people to go through a lingering illness, that He may in mercy speak to them. This, Job xxxiii. makes very plain.

PEACE AND SAFETY, A DELUSION.

Just before the awful storm bursts upon this world, with its living inhabitants, men will be so deluded by satanic influence that they will think they never had such a good time before. *But it will be the calm before the storm and deluge of destruction.* Just fancy them rubbing their hands and saying to each other, "Well, things were never so peaceful as now, and things never were so prosperous." Then "*sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child* ; AND THEY SHALL NOT ESCAPE" (1 Thess. v. 3).

Such is the teaching of the sure word of prophecy ! Look back over history and witness the destruction of Babylon, while the inhabitants thought themselves secure against all invasion. So undisturbed were they in their false security, that they were feasting, with riotous wine-bibbing, the very night the city fell.

Yet all that was foretold by the prophets. They, like most people in the present day, did not heed the warning. "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." How significant that such writing should mysteriously appear on the wall ! How fearsome the king became, but it was too late !

Witness the destruction of Nineveh and the great

Assyrian power. The prophets also foretold its doom. Where is it to-day?

Witness also the utter and desolating destruction of Jerusalem, so long and patiently borne with, and tenderly pleaded with! In the days of King Solomon could the wildest dreamer have imagined what the Jews have suffered for the last eighteen hundred years? At the destruction of Jerusalem so many were crucified that the Romans at last could not find wood enough to make crosses to put them to death on. Between butchery and slavery over one million perished.

The one overwhelming argument to a King of Prussia for the existence of God, given by a friend at his personal request, was, "*The Jews, sire.*" The mark of Cain's awful guilt and of his brother's blood is upon them. They clamoured for and shed the blood of all the prophets, and yet were so very kind as to build beautiful sepulchres as monuments to them! The Lord said to them, "Your house is left unto you desolate." How desolate, the poor suffering Jews know these last eighteen centuries.

THE STORM IS GATHERING.

Signs are not wanting that a storm is gathering over Europe and Christendom, and that it is very near to breaking. Statesmen dread it and shake in their very boots as they think of the mere possibility of it. Signs are not wanting that the whole of the civilised world will be shaken from its centre to its circumference when this storm bursts.

Signs are not wanting that Europe will be desolated by war from one end to the other, with famine and pestilence following in its train.

Signs are not wanting that God's ancient people, the Jews, so long scattered, peeled, beaten and down-trodden by the Gentile nations, will go back in great numbers to their ancient inheritance.

Signs are not wanting that society is being rapidly prepared by evolution, socialism, and higher criticism for the Antichrist—the man of the people.

Signs are not wanting of the near approach of the revival of the Roman empire—the beast that was, and is not, and yet will be—with its ten-kingdomed confederacy—under satanic power.

Signs are not wanting of the time when God will send men strong delusion, and they shall believe a lie—the lie of the Antichrist—and utterly reject the truth.

Signs are not wanting in the masses of society to-day of that hardening process allowed by God, because the gospel, so long preached, has only been tampered and trifled with.

Signs are not wanting that the professing Church, as a mass, is utterly Laodicean and lukewarm, and hence indifferent to the claims of Christ; and that she is about to be spewed out of His mouth, as utterly distasteful and nauseous to Him, and unworthy longer to bear His holy name.

Signs are not wanting of the revival of the Romish Church (with its mixture of paganism and Judaism), seeking to over-ride the civil power and determined to be its absolute dictator.

Signs are not wanting that there is another power—socialism and infidelity combined—rising side by side with her, which in the end will be her awful scourge (as in the French Revolution) and compass her utter destruction finally.

URGENCY TO ESCAPE.

In view of all this, *urgency* to escape for your life is the note of warning God would sound in your ears, and in the ears of all who have ears to hear. His solemn message—"Escape for thy life, look not behind thee," admits of no delay—no procrastination whatever. Judgment is at the very door, though men may not believe it. Yea, they even affect to despise it. "*Behold! I come as a thief*" is the threat of the risen glorified Son of Man, and Son of God, to these highly favoured Protestant lands!

A thief never sends notice when he will come to do his villainous work. In this case it behoves all to be in constant readiness for our Lord's near approach. "Be ye therefore ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh!"

"The morning cometh, and also the night." Yes, indeed, there is a bright and happy morning coming for all who believe in Jesus. Everlasting blessedness will be ours then. But the night cometh—night of weeping and night of woe—a night that will never know a morning with light to cheer and gladden. Think of endless night, gloom and darkness!

Which will it be with you, reader? Face the plain question like a man. Have the courage to take sides with Christ now. Break with all your sins and your sinful associates, though it cost you your reputation, your business, your friends, or even your natural life. Better to enter into the kingdom of God now, even though maimed, than into hell-fire that never shall be quenched.

If the Lord comes to-day or at midnight, when you are fast asleep, would it be to you "a morning without clouds," or a night of woe and black despair? The present condition of things will not go on for ever. This present age with its wickedness and pleasure must soon come to an end. The sooner the better, for those who love Christ, and believe in Him. Theirs will be the morning of joy that will know no more sorrow, nor sighing, nor tears. We may have tears and sorrow now, because this is the night of our weeping, but joy comes in the morning. We shall then see His face. What joy!

The greatest intellect, Biblical exegete, the greatest scholar, spiritual leader, Biblical student and the most deeply spiritual man of the nineteenth century, is reported to have said: "If I knew for certain the Lord were coming to-morrow, I should die with joy to-day."

He loved Christ deeply, adored Him profoundly, served Him in humility, stood for Him unflinchingly, suffered for Him gladly, followed Him devotedly, walked with Him in obscurity, and would have died for Him willingly.

FEAR CAST OUT.

IN the dead of night a Christian lady heard the footfall of a burglar. She adopted a pardonable expedient to alarm the thief, and said, "I will call John."

Now it so happened one of the burglars (for there were several) was named "John," and no sooner was his name mentioned than up came the burglar with his dark lantern, and a pistol in his hand. Seeing he was recognised, he put the muzzle to her head, as if in the act of taking her life, when she said (speaking as calmly and firmly as I do now), "Grant me one request. It matters little about my life, for I want to go 'home'; but it matters much about your life. If you take mine, you will be a murderer, and as a murderer you must stand before God. Let me offer one prayer that God may have mercy on your soul." She fell on her knees and prayed that the Lord would have mercy, but on opening her eyes the man had gone!

When the story was told at the assizes, such was the interest that the judge forgot his position, as judge, becoming for a moment an inquirer.

"Can you tell me," he asked, "how it was that at that moment you had such calmness and self-possession?"

As the judge asked the question, silence throughout the court awaited her reply.

She replied, "I have long known the perfect love of God in Christ. I have long known whom I have believed; and in my hour of extremity, I knew and realised that perfect love, which casteth out all fear."

Wondrous love ! How many of us can say, before we knew God, we feared, were in dread of Him ; for we saw Him only through the medium of our sins, and imagined that the Lord Jesus Christ, through His death, could at some time make Him propitious towards us ; but when we saw that it was because of His love He gave His Son, our minds became changed.

Oh ! it is the enjoyment of His own perfect love to us that casts out the fear that was in us. Moreover, dark and doleful were our soul's forebodings of sin, death, and the grave ; but the condemnation of sin having been taken away by Christ, death has lost its sting, and the grave its terrors. "The sting of death is sin."

Not knowing this, we used to sing a doleful song—

"Poor trembling mortals start and shrink,
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger shivering on the brink ;
We fear to launch away."

Cross what sea ? When the ark went over Jordan it was empty—dry. When Christ died, He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Judgment, therefore, is overpast.

ANON.

A CONTRAST.

VOLTAIRE wrote : "In man there is more wretchedness than in all the other animals put together. He loves life, and yet he knows that he must die. He spends the transient moments of his existence in diffusing the

miseries which he suffers; in cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay; in cheating and being cheated; in robbing and being robbed; in serving, that he may command; and in repenting of all he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal and unfortunate; and the globe contains carcasses rather than men. I tremble at the review of this dreadful picture, and

I WISH THAT I HAD NEVER BEEN BORN."

HALLYBURTON wrote: "I shall shortly get a very different sight of God from what I have ever had, and shall be made meet to praise Him for ever. Oh! how I wonder at myself that I do not love Him more, and that I do not admire Him more. What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pains, and in the view of death itself. What a mercy that, having the use of my reason, I can declare His goodness to my soul. I long for His salvation. I bless His name. I die rejoicing in Him. Oh, that I was where He is! If there be such a glory in His conduct towards me now, what will it be to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne?"

BLESSED BE GOD THAT EVER I WAS BORN."

ANON.

GO ON! GO ON!

LET us urge the gospel forward,
 Let us tell what Christ has done;
 In the power of God the Spirit,
 In the name of God the Son.

There are countless souls in danger,
Thousands blind and dead in sin,
And the Saviour came from glory,
These deluded souls to win.

Let us think of all the ransomed,
Purchased at such priceless cost,
Soon to shine in Christ's own image,
Who were once among the lost!
See them scattered, bruised, divided,
Knowing scarce which way to turn:
We should love them as *He* loved them,
With His own compassion burn.

Let us treasure still the Bible,
God's own Spirit-uttered Word,
'Tis the food of the believer,
And the Spirit's mighty sword.
Soon the conflict will be over,
And the endless rest begin,
Gone will be the night of sorrow,
And the power of hell and sin.

Now lift high the drooping banner,
Yea, go forth to meet the foes,
For our mighty Lord and Leader
Must be Conqueror where He goes.
We have failed full sore and often,
But our God is faithful still,
And in His own strength we battle,
Until good has vanquished ill.

"MORE THAN ANOTHER."

"**W**HAT is thy beloved more than another beloved?" her companions ask the bride, of whom we read in the Song of Solomon, and she, with love's tender appreciation, begins to recount his excellences. It wells up from her heart in a gladsome fount till presently the glowing words fail her, and she has to gather it all up into one brief sentence, "He is altogether lovely." It is thus with the Christian, when he tries to tell a little of the preciousness of the One who has won his heart.

Perhaps you say you cannot see it, you do not understand such infatuation. Like those Isaiah wrote of, you see "no beauty in Him that you should desire Him"; you cannot imagine why people should speak of following Christ, as though there were no more glorious occupation. For your part, if you may only get to heaven by and by, you will gladly forego the company of Christ until then, though of course it is all right to pray sometimes, especially if you are in trouble, and to go to church on Sundays, otherwise, well! you find the world a pleasant enough place, and too much religion would be a most inconvenient possession.

Alas! poor blinded soul, what shall we say to you? how attempt to let in a little light on the black darkness that enfolds you? Your case is well nigh hopeless; indeed, unless God is pleased to

awaken and enlighten you, there is no hope, but He loves to awake those that sleep, to bid them “arise from among the dead,” that Christ may shine upon them. You have had misfortune of late, pecuniary losses, sickness, bereavement, and you wonder why such and such things have befallen you. Be comforted, He is seeking your soul, and would use these means to awaken you. Your great need is that **CHRIST MAY SHINE UPON YOU**. What a difference does this make!

Do you ever read His gracious words? I am afraid not, or you must surely be touched by them, how when He was on earth He said, “Come unto Me,” and to another “Weep not,” and again “Go in peace.” Even the careless multitude wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth, and the men sent to take Him returned with the testimony on their lips, “Never man spake like this Man.”

Do you ever ponder His ways of love and mercy? When He would feed the five thousand He knew that they were weary and bade them sit down on the grass. When He raised the little maid to life, He commanded that they should give her something to eat. When Lazarus died, He wept with the sorrowing sisters.

Years ago, I remember hearing of some Christians assembled to break bread together, in remembrance of Him. During the meeting, one who had not been known to speak in public before, rose and read the words!—“Never man spake like this Man”

(John vii. 46)—and then added, “and never man loved like this Man,” with the result that all were bowed in worship and many wept.

Yes, it is His love that wins, that dying and yet undying love, and you are a stranger to Him, you know Him not? “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.” Let these few simple words persuade you to make acquaintance with Jesus. Do you ask me how? It is not difficult, just turn to Him, ask Him to make Himself precious to your heart, say to Him, as dear F. R. H. wrote—

“Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living bright reality.
More present to faith’s vision keen,
Than any outward object seen,
More dear, more intimately nigh
Than e’en the sweetest earthly tie.”

And He will do it, so that you, too, must needs follow Him.

He has gone up to His Father’s home, and He wants you there. I cannot explain it to you, but if you once know Him, you will understand. The little bit of His love that the heart has tasted draws us on, and we must have more, we must follow Him to the place where He has gone. He went by way of the cross, and the grave, for us, and it is ours now to take up the cross, deny ourselves, and follow Him.

And you, dear reader, will come to Him too, will you not, for His praise and your unending joy?

"I DID FIND THE PEACE."

"**T**HE last time I did see you, I did find the peace." The speaker was a tall young man, who thus accosted me on the platform of the well-known railway junction of Bienne, Switzerland, one summer evening in 1890.

That day my wife and I had travelled from Chur, on our way to Neuchâtel, a twelve-hour journey. At Bienne, the train tarried some twenty minutes, and for a little I was glad to pace the platform. This stranger, I noticed, eyed me very closely as we walked up and down. At length he stopped, took off his hat, and said, "You are Mr Wolston?"

"Yes," I replied, "that is my name. May I ask who you are?"

"The last time I did see you, I did find the peace," was his reply, in rather broken English.

"Where was that?" I rejoined.

"In Neuchâtel, on the roadside," was his definite answer, as he told me his name, and then I remembered a long-forgotten incident.

Exactly fourteen years before, in the autumn of 1876, I had spent a fortnight in Neuchâtel. One Sunday afternoon some Christian friends asked me to accompany them to a village four miles from the town, where there was to be a reunion—a meeting for fellowship and edification of believers in the district. The walkers—some eighteen or twenty

in number—were wending their way leisurely out, when I asked an aged Christian who knew everybody, "Are all in this company converted?"

He looked well at our companions, and then said, "All except that young man F——," indicating a tall youth walking a little behind us. Dropping back by his side, I said to him, I have no doubt in very broken French, "Monsieur D—— tells me that he fears that you are not yet saved. Is this so, my friend?"

"Quite true, monsieur," was his frank and immediate answer.

"But is it not high time for you to be on the Lord's side? Have you no desire to be a Christian?" I asked him.

"I should very much like to be one, if I knew how," was his reply.

"Have you been in anxiety about your soul?" I then inquired. It turned out that he had, for a long time, been very anxious, but did not see how he could be saved, and had been occupied with himself and his feelings. He thought he should feel something first, and then gradually get to know that he was saved.

Pulling out of my pocket my little French New Testament, I turned him to the Lord's words—"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). The one who *hears* the voice of Jesus and *believes*

Him, the Father, who sent Him, *has* everlasting life. *Hearing* and *believing* are coupled with *having*. These things God joins together ; let no man separate them.

Further, as we stood there in the road, it was pointed out that, not only has the hearing believer the *present* knowledge and possession of eternal life, but he is by the Lord assured that he shall *never come into condemnation* and *has passed* from death to life. Light broke in upon his soul. Faith sprung up in his heart, and he then and there got to know that he was the possessor of eternal life. He understood further, that being "justified by *faith*, we have *peace with God*, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Now rejoicing in Christ he went on to the meeting, which was a very profitable occasion.

Two days after this I left Neuchâtel, so I did not see my young friend again. I need scarcely say I was greatly rejoiced to meet him again, after fourteen years, at this distant place, and his joy at meeting me was also very great. He had evidently set out to follow the Lord from the day of his conversion, and very soon began to preach to others the blessed Saviour he had found on the roadside that Sunday afternoon.

Thus does the blessed Lord cheer us in our work, and this *rencontre* brought afresh to my mind the scriptures: "Preach the word; be constant in season, out of season. . . . Cast thy bread' upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (2 Tim. iv. 2; Eccles. xi. 1).

Fellow-believer, the Lord help you and me in the coming year, 1914, to be more earnest than ever in seeking to spread the blessed gospel of His grace, and more inclined than ever to heed the apostle's word: "My beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58).

I pen this reminiscence in Kristiania, Norway, where, for some weeks, I have had the privilege and joy of addressing, almost nightly, several hundreds of precious souls. Talking, by an interpreter, is not the easiest way of proclaiming the glad tidings, but God graciously uses our poor tongues to tell the glories of His dear Son, and believers and sinners are being helped. One is not permitted to see much on the spot, but the coming day of Christ will reveal much, I am assured, though we have "many days" to wait ere we see it. "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thess. v. 25). Pray specially for Scandinavia. It needs your prayers.*

In closing, let me ask you, dear reader, have you yet found "peace with God"? Do not let 1913 close on you till this question is settled. If you are not yet saved, let me urge you to face your real condition. You cannot deny that you are a sinner. Scripture says that you are, and your own conscience

* The ink of this sentence was scarcely dry before I received half a dozen letters from happy souls, who wrote to say that God had blessed them in these meetings. Everlasting praise to His name.

says Amen! to that solemn indictment. What is the wages of sin? Death, and after death the judgment. That means the second death—the lake of fire. Fancy! spending eternity there. You need not, for "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

The gospel brings to you a present salvation. You have but to accept it—accept Christ, who is it, and you are saved. Delay no longer in closing in with God's offered mercy. Time is rushing rapidly on. The Lord is coming quickly. "Be in time." More sinners are lost eternally through procrastination than through gross, open sin. Men mean to come to Jesus some day, but they delay.

"Procrastination is the recruiting officer of hell," said Rowland Hill. He was right. Reader, procrastinate no more. As you read this simple tale, trust the Lord Jesus. His precious blood will wash all your sins away. His blessed voice will say to you—"Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace" (Luke vii. 48, 50). A weeping woman once heard Him say these words and went to her house, forgiven, saved, and in peace. Imitate her. She got to know Jesus, and that was the result.

The young Swiss found Him, and fourteen years afterwards could say to me, "*I did find the peace.*" Christ is that peace, for we read in Ephesians ii. 14, "He is our peace." He "made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. i. 20). When He rose

from the dead He preached it—"Peace unto you" (John xx. 19, 21). "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job xxii. 21), was the wise advice Eliphaz gave to Job. I give it to you. Just you be simple, come to the Lord Jesus like a little child, trust Him and He will save you.

Then shall the closing days of 1913 be full of joy for your soul. You will be able to look into eternity with calm confidence of heart, while henceforth you will be able to look back to this year, and, like the young Swiss, say it was then

"I DID FIND THE PEACE."

W. T. P. W.