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The Gospel Messenger

THE SOLDIER'S "TURNING POINT."

A FEW weeks since I was being driven to a railway station through a lovely part of Bedfordshire, and, getting into conversation with the coachman, I found out that for many years he had been in the army, and had been an officer's servant.

"I went to India," said he, "soon after I enlisted, and that was the turning point in my life, sir."

"What do you mean by the turning point?" I inquired.

"Oh! I was turned to know the Lord, I was converted."

"That was good," I rejoined. "Tell me how it came to pass."

"Well, I was at one of the hill stations, and a young fellow in my regiment asked me if I would go with him to a meeting one Saturday night. He said there was good singing, and though I did not care for the things of the Lord, I liked singing, and so I said I would go. The meeting was addressed by a Captain T——, and he spoke very earnestly and very nicely about God's way of salvation. I

got thoroughly aroused as to my state as a sinner, and for a fortnight was in real distress of soul. Then at a similar meeting I was in such misery that I got up in the middle of the address, went to the top of the room, and asked to be prayed for. My request was followed by earnest prayer, and while on my knees the Lord revealed Himself to me, and I got the sense that I was pardoned, and I found peace with God.

"I left the meeting rejoicing, but on my way to the barrack-room the devil said to me, 'Now, do not confess Christ, it will bring you into great persecution if you do, for all the men in the room will be sure to make fun of you,' and I knew what that meant in a barrack-room. I argued with him that Christ said, 'Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God' (Luke xii. 8, 9). I felt that I must confess, for I knew the scripture, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'

"The devil kept on saying, 'Do not confess Him, do not confess Him, keep quiet,' and I was fairly staggered to know what to do. However, I looked to the Lord to give me strength to confess His name among my fellows. It was late when I got into barracks, all the men were in bed, and asleep, and the lights were turned down. I got on my knees

by my bedside and thanked the Lord for His grace in saving my soul that night, but of course nobody saw me. When I turned in I began to wonder what I would do in the morning, and I resolved that I would rise early, before the other men were up, hoping that again no one would see me. When I awoke in the morning I found to my dismay that I had overslept myself, and all the men were up and dressing. 'What shall I do now?' I said to myself, 'I think I will pray under the blankets,' but then I thought the Lord would neither hear nor answer that sort of blanket-prayer, so I rose, dressed rapidly, and then knelt down to pray.

"I expected a volley of boots and oaths, but instead of that profound silence reigned. The Lord restrained them all from saying one word, and the first step of confession having been taken, the rest was easy work. I was enabled to confess Christ with my lips and in my life, and very soon some of my comrades got converted also, among them the young man who first took me to the meeting, for at that time he was not decided. From that day to this, over seventeen years, I have had joy and peace in the Lord, and have never ceased to thank God for being turned when young to know Himself."

The beaming face and happy eye of the coachman attested the truth of his joy in the Lord.

And now, my reader, let me ask you, Has "the turning point" in your history come yet? If not, let it be now. Very likely your difficulty is that

of the young soldier, the lack of courage in confessing the Lord, whom you believe on in your heart. Get hold of this clearly, that the heart and the mouth must go together. You get right with God by your heart, and you get right with man by your mouth. Ponder these words, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thine heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For *with the heart* man believeth *unto righteousness*; and *with the mouth* confession is made *unto salvation*" (Rom. x. 8-10).

That is exceedingly simple. With your heart you believe that Christ died for you, and that God raised Him from the dead. This faith in Him and in God's action towards Him constitutes you a *righteous* person. The heart being thus affected operates on the lips, and with the mouth confession of Jesus, as your Lord, is the natural sequence. "*Thou shalt be saved,*" is what God says to the person who so believes and confesses, and the happy knowledge and *assurance of salvation* is the legitimate fruit of the lips in such a case.

Then we can sing:—

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting place.
And He has made me glad."

W. T. P. W,

SPIRITISM AND THE BIBLE.

THE great war has given a mighty impulse to spiritism. Alas! that it should be so. For in reality spiritism, where it is not trickery, is demonism. Those who profess to be earth-departed spirits are in reality personating demons.¹

If the claims of spiritism were true one would expect lofty and enlightening philosophy to come from this intercourse with the other world, but the results have been pitifully commonplace, vulgar, and trifling. Spiritism has added nothing to the true happiness and knowledge of the world.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, once a materialist, now an avowed spiritist, writes:—

“When the war came and all its swift awakening, it was not the booming of the artillery but the eyes of the dead called men and women from their sleep. ‘My son, does he live or has he perished for ever?’ How many thousands have asked that question, prostrate before the altars where doubt stalked. Is there a meaning in all this sacrifice, a gospel of blood and tears and death, or is it all but the raucous laughter of the clashing atoms? In darkness we groped and the veil of war hid the stars. In the Churches the priests had no new message.

¹ For further information see “Modern Spiritualism briefly tested by Scripture,” to be obtained from our publishers, 2½d. *post free*.

The few spoke to us. Those, who through the years believed that we could bridge the void, came out to comfort and uplift. 'We know,' they said, 'for we have spoken to the dead.'"

Let us see from this statement how spiritism stands in relation to the Bible. Is its teaching Biblical, or does it add to the Bible, or discard the Bible altogether?

Does it add to the Bible? The Bible says:—

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book" (Rev. xxii. 18).

Solemn statement!

Does it discard the Bible altogether? If they refuse the deity of its central Figure, Jesus Christ; if they deny the atoning value of His death on the Cross; if they teach salvation by works, they discard the Bible altogether. It is puerile to speak of retaining its literary sayings, its moral teaching, if its very central teaching, around which all else revolves, is denied.

Listen to the solemn statement of the inspired Apostle Paul:—

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

"As I said before, so say I now again ; If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8, 9).

The Apostle is not given to repeating himself, so that this twice-repeated warning comes with the greater force and importance.

We are told by spiritism that it matters nothing whether we be Jews, who reject Christ; or Christians, who believe in Him; or Confucians, who have never seen a Bible; or infidels, who deny the very existence of God. We are told that a departed spirit has communicated this fact. Is not this the discarding of the Bible altogether? Is it not an insult to the Son of God and a scouting of the whole meaning of the atonement? Does it not brand spiritism as anti-Christian?

It matters not, we are told, whether we be Christians or infidels. But the whole question hangs on this, Either the Son of God died on Calvary's cross to save this world, or He did not. There is no middle ground. There can be no alternative.

If He did, then every other religion must fail and their followers perish in their folly. If He did not, the sooner we give up the delusion the better.

Says Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:—

"If Christianity has failed, it is because it has made too much of the Cross and too little of the Sermon on the Mount."

But Christianity has not failed. Every man who

has honestly tried it has found it a success. Christ has saved all who have truly come to Him. Shall we make light of the Cross? Are the atoning sufferings of Christ to be set on one side?

Paul writing to the Christians in Corinth says:—

“I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and HIM CRUCIFIED” (1 Cor. ii. 2).

Again to the Galatian Churches:—

“God forbid that I should glory, save in THE CROSS of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal. vi. 14).

The Sermon on the Mount contains wonderful teaching for those who are already enrolled in the kingdom of heaven; the maxims of the King for the control of His subjects whilst He is away; but the Cross stands out as

THE SINNERS ONLY HOPE,

the place where atonement was made, without which none of us could ever hope for heaven.

Many are facing problems they have never faced before. May they face them with Bible in hand, and they will find therein the *only* way of salvation.

That way centres round the Cross. That way springs from the death of Jesus. “Without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. ix. 22), is the plain statement of Scripture. With daring hand Spiritism may brush it aside, but it is fatal to the hand. The truth remains unchanged,

Would you be saved from your sins? Would you be assured of God's favour and heaven? Then listen to *God's Word* and refuse the vapourings of men's minds.

"Believe on the Lord Jêsus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). There is salvation in none other. And He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Try Him.

*"They that trust Him wholly,
Find Him wholly true."*

A. J. P.

A SOLDIER'S LAST WORDS.

AS a wounded soldier was being carried from the field of battle, he said to the stretcher-bearers, "Put me down."

An officer asked him if he could do anything for him.

He replied, "Nothing; but stay, you might read the verse in John xiv. that begins with peace." So, turning to the chapter at the 27th verse, the officer read, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"Thank you," said the dying man, "I have that peace; I am going to be with that Saviour; God is with me; I want no more."

These were his last words; and thus he departed

to be with Christ, which is far better than anything here—even better than life on earth.

What a reality peace is! "Peace made through the blood of His cross" (Col. i. 20). It is not something of *our* own making. It is what Christ made, and leaves. "Peace I leave with you." Nothing can alter it—nothing can end it.

The one that has it can sing:—

"Filled with this sweet peace for ever,
On I go, through strife and care,
Till I find that peace around me,
In the Lamb's bright glory there."

The One who made it by His blood—even Jesus—lives. And Ephesians ii. 14 says, "He is our peace." Then it is ours by faith. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. i.). The dying soldier had it, and you see how it affected him. He said, speaking of Jesus, "I am going to be with that Saviour." Speaking of God, he said, "God is with me." There was no fear, nothing between him and God. Peace with God he enjoyed, and he had the God of peace with him. How blessed!

Dear reader, have you got what Christ leaves, and what He gives? The world does not give this way. Peace is never known in the world, or from it. When one looks at death and judgment—God and Eternity—can you, dear reader, look at these realities and your heart not be troubled, nor afraid? "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isa. lvii. 21).

B. K. W.

BIG BOB'S TESTIMONY.

SAVED and kept. Yes, lads, saved twenty-one years ago, and kept ever since." These were the words often repeated by Big Bob at the open-air meetings. The facts are as told by himself. "For many years I have lived in this town, and am well known to everybody, and especially to the police, having spent much time in prison. All the money I earned went in drink, so the wife and children were left uncared for. One night I left home—home, did I say? it was only two rooms, no furniture, and only straw to sleep upon.

"When crossing this very square I heard some singing, and stopped to listen. Then somebody said, 'Jesus was able to save all who came to Him and confessed their sins,' and I knew that I was a great sinner. I went straight home and fell on my knees and cried, 'O Jesus, they say thou canst save all who come to Thee. I am a great sinner and everybody knows me, but I come now; save me for Jesu's sake,' and, hallelujah, He did, for as soon as I said that the light shone in and I knew I was saved.

"This is twenty-one years ago now, and the One who saved me, blessed be His name, is the One who has kept me ever since."

Trust Him, dear reader; He is willing to save you, no matter how far in sin you have fallen. He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the

world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). He saved Big Bob, He has saved me: is He your Saviour? If not, why not? God bless you, dear reader, and grant that this simple testimony may be used to your blessing, and for His glory.

"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). G. G. S.

THE GENERAL AND THE EVANGELIST.

A YOUNG Christian soldier, who was dying in a hospital in France with enteric fever, wrote home:—"It is terrible to hear dying men being told that a crown of glory awaits them, because they are laying down their lives for their country. It makes my blood boil to hear dying men so deceived. Why don't they send out men who can tell them *how* they can be saved?"

A General told an evangelist that he must preach this to the men. "I take my orders from the King of kings," replied the evangelist, "and He bids me preach salvation for the lost *through the atoning death and blood-shedding of Christ alone*, and that there is salvation in nothing else!"

"Without shedding of blood is *no remission*" (Heb. ix. 22). "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, *cleanseth us from all sin*" (1 John i. 7).

KIT INSPECTION TO-MORROW, AND ONLY A PAIR OF SOCKS LEFT.

HOW A DRUNKEN SOLDIER GOT SAVED.

THE army has produced many a wonderful sample of the grace of God, which can not only save a man from a life of sin, but keep and use him while in the army for the glory of the One who saved him, and for the blessing of many of his comrades. The subject of this narrative was an example of how God often allows a man to run "the full length of his tether," and then steps in, and, in a most unexpected way, and at a most unexpected moment, brings about his conversion.

I met the subject of my story at the Soldiers' Home in St George's Street, Dublin, one evening, when he related his conversion to me. I took his name and address, but cannot now find it. It may be that the publication of the incident will be the means of my getting in touch with him again; unless indeed he has been "promoted" during this great war to that place

"Where of the prize possessed,
We'll hear of war no more;
And, O sweet thought! for ever rest
On yonder peaceful shore."

But let me tell the story as well as I can remember it.

He was stationed, I believe, at Alexandria, in Egypt, and he and his chum had been drinking for some

days. They had "spent all," borrowed all they could, and even all their kit except one pair of socks—the only available "asset" among them—was sold. It was Friday evening, and the battalion orders that night announced, "Kit inspection for all hands at 10.30 A.M. to-morrow."

This meant that as the ill-fated hour approached when all the others in the hut were laying their kits out on their cots, while not an article was to be seen on theirs, the Colour-Sergeant of the company (who usually made a preliminary inspection before the officer came round) would order their boxes, etc., to be searched, with the inevitable result that they would be marched off to the guard room, to appear before the Commanding Officer on Monday morning, when they would be put back for a court martial, and, as it was not their first offence of the kind, get six months' imprisonment.

But with the desperation and determination so characteristic of our brave British soldiers, with a courage no doubt worthy of a better cause, they decided to sell that last pair of socks for the price of a pint of beer, drink it between them, and then "face the music" on the following morning, and do their "six months' hard" like men. But though they both scoured the whole cantonments their efforts were in vain. Not a buyer could be found for that pair of socks. So our noble friend returned to his hut with supreme disgust for the remainder of his comrades who could not appreciate a "bargain," tossed the pair of socks back into his empty box, and sat on

his cot thinking of his past folly and his future punishment.

Only those who have been through it can imagine what it is to come to the end of one's financial tether in the army. To go "on 'the cot" *voluntarily* does not possess many charms for "Tommy," for the life at best is a dull one; but to be *compelled* to go on the cot through financial straits has its terrors for the poor soldier—especially when he contemplates the probability of doing "six months' hard" on top. So we leave it to those who are ignorant of soldier life to imagine what this poor fellow's feelings must have been as he sat on his cot in a nearly empty hut while his comrades were out enjoying themselves. He was learning that "the way of transgressors is *hard*" (Prov. xiii. 15).

It is small wonder that men under such circumstances are driven to do something desperate; and this no doubt accounts for the number of suicides in the army in times of peace; for the devil is mean enough to take advantage of the low state of a man's mind when depressed through his own folly. Satan leads us into sin, but leaves us when we have to pass through its inevitable consequences.

But God was watching over this poor fellow, for suddenly the door of the hut was opened and a voice announced, "The Salvation Army are going to preach on the Barrack Square in a few minutes. Come and hear them!" Now the idea of our friend listening to the Salvation Army was enough to make the whole regiment laugh; nevertheless he felt a hitherto

unknown power take hold of him, and lead him like a little child from that cot whereon he sat to the spot where the Salvation Army was holding its service.

There was a large company outside the ring, but he stood outside of all. As he listened to the story—the old, old story of Jesus and His love—how He came from heaven and died for even the *worst* of sinners, his heart was melted; and when the captain urged all those who wished to be saved to come into the ring, that same power that led him *to* it, made him force his way *through* it, until he stood *in* it, the central object of all.

What a sight for a British regiment to behold! One of its most careless, dare-devil characters in the centre of a gospel meeting on his knees weeping like a little child! But what a sight for *heaven* to behold! One of the devil's dupes snatched like a brand from the burning. There was joy in heaven that night, not only because one sinner had *repented*, but because he was *saved*; for that night our friend (and brother) went to his hut rejoicing in God's "great salvation."

"But," I imagine I can hear some of my military friends anxiously asking, "what about kit inspection the next morning? How did he get on?"

Well, he didn't get on at all—he "got off"; for by some extraordinary means, he not only was not required to show kit the next morning, but had not to show kit until he had time to save enough to purchase a complete kit!

"That was just a bit of *luck*," exclaims my dubious reader.

Well, you may think so ; but I will tell you what our converted friend thought of it. He saw in it a tender touch of the mercy of God, who not only saves us from the *eternal* consequences of our sins in the *next* world, but often saves us from their *temporal* consequences in *this* world ; especially when He sees we have learned our lesson, for "though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies" (Lam. iii. 32). And although God no doubt would have kept him and used him while in prison, yet He had provided some better thing for him, for from the moment of his conversion our friend came out as a bright and shining light for the Lord Jesus Christ.

"That is a very nice story," I can imagine one of our soldier readers say, "but, thank God, it has no application to me ; for I have been a strict teetotaler for many years, and can show a complete kit at any time. So I am all right."

Well, you may be all right with the military authorities, but are you right with *God* ? Remember there are other sins beside drunkenness. Even Moses, the man of God, could say, "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our *secret* sins in the light of Thy countenance" (Ps. xc. 8). When an inspection of kit is ordered by your commanding officer you may not be found short of any article of kit, but when that inspection of books is ordered by God you will be found short of His glory, for "ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).

When those books are opened at the Great White Throne for God's inspection, you will find it a terrible reality, what you lightly repeated perhaps fifty-two times in the year, that you had left undone those things which you ought to have done, and done those things which you ought not to have done. Then your sins of omission and commission, whether open or secret, will be exposed in the light of God's holiness; and the punishment will be not "six months' hard labour," but banishment from the presence of God *for ever* (read Rev. xx. 11-15).

And perhaps one of the ingredients of *your* punishment will be that you—a *teetotaller*—will spend eternity with those drunkards whom you thought so far from the kingdom, little thinking that you were quite as far off yourself in spite of your teetotalism. For while it is quite true that the Bible states that "no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 10), that does not imply that "teetotallers shall inherit the kingdom of God"; for Scripture declares plainly that it is "not by works of *righteousness* which *we* have done, but according to *His mercy* He saved us" (Titus iii. 5). And again it says, "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).

Of course it is much better that a man should be sober in this world than drunken. Better for himself as well as his wife and children; but he

must not make his sobriety his *saviour* for the next world. Christ is the *only* Saviour. Through Him the drunkard *can* be saved; and through Him the teetotaller *must* be saved, if saved at all.

"But," I imagine I can hear another of my military friends say, "that is not *my* trouble. I shall never be deluded with the idea that my good deeds will gain heaven for me, for I have none. My trouble is that I am too *bad* to be saved."

Good! you are just the man for the Lord Jesus, for He said, "I am not come to call the *righteous*, but *sinners* to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13).

But you may say, "Ah! but you do not know what a sinner I am."

Nor do I wish to know; but I can tell you that the Lord Jesus, who does know what a sinner you are, says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will *in no wise* cast out" (John vi. 37). Just think of those words, "*In no wise.*" They really mean that He will not in any *way*, for any *reason*, or at any *time* cast you out. All possibility of your ever being rejected by Him is excluded by that verse. Moreover, He has saved the chief of sinners, Saul of Tarsus. He was saved in order that "Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting" (1 Tim. i. 16).

And for your encouragement, for we like to see *present-day* samples as well, let me tell you that I was saved as a soldier, and was enabled to serve Christ in the army for years, and in my spare time

have preached the gospel as many others have done—a delightful and profitable occupation I can assure you—my only regret being that I have not served Him better.

May God lead you to trust that blessed Saviour; for “blessed are *all* they that put their trust in Him” (Ps. ii. 12).

“Only trust Him ; only trust Him ;
Only trust Him now :
He will save you ; He will save you ;
He will save you now.”

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31). T. C. M.

A NOBLE GIFT BY NOBLE MEN.

IT is not often that men turn over the whole of their fortune during their lifetime for benevolent purposes. Yet this is what the brothers Mayo, of Rochester, Minnesota, have done, amounting in their case to the large sum of \$1,650,000 or over £330,000. They are described as “the most noted surgeons in the United States, if not in the world.” Patients have flocked to them from *all* parts of the world, *their fees have been* very high, but few recognised the kindly nature which has led to this truly magnificent gift.

An interesting incident took place in the life of one of them. He had a number of lady doctors, who were taking a post-graduate course, under his instructions. As it happened they were all, thank God, Christian women. One day they fell to speaking about the religious state of their eminent instructor. One of them declared that he was not a Christian. Another offered to ask him for five minutes of his valuable time, and speak to him on the subject, if the other ladies would pray about it.

When the opportunity was granted the lady came right out with the question: "Doctor, I am very thankful for the opportunity you have given me, and we are all, indeed, thankful for the privilege we have to learn here. What I have to tell you may seem forward, but we are so much concerned about your welfare that I made up my mind to speak to you about it. We have been told that you are not a Christian, and we are very much afraid that you are missing the best of life. I have brought a Bible with me, and have marked certain passages. The question which I have to ask is this: Will you read the Word of God when you have time?"

After some deliberation the doctor replied: "Well, doctor, you are the first physician of the many physicians (and I know there were Christians among them) who ever spoke to me about the salvation of my soul, and I am very thankful to you, indeed. I promise you that I will read a portion of the Word of God daily."

What would that Word tell him? That his

benevolence would save his soul? Nay, he would read,

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not [divine] charity, it *profiteth me NOTHING*” (1 Cor. xiii. 3).

Scripture is plain. Noble as the surgeon's gift was (and who would belittle it?) nothing short of his personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour would suffice to the salvation of his soul.

Not our works, but Christ's finished work of redemption; not our life, however blameless as men say, but His death, can suffice.

Then when saved good works should follow, not as the price of salvation, but as the fruit of God's work in the soul, well-pleasing and acceptable to Him.

But salvation is only and altogether of Christ and His death.

“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from ALL SIN” (1 John i. 7). “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

And He says:—

“*Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out*” (John vi. 37).

“Peace is found alone in Jesus,
Only there 'tis offered thee—
Offered without price or money,
'Tis the gift of God sent free.”

SOCIALISM AND THE SOUL.

ONE Sunday evening in Edinburgh a few weeks back two young Christians were going home after an open-air meeting. They happened to pass by a spot frequented by socialists and infidels as a place of debate and argument.

The night had been very wet, and consequently the place was all but deserted except for a crowd of men listening to "Socialism" as advocated by the S.L.P. It was question time, and the speaker boldly threw down the gauntlet. The younger of the Christians asked, "What Trade Union regulates the wages of sin?" The socialist looked somewhat amazed, but he actually proceeded to answer in the very words of Scripture:—"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23), adding a few remarks, whereupon the elder of the Christians asked, "What does socialism provide for our eternal future?" The lecturer replied, "When you are dead you are dead, and you will be a long time dead before you wake up, and then too long a time will have elapsed to remember the past."

Such was the poor socialist's answer. No "sure and certain hope." No knowledge of "the gift of God [which] is eternal life." The first questioner then asked for five minutes in which to proclaim the wonderful gospel of the grace of God. This request was courteously granted.

These two Christians, the one a very respectable, moral, and religious young man, occupying a good

position in one of the city's public institutions, reared in the lap of luxury, but withal a sinner needing to be saved as much as the vilest and most depraved; the other, a brand plucked from the burning, "one of the devil's castaways," but who had been converted from the depths of sin and poverty, proceeded to tell how God had saved them in their deep need, though their circumstances were so widely different.

Perhaps, my dear friend, you have socialistic views. I would ask you, What about the wages of sin, and what provision have you made for your eternal future? God's Word tells us that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23), and thus death and judgment lie before the sinner as God's appointments. But God wants to be gracious, for we read, "*The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (Rom. vi. 23). The *only* provision you can make for the future is by accepting the Lord Jesus as your personal Saviour.

"Where will you spend eternity?"

This question comes to you and me.

Tell me what will your answer be,

Where will you spend eternity?"

How soon you may be in it. Make sure it will be a joyful one.

Remember once you have passed the border line between time and eternity mistakes cannot be rectified. "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"I WANTED SOMETHING MORE."¹

HE was a middle-aged man, who had been drawn into the British Army to form one of the millions engaged in fighting the Germans. He was sitting in a Soldiers' Institute in a large camp in the West of England, reading a little book entitled "The Journey and its End,"² of which tens of thousands have been put into the hands of our brave soldiers and sailors, and which has been, under God's good hand, the means of blessing to very many.

A Christian lady was engaged in laying out a few copies of this book on the tables when this soldier beckoned to her, saying he had something to say to her.

"First of all," he began, "it seems to me a very remarkable thing that you should be coming along here *just now* with that book in your hand. I must say it made me all of a quiver, and I thought to myself, 'There it is again! *Some one* must be doing it. Can it be the Lord Almighty, His very self?'"

"Yes, indeed it can," the lady responded. "I trust it is Himself who sends the books and will use them in much blessing."

¹ To be had in separate form, 1s. per 100 net, or 1s. 2d. post free.

² A copy forwarded post free on receipt of five penny stamps by our Publishers.

"He is doing it, lady, I'm sure He is in my case. And I was just thinking, would it be reckoned a misdemeanour if I took away one of those books, for I would like to read it again when I am alone, and then send it to my soldier son in France?"

"What will you tell your son?" inquired the lady.

"Oh! I've found out it's the wrong way I'm going and I want to tell him. I've turned, lady, I've turned. I am not the same man I was when I came here six weeks ago."

"How did it happen?" inquired the lady.

"Well, I've not been going the right way for some years. Drink and companions were my snare. I always had the thought of my good wife beside me, and knew she was praying for me, even when the glass was in my hand.

"Anyway, thinks I one day, as I was worrying about it, you can leave off the drink a bit. So I slipped away from the rest and came in here for a cup of tea. I said to myself, 'Here's another kind of life. What a contrast to those pubs! Why, the folks actually look happy in here. I wonder if I can find out what makes them look sort of satisfied—no grouching nor swearing like the pub.' Then I found out that though tea was good, *apples* were the best of all for thirst, and when a craving came over me I got away by myself and ate an apple. But that did it, alongside of my wife's prayers,—I don't want to leave them out.

"My thoughts soon became clearer and my health much better. Still,

I WANTED SOMETHING MORE.

"The more I thought, the more miserable I felt. All my life kept coming up, bit by bit, like a lot of panoramas, and I was that afraid I dare not sleep. I kept it all to myself, for I did not know anyone then who could help me. And I kept on coming in here and reading the bits of things lying about, and this 'Journey' book; and every time I came it seemed to do a bit of good, until last week all at once the misery all seemed to clear off like a pack of clouds, and I have to keep rubbing my eyes now, everything seems so bright and different from what it used to be.

"Now this is what I want to know, lady, *Is this what you call CONVERSION?* I hope it is, for I do want to be right—'right with God'—as I've heard them sing. Yes, I am trusting in Him,—I am, indeed. I have thought a lot about Calvary. I can't explain what I thought, but I feel as if I've got something firm under me at last, instead of shifting sand. Yes, I'm trusting in Jesus Christ; but I hardly like to say His name, I have so often used it ill."

A week or two later he said, "This morning, before my eyes were open, those words came to me with such force, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?'

(Mark viii. 36, 37). I thank God, and shall ever bless Him, that mine is safe through the precious blood and death of Christ. I had nearly lost it, though."

Reader, notice, though this man had the courage and determination to turn from the drink, and he found his health greatly improved, he said,

"I WANTED SOMETHING MORE."

Yes, something more than reformation is needed, aye, and something more than death in battle—the "supreme sacrifice" as it is called—is needed. A reformed man, but unconverted, is not right with God. A soldier who falls in battle unsaved must be lost for ever.

Notice, this man said his soul was safe only

"THROUGH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD AND DEATH OF
CHRIST."

There is no other ground of safety. See to it, I beseech you, that you are on that safe and only ground. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). *There is no other way.* "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9). Think a great deal about Calvary, and do not rest till salvation is yours, till firm ground is under your feet for eternity.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

A. J. P.

"I'M NOT FIT."

SO said a dying officer, as he lay in hospital, to the clergyman who "was administering the Sacrament to the patients in the ward. He was nearing the end of his little life, and felt that the sins he had committed in it disqualified him from partaking of so sacred a rite as the Lord's Supper. The feeling was intelligible; for what title can a sinner, as such, have to an ordinance so holy as that supper?

"I'm not fit," said he, and the clergyman passed on, leaving him in despair. A "miserable comforter," indeed, must that "padré" have been. Had he nothing but a rite, a ceremony, an ordinance to present to a guilty, dying man? Had he nothing to say about a living, loving Saviour, who could meet his condition, pardon all the sins of a lifetime, and save, there and then, at his closing moments, his sin-stained soul? just as He, in tenderest pity, said to the thief who died beside Him: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43).

How lamentable! Such blind leaders will incur their own judgment.

"I'm not fit" for the sacrament! Quite so! That feeling is easily understood. It is sacred, but I am sinful. I am unworthy to touch the feast which belongs to the holy. I would but eat and drink to my own damnation.

"Not fit," "not fit," was his only but truthful confession.

Poor fellow! He needed something else—some one else than an ordinance. What should the clergyman have done? He should have taken him up on the very ground of "his acknowledged unfitness," and shown to him that it alone was his full warrant to receive not a sacrament but a Saviour—One who had "come to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10).

Personal merit is necessary for the right partaking of a Church ordinance; none whatever for the reception of pardon. The simple reason is that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

Blessed feast! And whoever feels his guilt, his unfitness, his unworthiness, like the prodigal of Luke xv., who could only plead that best of all penitential confessions: "I am no more worthy to be called thy son"—that man is truly fitted for the kiss, the robe, the sandals, and the welcome home to the feast of love.

"I'm not fit"—so saying, and saying it truly, you are fit for Christ and His glorious salvation.

There is not much difference between "I'm not fit" and "I am no more worthy." So said the prodigal, and on that perfect plea he ventured, he came, he was blessed.

Yes, you are fit for the Lord Jesus Christ in His sinner-saving grace, if you are fit for nothing else but the judgment of a sin-hating God. Hence:—

"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;
All the fitness God requireth
Is to feel your need of Him."

If you have that feeling you may "venture on Him, venture fully," you will "in no wise be cast out."

Do not let an ordinance, however appropriate in other circumstances, take the place of the once dead but now risen, living Saviour, who can meet you just as, and where, and what you are, at this very moment, whether in hospital or in trench, or on battleship, or elsewhere.

"Look unto Me," he declares, "and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22).

J. W. S

"HE STOLE IT AWAY IN THE MEETING."¹

THIS title, dear reader, may seem a little strange, but if what it involves has not yet taken place in your history, I trust it may now come to pass. You will be an immense gainer by losing what the speaker, whose words I quote, referred to.

There are moments in the history of certain places, as well as souls, when God comes very nigh unto them. Such was the case in the town of L— some years ago, when a wave of Gospel

¹ To be had in separate form, 2s. per 100.

blessing rolled over the inhabitants thereof. God's Spirit was working blessedly, and in some streets there was scarce a house that grace did not visit, and save some therein. In some cases whole households were blessed. The gospel meetings, held in large halls, were crowded with attentive listeners, anxious inquirers, and rejoicing believers, many of them but just converted. Truly they were blessed moments—"times of refreshing"—such as one longs and prays to see again.

Among my auditors, one Lord's Day evening, I observed a young person very deeply affected as the preaching went on. The tale of the Lord's dying love, of the value of His blood, and of the interest of God in man's salvation, completely commanded her soul; and tears flowed freely as she eagerly heard the Word. An "after-meeting" being announced, I observed that she kept her seat, so at a fitting moment I drew near and got into conversation with her. She was still weeping profusely, but no look of anxiety was on her face. Inquiring of her why she so wept, she replied, "Oh! I can't help it, after what I have seen to-night."

"And what have you seen to-night—yourself a lost sinner, and Jesus a living, loving Saviour?"

"Yes, that's just it. I never saw things before as I see them to-night."

"Then the Spirit of God has shown you yourself to-night as an utterly lost, ungodly sinner in God's sight?"

"Yes, I see that most clearly. I've seen that I

am utterly helpless and lost," and here the tears rolled faster than ever.

"And what else have you seen?"

"I have seen that Jesus loved me, when I was a poor, wicked sinner; and that He gave Himself for me, and died for me on the cross, bearing my sins, and God's judgment of them."

"That is a blessed thing to have learnt. And now, tell me, how many of your sins did Jesus bear on the cross?"

"I believe He bore them all, every one of them," she replied.

"And how many of them did He blot out from God's sight, by His precious blood, when He so hung on the cross?"

"I believe He blotted them every one out," was her emphatic reply, "for it says, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin'" (1 John i. 7).

"Good. That is faith. And if He died for them all, and blotted them all out when He shed His precious blood for you on the tree, how many do you suppose He forgives you to-night, now that you believe in Him?"

"I believe He forgives them all, every one," she replied, with a fresh flood of tears, which had, however, the manifest appearance of tears of joy, as indeed they were.

"Quite right, my dear friend," I rejoined; "you have a divine warrant for knowing that. To a poor sinner, weeping at His feet, the blessed Saviour once said, '*Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved*'

thee; go in peace'; and He says the same now to you, depend upon it. Of all who trust in Him it is truly written, '*In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace*' (Eph. i. 7). And, if I understand you aright, you are now, for the first time in your life, assured that your sins are all blotted out, and forgiven through the finished work and present grace of the Saviour?"

"Yes, thank God, I am quite sure about it now," she replied, and her face, radiant with joy, bespoke the inward sense of the Lord's forgiving love.

"That is an immense mercy, and now that the Lord Jesus has so greatly blessed you, may I ask how much of your heart are you going to give to Him?"

"I couldn't give Him any," was her sincere and simple, but, nevertheless, to me astounding answer.

"Couldn't give Him any?" I replied in amazement. "What can you mean? Here you sit and tell me that, for the first time in your life, you have learnt that Jesus has borne *all* your sins on the cross, sustained *all* the judgment due to them and you, blotted them *all* out, and forgiven them *all* this night, and then you add that you 'couldn't give Him any' of that heart of yours that should be His, entirely His, henceforth."

"I have none left to give," was her quiet reply. "HE STOLE IT AWAY IN THE MEETING."

"Ah! I see what you mean now. He won your love by the revelation of His own."

"Just so; while you were speaking to-night of Him, and His love in dying for such as me, before

I knew it I was drawn to Him, and my heart is His, not mine, henceforth."

Reader, has your heart yet been stolen? With all my heart I wish you true happiness. Would you have a certain receipt for it? Taste the love of His heart,—“the love of Christ that passeth knowledge,”—and let Him, in return, simply and unreservedly, have the love of yours, and you will be truly happy. For “blessed are all they that put their trust in Him,” and each such one may add, “Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Ps. xvi. 11).

W. T. P. W.

“I AM NOT INTERESTED.”

RECENTLY in a tramcar I gave a man sitting beside me a gospel tract. On the back of it was a hymn, the first verse of which ran as follows:—

“Time is earnest, passing by,
Death is earnest, drawing nigh,
Sinner, wilt thou trifling be?
Time and death appeal to thee.”

He shortly returned the tract to me, saying, “I am not interested in it.”

“You should be interested in the gospel,” I replied, “for it is the most important thing in the world.”

“I have no use for it,” he answered.

"I am sorry," I said, "but you will have use for it some day."

It is just possible that my reader is not interested in the gospel of God. Just think of it.

If there is a change in the stock market you are interested. If prices go up or down you are all attention. If a new dance is announced you want to know all about it. If your favourite team leads the league you are pleased and interested. If your candidate makes a speech you read every word of it.

But here is the one important business of life; that which gives pleasure and joy for ever; the only truly winning side on which you can be; the great fight of right against wrong, of light against darkness, of love against hate, and, most solemn, of life against death, and yet you are not interested.

Would that I could arouse your interest, lead every unconverted reader of these lines to realise the awful truth that the indifferent are on their way to hell.

Let me urge you to take a personal interest in the gospel of God until you receive it into your heart, and have trusted the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour.

The gospel tells us that Christ died to atone for sin, and was raised again, and that those who trust Him alone may be wholly justified before God from every sin. We read, "By Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39). That is the gospel in a nutshell. Will you believe it? Will you not receive Christ as your personal Saviour, and be eternally interested in these things? F. L. F.

SAVED IN A MINE-CRATER UNDER FIRE.

THE shadow of the Great War lay heavily on the land. Company after company of youths had left their native shores for the seat of war, leaving aching hearts and tear-dimmed eyes behind them.

By a homely fireside in a northern town sat a mother and son. It was the lad's last night at home before leaving for the "Front."

The mother had found life one long hard struggle against adverse circumstances. Early left a widow, she had maintained herself and her two boys by keeping lodgers. It was a strenuous life, yet in it the peace of God had garrisoned her oft-times fainting heart, and the consolations of the gospel had soothed her spirit.

In days of strain she had looked forward to the time when her boys would be able to earn money, and thereby make life less difficult for her; but the inexorable war had blighted these hopes. The body of her elder son lay buried on the banks of the Dardanelles, and her younger son must be given up on the morrow.

On this last night at home both were oppressed with grief, yet each endeavoured to appear cheerful. They laughed at the boy's clumsy efforts to acquire the art of stocking-darning and button-sewing. The mother packed her boy's kit with many little delicacies of fruits and confections, though she did

not tell him that to obtain these dainties she had gone many days without her dinner.

"Cheer up, mother," said the lad, "I'll come back with the V.C."

"Well, Willie, I'll be very proud when you come back, whether you have earned a medal or not, but come back with the fear of the Lord in your heart, for the fear of the Lord is clean. You wanted my photo," went on the mother; "here it is. On the back of it I have written some little texts. You know how Jim and you used to complain about having to learn a text every Sunday, yet Jim wrote from the Dardanelles that the thing that comforted him when in great danger was the texts he had learned when a boy."

Mother and son were thankful of the darkness the next morning, for at parting it hid the tears which no amount of effort could repress. With his mother's blessing in his ear the lad went forth in the spirit of a brave crusader to do battle against great wrongs.

Months passed in which Willie, "somewhere in France," like so many others, "did his bit." In the dawn of a summer morning he was one of an attacking party. With every weight laid aside, and girded for the fray, they got over the parapet, and stumbled on across the shell-riven ground toward their objective. The accurate fire of the enemy dealt death among the attackers. Men dropped and lay still, others dropped and writhed in agony. At last Willie and his comrades reached a mine-crater, got inside, and lay down.

Presently a groan broke from the whole company

—they were being shelled by their own guns! Without a moment's hesitation a youth from a Scottish glen, the spirit of self-sacrifice strong upon him, scrambled up the side. With grim, set face he stood on the rim and signalled the situation to the gunners. Almost immediately his bullet-riddled body fell back amongst the men for whom he had died.

But his work was done. The shells of friend and foe alike passed with nerve-racking screech overhead. It was impossible at the time to proceed, so they lay in the declivity. Presently Willie fumbled in his breast pocket and got out his mother's photograph, and his nerves got steadied as he looked on the picture of the calm, kindly face of the woman who had toiled and cared for him all his life. To him the issues of the war narrowed. Not only did he fight to help to free two nations from the ravages of a ruthless foe: he fought for his mother's sake, fought that she might never endure the agonies that had befallen the women of Belgium and northern France. He was willing to die for his mother, but after death? Was he ready to meet God?

He turned the photo and read the writing on the back of it:—

"The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble" (Ps. xx. 1). The day of trouble, stern and pitiless, had come to him, and his mother had given him a message specially for it. He read the other verses.

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

"Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. xv. 3).

"Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends"¹ (John xv. 13).

"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

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

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. x. 28).

There was no lack of clearness in the message. He knew all the verses off by heart, but they came to him that day in his time of need in the power of the Spirit of God. There, lying prone in a mine-crater, amid the awful welter of death and devastation around him, he prayed to God. He confessed himself a sinner in God's sight, and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding took possession of his heart.

¹ The Christian widow used this text in its right sense, that is, as applying it to the Lord Jesus and His death in order that His own, those who believe on Him, might be saved. How unutterably sad it is that the brave soldiers should have the devil's cruel lie foisted upon them, that their own death in battle will save their soul, and that this beautiful verse should be twisted to appear to support such an utterly wrong and blasphemous meaning. Said one high-placed ecclesiastic, "Even if the soldier goes over the top with a foul oath upon his lips his death in battle atones at once for all his sins, and he goes straight to paradise."

Reader, let it be clearly understood that nothing but the death and blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ can save us. If the soldier is not saved by Christ his death in battle will not avail to clear him in God's sight. Christ and Christ alone by His death at Calvary can save.—EDITOR.

Willie emerged alive and unwounded from the conflict of that day, and was able afterwards to testify to the saving grace of God. Later, when moved to a rest camp, he wrote to his mother and told her he had, amid the dread scenes of war, found peace and joy in believing in Jesus.

Reader, have you found that blessing yet? If not, why not?
M. M.

HOW A RUSSIAN JEW WAS CONVERTED.

THERE was one deficiency in my education: I was brought up exclusively in Jewish schools, which are not recognised by the Russian Board of Education. In order to mend this fault I was advised to pass some examination which would give me a government status. I accordingly sat for and passed the High Schools Teachers' diploma, with first class honours. One of the subjects for that examination was the Ancient Slavonic—the mother tongue of Russian, Polish, etc.—and the only textbook for that language is the New Testament.

Now in England and in other countries where Jews come in contact with Evangelical Christians, especially with converted Jews, they read the New Testament, and in some cases prominent rabbis even preach from the New Testament, and advocate the teaching of this book. But we had no such notions in Lithuania, the centre of orthodox and bigoted

Jewry. Like other bigoted Jews, I believed the New Testament to be a very pernicious book.

At that time I hated the name of Jesus, and whenever I passed a Christian place of worship I used, in accordance with the prevailing custom, to repeat thrice: "Thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing" (Deut. vii. 26).

When I was at college in Mir, two students were instantly dismissed for having a New Testament in their possession, and I never greeted them afterwards. Thus, when I found I should have to read that book, I at first intended to give up my ambition of obtaining a diploma, but after much consideration I went on with preparation for the examination, vowing to destroy the book as soon as I had finished my studies.

On the evening of the day that I passed my examination, I took my Testament to throw it in the fire. The Jewish sense of economy, however, told me that I ought to make some use of the nice cover; I thought that it would make a useful pocket-book. I began to tear out the leaves, but the beautiful sentences of the Sermon on the Mount arrested my attention, which I went on reading. The first question I asked myself was, Could a bad man utter such sublime sayings? Instead of destroying the book, I began to study it secretly. In a short time I became a great admirer of Jesus, and subsequently I considered Him the greatest moral philosopher.

I became, for a time, a sort of Unitarian, although I was not aware of the fact. Whenever I found that Jesus claimed to be greater than a human teacher, I managed to explain it somehow. I may with safety say that rabbinical students are unexcelled in sophistry. My theory held good while I studied the Synoptic Gospels, but no sooner did I carefully read the first few verses of St John's Gospel than I was convinced of the fallacy of my opinion. This writer states definitely and clearly that Jesus was (1) the Creator; (2) in the beginning; (3) the Word; (4) God. I was faced then with a very difficult problem. Jesus was not an ordinary human teacher. He was either "Jehovah, Our Righteousness," or, as I had been taught, an impostor. No middle course was possible.

Another thing began to trouble me. Up till then I had considered myself a righteous Jew. My manner of living and religious observances gave me absolute satisfaction. But when I began to search myself in the light of the Gospel, I realised how short I fell of God's standard of true religion, how daily and hourly I broke God's commandments, and often I became so depressed that I intended to give up all attempts to be religious. For a few months I tried to find pleasure in dancing and other amusements, but such verses as "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," used to trouble me in the midst of my exciting amusements. Several times I left in the middle of a grand ball, and when I arrived home spent a sleepless night.

Thus passed nearly three years. I was then over twenty-one years old, and in the Russian Army. On Easter Eve, when most of the men had gone to the midnight service, as the custom is in Russia, I walked up and down the barracks, and thought as usual about the question of salvation. The rabbis teach that prayers, fasting, and almsgiving atone for sins, but I was quite sure that they were wrong. The Old Testament is so clear on this point, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sins. I asked myself, What will become of my sins, seeing that there is at present neither altar, nor temple, where sacrifices can be brought?

Suddenly I heard a clear, distinct voice, which I can never forget, saying, "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6).

There was no human being near me, I am positively sure of that, and up till now I could never explain with certainty whose voice it was. But, like Paul, an inner light shone upon my soul, the veil of darkness was taken away from me, and I saw my Saviour pleading with me to open the door of my heart, which I gladly did *at once*. All my doubts and fears vanished immediately. Since that night, 1904, God has kept me in the faith of His Son.

"Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise ;
In all His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways."

A STARTLING QUESTION.

A YOUNG Christian was sounding forth the "old, old story" in a busy street in a northern town. Suddenly he was rudely interrupted by some one on the outside of the crowd, who hurled the question at him, "Where's hell?" "At the end of the broad road that unbelievers tread," was the reply.

After the speaker had finished, the interrupter asked if he could have a word with him, when he again asked a question. This time it was very personal. "Am I," he said, "on the road to hell?" The answer was not, "Do you go to church?" or "Do you read your Bible?" but, "Do you know the Saviour?" "I don't," he said. "Then according to God's Word you are on the broad road that leads to everlasting destruction."

"God moves in a mysterious way," and so it was in this case. Both men, it appeared, had lived in the same street, in the same town, and knew all the old familiar places. The preacher had started life selling newspapers, though a youth in years, deep in sin and sorrow. But he had learned that Jesus was the Saviour of sinners, and was led to trust Him, and was saved and satisfied for time and eternity.

The other had wandered astray, and had ignored the tender voice of the Shepherd calling the lost ones home. As a young man he had been left an orphan, and had chosen his own paths, and gone

his own way, which made him as he was that day—a poor, miserable, self-convicted sinner. He was tired and sick of all that the devil and the world had to offer, a poor slave of sin and Satan, seeking peace and liberty.

The preacher told him in plain and earnest words what the Lord had done for himself. How he had been “plucked as a brand from the burning,” and how that Jesus was waiting to save him too. And there upon the street this weary, wayworn, tempest-tossed soul found a haven of rest in the blessed Saviour.

Dear reader, no matter who you are, what you are, or where you are, God says, “All we like sheep have gone astray” (Isa. liii. 6), and “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. iii. 23). That “ALL” takes you in, and whether you realise it or not, if unsaved, you are on the “broad road that leads to everlasting destruction.” But “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16). God’s blessed “whosoever” takes *every* lost one in. Come to the Saviour now, and trust Him for your soul’s eternal welfare. “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be *saved*” (Rom. x. 13). Call now and be saved, and when the roll is called in Glory, you’ll be there.

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

“Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). J. G.

HOW GOD USES HIS OWN WORD.

ONE busy Saturday evening a young man was walking the street of a country town when these words, spoken by an open-air preacher, arrested his attention: "Have you a Bible? If not, buy one, and go home and read it." The young fellow listened to God's voice, through His servant, and bought a Bible. The divine letter of God's love to lost man was the means of bringing him to his Saviour, who still says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will *in no wise* cast out" (John vi. 37), and "My sheep shall *never* perish" (John x. 28).

Another copy of God's Word was destined to bring eternal happiness to its reader, who is now used of God to bring others to a saving knowledge of Christ. A little girl gave her playfellow a Bible on her birthday. It was treasured by the recipient, who, after she married, took it out to India with her. A page came out, and this was being kept by her until she returned to England, and could have the Bible rebound, but in the meantime God had His purposes for His Word, which He says shall *not* return unto Him void. While the lady was away up on the hills, her husband, who had at the time no hope, and was without God in the world, saw it, and this sacred page was the means of his conversion.

The third true anecdote is of a girl who had

always been brought up to read her Bible every day, but after she had been married a little time, and had many things to occupy her, thought she should give up doing so, but this was not to be so. God inclined her heart to continue reading His message of love, and one day, when she was reading the epistle of Ephesians, He himself showed her that Christ was her Saviour, and ever since then, which is a good many years ago, she has been rejoicing in the finished work of Christ alone for her salvation.

Nothing in this world is certain; but eternity draws near. Why trouble so much about the things of this life, which may end any moment? It is Satan's temptation to occupy us with this world's riches, cares, and sorrows; but surely God is calling louder than ever to us to turn to Him. Everlasting PEACE He gives to those who trust in JESUS; and how can we doubt such a Saviour, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*? By all means read *your* Bible.

Hear what the great apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, which are able to make thee

WISE UNTO SALVATION

through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 14, 15).

What an honoured place the Word of God has! Read it, my reader, and may God bless you with His blessing in so doing.

H. B. N. G.

ONLY A CHARWOMAN.

IN one of the slum districts of Edinburgh there lives an elderly Christian woman who earns her living by "charring."

The "stair" she resides in is one of the many one-roomed tenements, where doors are often standing open, and the containings of the abodes in full view to any who approach.

Thus it was that two children of tender years watched this old Christian preparing and emptying out upon the table her frugal supper of boiled potatoes, their little mouths watering the while; for, alas! there was little prepared for them at their home, which was just opposite Margaret's room.

"Would you like a 'tatie?" Margaret asked them; and as their looks or words were decidedly affirmative, she gave them one each of her nicely cooked potatoes.

The mother of these hungry children was given to drink. Their father, who, though more sober, was not exemplary, was away in the army in France.

The drinking habits of his wife, and the comfortless nature of his home, kept him back from asking for leave, much as he longed to see his children, so he had not been back since he first left for France.

This evening, delighted with their potatoes, the little ones ran in to their mother with them; and evidently something spoke to her conscience as she saw how little gave her children pleasure, and

yet that little she had selfishly neglected; for next evening Margaret overheard her speaking very decidedly to herself—

“No, I’ll not spend this shilling in drink; I’ll buy ‘taties for my bairns wi’ it,” and buy potatoes she did.

Now was Margaret’s opportunity, and she quickly got into touch with this mother, and by her help and counsel a different state of things began in the little home.

Then naturally the thoughts of the wife turned to her husband.

She had never sent him anything, but now a letter and a handkerchief were posted. But, as Margaret suggested, a pair of socks of her own knitting would be much more appreciated. “But I canna turn the heel,” said she.

With Margaret’s help, however, this was overcome, and the socks duly reached the soldier-husband, who had now been seriously impressed by the terrible scenes around him.

Thought he, “There must be a change at home. I must see them if I can.” So leave was asked and obtained, and in due time he reached his altered home.

But his parents had been neglected, and his conduct had been so bad that when he sought their door he was not admitted. He tried again, however, and with success, and now again dear old Margaret’s influence was to tell more and more deeply. She persuaded the soldier and his wife to go to her mission meetings, and soon there was joy in heaven

over both husband and wife, for they trusted the Lord Jesus as a personal Saviour, and they realised that all their sins were forgiven through faith in Him. Then the old father was taken to the mission, and he, too, was converted to God, and at least one other of the family circle, and great was the mutual rejoicing.

But all too soon the soldier's leave expired, and he had to return once more to scenes of strife and bloodshed, but no longer fearing death, for had he not a Saviour and a home in glory now?

Within six short weeks the news came that he had been killed, but oh: thank God, absent from the body, he was present with the Lord, who died to save him from hell, and fit him for His own presence in heaven.

Dear old Margaret, she will have these, and doubtless more than these, for her joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of coming glory and reward.

She lets her light shine, and the Lord blesses it, and I expect He would say of her—humble as is her service—"She hath done what she could." Could He say as much of you and me?

Margaret has never learned to read, but she loves to say, "I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies!" Can you say as much? One thing alone can enable you to do this, and that is the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you rested your soul on it? Have you trusted the Saviour yet? "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life" (John iii. 36).

F. L. H.

THE COMING STORM.

A CHRISTIAN butcher stood in his shop. An old man entered.

The day was very stormy, and the old man commented on the fact.

"Yes," said the butcher, "it is stormy, but there is a far worse storm coming."

"What storm is that?" said the old man, with some surprise.

"The storm of a righteous and holy God against sin, and if you are not sheltered by the blood of Jesus you will come under it," was the answer.

"Do you believe the Bible?"

"Yes, every word of it," said the butcher.

"Well, that is where you and I differ, but I came here to buy," evidently meaning he had not come to be preached to.

"Well," said the butcher, "what have you got to buy with?"

"Ah! now you are talking; you are after my money now."

"Very well, let me see what money you have got."

The old man held out his hand, and displayed the sum of *one penny*.

"Oh! yes," said the butcher, and taking his knife he cut off a good slice of beef, then a nice bit of fat to go with it, and, wrapping all together in a piece of paper, he handed it to the man and said, "Take that now, and your penny as well, and if ever you are to be sheltered from the storm of which we have

spoken, it can only be by taking God's offer of salvation through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as you have taken this, as a free gift."

Tears of gratitude started to the old man's eyes and coursed down his cheeks at the thought of the butcher's kindness, as he turned towards the door.

Reader, that is the gospel.

The storm of the judgment of a holy God is about to break on the head of a guilty world. Even now the anointed eye can see the ominous gathering of the clouds.

Are you in the shelter that God has provided at such a cost?

Have the tears of gratitude ever wet your cheeks as you thanked Him for such wonderful love?

Remember, you cannot buy God's salvation. Just as the old man's penny was altogether inadequate to pay for the good square meal he needed, so is anything you can do quite useless to meet the claims of God.

But God has provided a Saviour in the person of His own beloved Son, and He now offers pardon and peace to whosoever will.

"The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

"A man (the Lord Jesus Christ, a man, but thank God much more than a man) shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest" (Isa. xxxii. 1).

Again I ask, "Are you in the shelter?" Remember, the storm is coming. Burst it will one day. Are you ready?

W. C.

A SAILOR'S CONVERSION.

WE were homeward bound from a port in India towards London when I became anxious about my soul. It so happened that there was a Christian young man on board, on his first voyage as an apprentice, and much younger than myself, who was before the mast as able seaman.

In filling our various duties it very often came about that we were sent to work together, and being in the same watch (starboard), on and off duty, we were thrown a good deal into each other's company. While pacing the decks in the night-watches we would often speak of home, the place so dear to a seaman's heart.

I learned that my companion's father and mother were Christians living in Glasgow, and that it was not their wish that he should go to sea; but since he so earnestly desired it, they did not restrain him from his purpose. They did not know then, in their anxiety and fear for their son, that he was to be used by God in pointing a vile sinner such as I was to Christ. I felt drawn towards him by a power I could not account for.

Being in possession of some excellent books, which were given him by some Christian friends on our departure from Port Chalmers for India, we used to spend many hours reading in our watch below, generally finishing with a chapter from God's Word. This went on for some time. I could plainly see that he possessed an inward peace and happiness

such as I did not know, and I yearned to obtain it. I knew a good deal of the Bible, and in the sight of my fellow-shipmates might have passed for a good, moral, and upright man, but I knew I was not saved. I soon learnt that my supposed morality was black and loathsome in the sight of God, and did not give peace to my mind. I was beginning to realise that I was on the way to destruction, which desperately troubled my mind.

One night as we were reading about the Philippian jailor crying out at midnight, "What must I do to be saved?" and how he was told to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and "thou shalt be saved," I said to Edwin (my shipmate) that "*I* believed in Christ right enough." He said, "If you do, you *are* saved." "No," I said, "I know I am not saved."

I had known the story of Christ dying on the cross since I was a little boy at school; but up to then I knew I was not saved. The Philippian jailor had peace in believing; and Edwin had the same peace, but I had not. My heart was now awakened to seek this peace, and all other pleasures, vain talking, and spending the time as seamen are wont to do when off duty, became distasteful to me. I began now to *search* and read my Bible very diligently. This, of course, directed the attention of my shipmates to me, and they began to pass remarks about my becoming religious; but what did I care for that? I saw that I was being lost unless I got salvation. I knew if I were to die in that lost state I would be cast into hell.

One afternoon I was turning over the leaves of an old torn hymn book, in which were a number of large texts of Scripture. Looking over these my eye lighted on one, "Commit thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in Him ; and He shall bring it to pass " (Ps. xxxvii. 5). It just seemed to send a gleam of light into my soul. I brought the book to Edwin, and asked him to find the text that he thought suited me the best, and strange to say, he pointed out this very one. It was always in my mind after that, telling me to commit my way unto the Lord, and He would bring it to pass, that I should find peace in believing.

One night, during the first watch (it was my "look-out" from ten to twelve), Edwin came on to the fore-castle head to accompany me for a short time, and talk about what was dear to his heart. We were running under top-gallant sails ; the night was dark, and it was blowing hard. The watch began to take in sail, so Edwin had to leave. I just said I would give myself up to God ; I thought if I put my case in His hands, and left it with Him, He would bring it to pass, and give me this "peace in believing." I knelt down on the fore-castle by the rail, and cried to the Lord Jesus to save me. I just said, "Lord Jesus, I give myself up to Thee, just as I am, my soul, my body, sins and all, and bring Thou it to pass, that I may believe." "

Oh ! that was the first real prayer I uttered during all my life ; and it went above the roar of the wind and tempest, right to the throne of God. Such a happy hour that was ! Such a glorious light shone

into my soul which I cannot describe. I saw it all in a moment ; I had not to wait, as I had thought, until some future time, but, as soon as I cast myself upon Christ, laden with sins as I was, I was enabled to believe on Him for salvation ; for he says, " Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out " (John vi. 37).

Being relieved at eight bells (midnight), I went down from off the look-out a saved man. I went straight and told Edwin. His joy was great. What a happy time we had afterwards ! One day, while showing me some letters he had received from home, one from his mother struck me very much in which, writing to her son, she said, " Many times a day do I lift up my heart to the Lord to take care of you, and that He might make you the means of bringing one to Christ to be with you." I did not know then the mighty power of prayer, but many times since then have I thought it was in answer to this Christian mother's prayers for her son, far away at sea, that brought about my conversion. I now began to yearn for home ; how I wished we would put into some port that I might write to my father and mother, and tell them that I was saved. My wish was very near being realised, for in a gale near the Cape of Good Hope our ship began to leak badly. After pumping all night, our soundings showed five and a half feet of water in the hold. The captain thought of running for a port, but as the gale abated, we gained on the water, and so kept our way. I shall not forget that dreary night and morning, but

I knew if we foundered in that gale *I was saved*; this hope cheered me through it all, and amid the cursing and oaths of my shipmates, I could lift up my heart to Christ, who gave me a quiet peace.

We eventually arrived in London, and after a short delay I reached my home in the north of Scotland. It was winter time after supper; we were all seated round the fire, and I told them then of this, the most eventful voyage I ever made, and how I had found Christ, and of the joy and peace I now possessed through believing. I also read them a tract, which, when done, I turned to my father and said, "Father, will you believe that" (meaning the story I read out of the tract)? With a quivering voice, he said, "Yes, my boy, I will." I then turned to my mother and said, "Mother, will you believe it?" She could not speak much, but said through her tears, "Yes." They were not tears of sorrow, but I believe tears of joy.

I did not speak to my brother just then, but when we went to rest I spoke to him about his soul, and how Christ was waiting for him, and of the joy in heaven over even one sinner coming to Jesus. Although he was older than I, and had a family of his own, I urged him to come to Christ at once, and told him of the joy it would bring to his wife, and peace to himself. He could not speak, but he just put his arm round my neck and cried. I believe Christ was with us that night, and that salvation came to all in the house, as it did to the Philippian jailor's household.

I never knew what real joy was until I came to Christ. The people of the world think that the religion of Christ is a dull thing. That is just what my shipmates said, and they laughed at me because I did *not join them in their amusements*; but I had something better. Christians cannot join in with the world, in its ways, and be true to Christ. If the world only knew of the real lasting joy a Christian has, they would just come to Christ at once. Well, I knew for myself, for I have tried both sides; I served the devil faithfully, and the greatest enjoyment I ever got in the world left a gnawing at my heart. I'll praise God for all eternity that I did not receive the devil's wages, for "the wages of sin is death; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

And what can I say more? If anyone who has not this peace in believing reads this—perhaps a seaman, troubled and tempest-tossed, and steeped in sin as I was—I would say to him, just cast yourself upon Christ, sins and all—commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.

Then you will be able to sing:—

"I rest my soul on Jesus,
This weary soul of mine;
His right hand me embraces,
I on His breast recline.
I love the name of Jesus,
Immanuel, Christ, the Lord;
Like fragrance on the breezes,
His name abroad is poured."

"THEY LOOKED SURPRISED."

SOME working men were returning by train from a country job at the close of the week's work to lift their wages at their employer's office.

An elderly gentleman asked them, "Did you ever hear of a day when the worker will not want his wages?"

They looked surprised at each other, and no doubt thought how ridiculous such a question was. Whoever heard of a man working and not wanting his wages? That was certainly not their experience, for pay day was to them the all-important day.

"Listen, then," said the old man, breaking the silence, "God speaks of such a day," and opening a well-worn book, which he had drawn from his pocket, he read the well-known words, "The wages of sin is DEATH" (Rom. vi. 23).

Reader, are you prepared for such wages? Would it not be better to go in for the gift? "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"The wages of sin is DEATH;

but

The gift of God is ETERNAL LIFE,

through Jesus Christ our Lord"

(Rom. vi. 23).

God is ready to give you the *gift* even now. He refuses none who come in repentance towards Himself and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ. "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). s. o.

A STRANGE REQUEST IN A STRANGE PLACE.¹

OUR scene lies in all the strangeness and pathos of a prison chapel. See that young man, a warder on either side of him. It is his last Sunday on earth. Before the next Sunday comes round his body will be sleeping in an unknown and a dishonoured grave. He is a murderer, charged with the horrible crime of murdering his girl-wife and their first-born and only child.

Listen! He makes a request. Was ever one made like it before, in such a strange place, under such strange circumstances?

It is his last request upon earth. He asks permission for a certain hymn to be sung. How could he sing—a murderer within very measurable distance of the death penalty?

But listen to his choice:—

“Weary of earth, and laden with my sin,
I look to heaven and long to enter in :
But there no evil thing may find a home,
And yet I hear a voice that bids me ‘COME.’”

The circumstances of the murder were revolting in the extreme. There was no difficulty in finding a true verdict. Indignation ran high, till at length the murderer found himself in the condemned cell, to spend in solitude and reflection the few days the law mercifully allows such.

¹ May be had in separate form, 1s. per 100 net; 1s. 2d. post free.

Thank God, if the furniture of the prison cell is meagre, it contains a Bible. The deluded young man perused its pages. He found there was mercy for him in all his sin. Christians became interested in him, and many were the prayers that ascended up to God on his behalf. The post, too, brought many gospel tracts, which the condemned man read with eagerness.

Thus it was the grace of God reached his heart, and wonderful to relate he was soundly converted to God.

We can understand his request for such a hymn. The beautiful words rang out in that prison chapel. How appropriate they were. Hear how the hymn proceeds:—

“So vile I am, how dare I hope to stand
In the pure glory of that holy land?
Before the whiteness of that throne appear?
Yet are there hands stretched out to draw me near.

“It is the voice of Jesus that I hear,
His are the hands stretched out to draw me near;
And His the blood that can for me atone,
And set me faultless there before the throne.”

Thank God, there was room in heaven for the dying thief,—for Mary Magdalene, out of whom were cast seven devils,—for proud, blaspheming Saul of Tarsus, chief of sinners,—for this poor murderer as well. *Aye, and there is room in heaven*
FOR YOU.

We cannot, and do not, make light of sin. The cross of Calvary is the witness how solemnly God

looks at sin. No less a sacrifice than that of the Son of God would suffice, and when the magnitude of the grace of God reaches the hardened heart of the sinner, it breaks him down in utter repentance and loathing of evil, whilst attracting his heart to the Saviour, His perfect, finished, atoning work setting the conscience at rest.

The hymn the poor murderer requested to be sung is a proof of this. The writer's experience does not make light of sin, but depicts the attractive grace of God in glowing language, all so true; presents the blood of Jesus as the only means of cleansing for the sinner, whilst justly acknowledging the holiness of God and heaven.

Just as the dying thief went to paradise from the shameful cross, so did this murderer mount to bliss and heaven from the scaffold.

How do *you* stand in relation to this matter? You have not been permitted, thank God, to go to the extent of murder,—you may be exemplary, moral, even religious, yet you need salvation just as much as the murderer.

"There is NO difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 22, 23).

"There is NO difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the 'name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 12, 13).

Will you not take the low place of repentance, and call on the name of the Lord for salvation?

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

The grace of God abounds over our sin. His compassion runs out to the returning prodigal. His love welcomes the repentant sinner. His title is that of Saviour God—"a just God and a Saviour," who can say, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 21, 22).

Righteously, on the ground of His claims against sin being fully met at the cross of Calvary, God can now be "just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26).

Trust in the Lord even now, and all this blessing and happiness will be yours.

A. J. P.

THE CLOCK REPAIRER'S STORY.

AN earnest Christian, following the occupation of clock and watch repairer in a small north of England market town, in the course of his business visited the homesteads for miles round to attend chiefly to the cleaning of "Grandfather" clocks. On one occasion he was requested to call for that purpose at the house of a man with whom, in his younger days, he had been acquainted, but whom he had not seen for some years.

Arriving at his destination, our friend the clock

repairer called at a certain house (not quite sure whether he was at the right one), and his knock brought to the door the occupant—an aged man—apparently very weak in body; indeed, to all appearance, his days on earth would be few.

Not being perfectly sure that he recognised the man in his much changed condition, he asked, “Does Mr — live here?” “Yes, I’m he; are you the clock repairer? Come in.”

Our clock-repairer friend, taking in at a glance the situation, had immediately a great longing to know if all were well with his soul, and as he had never heard of his old acquaintance having made any profession of conversion, he decided first of all, “clock or no clock,” to have a talk with him as to eternal things.

On asking about his health, he found that his conclusions were fairly correct; then, not wishing to lose the opportunity, and looking to God for guidance, he commenced to relate a little incident in his own experience.

“I was going,” he said, “one Sunday evening in winter time to preach the gospel at a village in an outlying district, when a friend kindly offered to drive me. As the night would be dark, and the walk long, I gladly accepted his offer, and at the appointed time off we went.

“After driving for some time, and thinking we ought to be near our destination, I began to feel a little uneasy, and asked my companion if he thought we were on the right road. He gravely

remarked that 'he wasn't quite sure,' and by this time the hour for the meeting was nearing. I got somewhat alarmed, and wondered what to do for the best, when I observed a light, apparently from a cottage standing back a little from the road.

"I suggested to my friend that I had better stand up and call out '*lost*.' This did not appeal to him evidently, for he said, 'Oh! no, don't shout "*lost*," that will never do.' 'But why not,' I argued; 'it's a fact, isn't it? Had we not better own up at once and get put right?' So forthwith I stood up in the conveyance and called out very loudly '*lost*.' In a moment or two the door of a cottage opened, a man carrying a lantern appeared in the doorway, and a voice called, 'Who's there? what is it?'

"To this I replied, 'I'm *lost*; I want to get to —.'

"'Oh!' said he, 'you're on the wrong road. Turn round, go back a mile, then take the road to the right which leads to where you want to be.' Acting on this, we very soon found ourselves safely at our destination."

By this time the invalid man appeared to be deeply interested, and on being asked, "Don't you think I did right to call out *lost*?" he readily agreed, and then to bring home the incident, our friend applied it to his own condition, and finished up by putting before him the glorious gospel, telling him of the Saviour, who, in love, "came to seek and to save that which was *lost*" (Luke xix. 10).

How like the sinner on the wrong road, the broad road, the end of which is destruction (death and judgment). Granted there may be on this road many sections and sub-sections, and "all sorts and conditions of men," but the awful fact remains that all on this road are *lost*.

Are you *lost*, my dear reader? "Well," say you, "I don't exactly think I'm *lost*."

Then are you *saved*? . . . Come; does this make you think? *Are you saved?*

"I wouldn't like to say I am *saved*," may be your reply.

But you must be either *saved* or *lost*. *If you are not saved*, if your sins are not washed away by the precious blood of Jesus, if you are not resting for your eternal salvation on the work of atonement finished by Jesus on the Cross—the work of redemption—for "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22), *then you are lost*, and if *lost*, what are you to do? The only advice I can give you is to take your true place as a *lost* sinner, admit the truth like our friend, the clock repairer, and cry out *lost*. You are helpless, as he was; your condition as a lost sinner is hopeless so far as you are concerned, but—to God be the glory—the *right way is now open*—the way to *life, eternal life*, and a cry of need from your soul will bring to your aid the only One who can put you right, even *Jesus*, for He has said, "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*" (John xiv. 6). And again, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends

of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22).

Before the clock repairer left his old friend that day his heart was rejoicing, his old friend was rejoicing as he received the gospel and was saved, and best of all, the Father's heart was rejoicing (see Luke xv.). "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The sequel will show that the old friend was just in time.

Passing the same house a few days later, the clock repairer was somewhat surprised to find all the blinds were down, so knocking at the door he could only say, "I'm afraid I know what has happened," and then was told that he had passed away the night previous. Truly it was well for him that he was on the right road, and ready. And now, my reader, may I ask you to sit down and *think of your latter end?* How will it be with you? Are you on the right road, for if not, you are *lost*? God in His infinite love offers to you salvation, full and free, without money and without price. Get on your knees in the presence of God. There only you will see what a sinner you are, that you have sinned and come short of God's glory, but in the light of His presence you will also truly find that God is a Saviour-God, ready to pardon. *Note very carefully*, however, that God makes no offer for to-morrow, "*Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"Come unto Me ! Oh, blessed open door !
 For those who, but for Christ, had hoped no more :
 Oh ! love of God, told out in full extent,
 When Jesus to those depths of darkness went.
 Come unto Me, for Christ the risen Lord
 Now speaks from Glory through the written Word ;
 As Victor now He can with triumph shout
 That none who come to Him will He cast out."

"Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

R. T.

AN INSULT TO THE AMERICAN FLAG.

AN interesting editorial in a leading newspaper discussed the criticism of the President of the United States for making a distinction between the killing of some American citizens by the bandit, Villa, in Mexico, and the firing upon some American sailors in Mexican waters by the regular troops of that country.

The editor pointed out that in the former case, the outrages "were committed upon individuals who had taken the risk of living in Mexico in war time, and of interfering more or less in its domestic contentions." It was also difficult to definitely fix the blame.

But "the Tampico affront was committed upon servants of the nation engaged in its lawful service under shelter of the American flag. It was an insult to the nation and required atonement to the nation." Outrages of ordinary character can be paid for in

coin of the realm, but "an insult to the nation's flag must be atoned for."

There is a solemn and weighty truth, conveyed in this, often overlooked. All sin is against God. It is contrary to His character. Not one sin can be passed over. David, in committing a serious moral evil against his fellow, yet said, in confession to God, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight" (Ps. li. 4).

Man is ever ready to excuse himself. He would settle his sins—even though they are weighing heavily upon him—by good works. But this cannot be. Sin is an "insult to" God and "must be atoned for."

If atonement is to be made, who shall make it? Satisfaction must be made. God's Word emphasises this, "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30). Conscience bears witness to it. Man's dealings with his fellows illustrate it. How shall it be made?

Much is expected from money. Its uses and limitations are tersely expressed in the words—"the universal provider of everything but *happiness*, the universal passport to every place but *heaven*." How can it be used in this respect? The Bible says, referring to man's sufficiency, "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches," yet in the extremity of need, they look to these in vain, for "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps. xlix. 6, 7).

What man cannot do by wealth, wit, or wisdom, God has done, for :—

“His love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end.”

The American Government bore for a long time with the Mexicans, the more so as the latter were weak. God has borne with man for many years because He is “long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. iii. 9). He declares that we are “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. iii. 24).

Through that blessed One, who has accomplished such a work and glorified God by it, is now offered to sinful man a complete salvation. God's character has been disgraced and His glory dishonoured by sin, but Christ has died that His holy claims may be satisfied and your deep need, dear reader of these lines, fully and eternally met. Look away to Christ at once, receive salvation and rejoice!

The American Government demanded that Mexico salute its flag; failing this, the commander was to open fire on the enemy. Not yet has God taken vengeance upon the refusers of His grace. In pity He is sending the message of reconciliation.

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. v. 20, 21).

J. H. F.

“BEHOLD, HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS.”

THE Bible says, “Behold, He [the Lord Jesus Christ] cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him” (Rev. i. 7). Reader, you cannot escape that; you may escape the gospel, escape forgiveness of sins, justification, and God’s salvation—you may escape all these, you may hug the world, but mark you this—“*every* eye shall see Him.” The One who was crowned with thorns, and whom you have heard proclaimed as the Lamb of God—this One who has been out of sight for nearly two thousand years—He is coming. When? It may be at any moment.

Now there is in heaven a seated Saviour. Another hour and He may have risen up, and then, if unsaved, the knell of doom will have sounded in your ears.

An open door and a seated Saviour go together; a risen-up Saviour and a closed door go together. Do you understand? I hope so. If you do, you will say, “I will make sure of getting in at the open door by faith before He rises up to shut it.”

Oh! careless sligher of Christ, beware lest you too late see that you have despised grace, and put yourself beyond the reach of mercy. There is no time to be lost. “Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of Salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2). If you stand before Him unsaved there will be no advocate then, no mercy. Now you may be saved. He says, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” Oh! come, and that now.

W. T. P. W.

LIBERTY!*

THERE is a great cry going out for Liberty just now. A wave of democracy is sweeping over the world. Things will never be again as they were before this terrible war. The smaller nations cry out for liberty, the right to assert themselves, to speak their own languages, make their own laws, and mould their own destinies.

Then the individual is calling out for liberty, and the irony of the situation is this, that in order to get it men band themselves into associations, wielding the most autocratic and tyrannical power, and the very opposite to liberty is often the outcome.

So for the attainment of liberty we witness the most terrible conflict between nation and nation, between capital and labour, between master and man, between man and woman, and the worst is yet to come.

But let us discuss freedom at the very root of things. I call upon my reader to face **FACTS**. Let it be granted that God is Creator. In the magnificent language of the most widely-circulated book in the world, "The worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3). Whatever else we may believe or disbelieve, it is incontrovertible fact that **ORDER** and **LAW** are

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stamped upon all creation. Where is liberty in creation? It only lies in carrying out the *order* and *law* that are stamped upon it. All else apart from that is confusion and catastrophe.

For instance, has an apple tree liberty to grow pears, or a fish to live on dry land, or a planet to choose its own orbit, or a stream to run uphill? Is not man driven by inexorable law to eat and sleep? Every infraction of the laws of nature meets with certain punishment. The daily newspaper bears abundant and gruesome witness to that.

It is lamentable to see a fine man, endowed with brain and the will power to advance his life's schemes, beginning to fail. Just when his powers are at their zenith and his experience has gathered in a great store of useful knowledge, he begins gradually to go downhill, until body and mind are worn out, and finally he DIES. What an awful thing death is! Liberty! Liberty!! Why, we are bound hand and foot all our lives by a thousand chains.

Let me give you an illustration. A medical man was preaching the gospel in the street of a South London suburb some years ago. A drunken man began to interrupt. The preacher said to him, "Now, my man, if you will listen quietly till I am finished, I promise to hear what you have got to say." The man agreed to the terms. When the preaching was over the doctor turned to him, and said, "Now I'm ready to hear what you have to say."

Nothing loath the man stepped into the ring, and with the foolishness of a drunken man, said, "I'm a

free thinker, a free eater, and a free drinker"—the last named only too evident by his condition.

It was dusk, and from the outskirts of the crowd a voice cried out, "But you're not a free agent."

The man turned round, indignantly challenging the statement, when the voice asked, "Do you want to die?" He answered, "No." Then came the inquiry, "Will you have to die?" He replied, "Of course, we've all got to die." Then came the crushing rejoinder, "Then if you don't want to die, and you have to die—you'll have to do what you don't want to do. You're not a free agent."

The fact is, there is no liberty apart from God's will—no true liberty apart from God's truth and God's Son. "The truth shall make you free" (John viii. 32); again, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (ver. 36).

What is the use of talking about liberty when you are a slave of sin, and in the grip of death?

I beseech you, unknown reader, to face FACTS. You are a sinner, death and judgment are appointed to you. Remember that God's blessed Son, the Lord Jesus, became a man, and died on the cross of shame, in order that He might "deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 15).

Doubtless, liberty in a very secondary and temporal sense can be secured by man's efforts, but what will that avail if you are not in right relation to God? A planet out of its orbit would be less disastrous than a soul out of relation to God. The fact is, *lawlessness*

to a great extent is deified and miscalled *liberty*, and the result is confusion, catastrophe, tyranny, the passions of men let loose, God defied, and eternal ruin. Two notable instances of this are the French Revolution, culminating in the Reign of Terror, when the streets of Paris ran with blood, and the recent Russian Revolution, with its terrible lessons.

No one can save you from the awful results of sin but the Lord Jesus Christ. He, and He alone, can put you into right relations with God. His precious blood can cleanse you from every sin, and His power can give you true liberty.

Will you not face FACTS? Child of a moment, thou art soon passing away. Whither? we earnestly ask. Take a long look into eternity. Death and Judgment await each unsaved man and woman. But right athwart your path stands the Son of God. He bears the wounds in His hands and feet and side. He is the great Redeemer. His precious blood can meet your dire case. He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). Beautiful, gracious evangel! It comes with all its drawing charm!

Let the old-time cry, "What must I do to be saved?" come from *your* lips and heart. Hear the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). In this, and this alone, lies your eternal happiness. Once more, face FACTS.

"Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). A. J. P.

CHARLIE C—.

CHARLIE was a young naval officer—the child of Christian parents; but, spite of godly influence, he had dropped into sinful habits, and had turned his back on his father's God. He had to learn the painful lesson—that “will leads to want,” and that “what we sow we reap.” He ran heavily into debt, deserted from his ship, and fled from the country.

I happened to be preaching in the town where his father lived; and, being in the house, I asked him how Charlie was getting on.

Sadly the old gentleman informed me of the above facts. I sympathised as best I could, feeling how little mere verbal consolation could meet such a sorrow. “He has run into debt,” said the stricken father, “has left his ship, dishonoured our name, and has gone to America. I fear that I shall never see Charlie again.”

Weeks passed away, and once more I went to preach in that town. I called on the broken-hearted father, and again asked for Charlie.

“The last I heard of him was that he had shipped aboard a South Sea whaler, and now the little hope I had of seeing him again is dashed to the ground,” was the sad reply.

I went to the meeting, leaving that disconsolate heart to bear its burden in secret, but in submission to God.

The meeting over, I returned to the house before

taking the train to my home; but at once, on entering, I was met by the father, who grasped my hand, saying, "Come in, come in," so warmly that I felt that he had some good news to tell me.

"Have you heard of Charlie?" I ventured to ask.

"Yes, he is in the house; he is upstairs washing himself, and will soon be down."

The joy of the dear old man was really indescribable. "Tell me," said I, "the story."

"Well," he replied, "while you were at the meeting the bell rang, and when the maid opened the door she saw, in the gloaming, the figure of a sailor, who said to her: 'Is Mrs — at home?' 'No, she is not,' was her answer, whereupon the figure began to retreat in the darkness. But," said I to myself, "that's Charlie's voice; so I ran to the door, and called out 'Charlie! Charlie! You are as welcome as ever.' He recrossed the threshold; I flung my arms around him, and pressed him to my heart."

Oh! how these lovely words flowed from the lips of that tender-hearted father; how, in one glad moment, the load of months was removed, and the broken heart bound up! I would not have missed that sight for anything: The only offset was that Charlie had asked only for his mother. He thought that a mother's love was stronger than a father's. Had Jacob no love for Joseph? Had David no love for his wayward Absalom? A father's heart is not made of steel. When I heard the tale of delight, and relief, and gratified affection, I said to myself:

“The story of the ‘prodigal son’ is a reality; here it is illustrated and proved.”

A finer proof could not have been given. Think of the story as it fell from the lips of our blessed Lord; study the picture; look at that-favoured lad leaving the old paternal dwelling, its plenty, its comfort, its love and sunshine, in order to gratify his wretched self, and wallow in sin. Well, he had his fling and got his fill, like many another; but want befell him in due time; husks would have been a savoury food; destitution and death stared him in the face; friends he had none; to feed swine was but the witness of his fall; no man gave to him; hope had fled from his bosom. Suicide? Stay, Prodigal! what, whose image is that you can trace through the cloud?

It is that of my father; but does he, can he love me? Does he remember me still—me the wilful, the wicked, the worthless? Could I crave a husk at his hand, or a hire for my service?

Dare I venture? It is that or starvation, for “I perish with hunger.”

Yes, “I will arise and go to my—my father.” He came, and came slowly, because full of misgiving and doubt; but his first step homeward was (in one sense) the signal for the outrush of the father to meet, and embrace, and kiss, and clothe, and welcome home the poor, friendless, helpless, but penitent prodigal.

And this is the way of God the Father toward such as we, portrayed, as it is for us, in the inimit-

able but perfectly true story of the prodigal son, in the deathless words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Luke xv.

There is no need of the intervention of a mother of any kind or name. The sinner may go direct to the Father, whose heart is one of profound compassion, and who "willeth that all should be saved."

And so we read: "Herein is love, not that we loved God [how sadly true!], but that He loved us [how wonderful!], and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" [how absolutely necessary for the maintenance of His holiness, and as the sole but solid ground of our blessing] (1 John iv. 10). "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke xv. 10). J. W. S.

AN OFFICER'S TESTIMONY.

I BELIEVE the gospel is 'the power of God unto salvation' (Rom. i. 16). It has come to me as God's message of pardon and peace. It has transformed me—once a rebel sinner—into a child of God. It is the only message which means emancipation to the captive souls of sin-sunken humanity."

Such is the bright and decided testimony of Captain E. Robertson, R.F.C., a Mons, Marne, and Ypres veteran, who was killed in India by his machine catching fire in mid-air and crashing to earth on 5th December 1917.

Mark, the gospel "is *the power of God* unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16).

I know that many sneer at it, many think they know of some better way, but when brought to the test every other way fails, and turns out to be simply another of Satan's counterfeits.

The gospel is based, on its negative side, on the fact of man's utter helplessness to save himself, and in this respect *it stands alone*. Every spurious gospel, and every attempt by man to accomplish or aid his own salvation, rests upon the false idea of some goodness in man. God's gospel sweeps all this entirely aside, and brings in its own blessed story that "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6), "while we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8), and so "when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rom. v. 10).

Man is in himself an utterly ruined creature. Deeply significant of this are the Lord's words, "Now is the judgment of this world" (John xii. 31). When? At the great day of judgment, as men say? No, but in the days of His flesh, nearly two thousand years ago.

Man had his four thousand years' trial, without law and under law, and the end of his probation was the cross, where by wicked hands, directed by a more wicked heart, he crucified the personification of goodness, in the Person of the Lord Jesus, between two malefactors.

Talk of human culture, there at Calvary see its outcome! Talk of man having any hand in his own salvation — of you, friend, doing anything towards yours!

Look at Calvary, and see the climax of man's efforts, *i.e.*, the murder of the Son of God, who came in goodness and grace into a world that would not have Him at any price, and of which you are part and parcel.

But notice what Captain Robertson said, and what every one who believes the simple grand old gospel finds: "It has transformed me—once a rebel sinner—into a child of God."

Here is a metamorphosis for you! Can you find anything like it, friend?

"How can the gospel do this?" do you ask. The answer is blessed and simple:—

"And did the holy and the just,
The Sovereign of the skies,
Stoop down to man's estate and dust,
That guilty worms might rise?"

Yes, He did, and more:—

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

And "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John i. 12).

Yes, as Captain Robertson says, the gospel *emancipates*—takes the confessedly guilty sinner

out of the awful condition in which he finds himself, and gives him a perfect standing in righteousness before the God of holiness.

He sees, by faith, his guilt laid upon his adorable Substitute, he sees the precious blood flow beneath the stroke of infinite justice; and he hears the triumphal shout of victory, "It is finished." He stands where the fire of judgment has been, and been met, and stands in perfect safety. He stands on the foundation which infinite love has laid at infinite cost, where infinite justice is satisfied, and infinite love can pour out its treasures unhinderedly. Thank God, the gospel is for the lost and the guilty, the hell-deserving, or where would you and I come in for its blessings?

Righteous there are none, "no, not one," says the Scripture. *Self-righteous* there are many; but they are what the Lord called them: "Whited sepulchres." For such the gospel has no charm; but for the heavy laden, the sin-sick, the awakened, it is the sweetest music.

Alas! for the self-righteous. They may say to the Lord, "We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence" (Luke xiii. 26), but He will say, "Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity" (ver. 27).

Oh! friend, may these terrible accents never fall on your awakened ears; but now, while the Saviour calls, may you believe His word, and flee to Him from the wrath that must inevitably fall on all who know Him not as the Saviour who came to save the LOST.

GOD'S LOVE IN ALL THINGS.

I MAY not be able to understand God's love in all things He passes me through, but if I wait on Him, I shall learn that He makes "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. viii. 28). In all His doings love comes out, the blessed unfolding of His nature.

Having tasted His love, I am to show it in deeds. Talking of love is not love in action; God loved, and His love took action and form. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we *ought* also to love one another" (1 John iv. 11). There is no "must" in Christianity, but there are a good many "*oughts*." We ought to love one another. Why? Because God has loved us.

What men saw in Jesus when He was here ought to be seen in you *and me* to-day, the love of God manifested by us. That is Christianity. The great necessity to-day is downright, real, practical following Christ in life, and ways, and conversation, and behaviour. If you and I are living the life in Christ, then the love of God will be flowing out from us.

It is a great thing to bear in mind that the believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. This should make him careful where he goes, because, wherever he goes, he cannot leave *Him outside the door*; He never leaves the Christian; even when grieved He never forsakes. He is God's seal until the day of redemption.

W. T. P. W.

"I'VE GOT TO MEET GOD." *

SUCH was the piteous wail that could be heard well down the street, striking the inhabitants of that little village with awe.

They knew from whence came that oft-repeated cry. It came from the lips of a young man, only four and thirty years of age. Strong drink had wrought its awful havoc, and now death was about to claim its victim.

His old companions dropped in to see him, but were glad to escape out of his presence, and forget, if they could, the haunting cry: "I've got to meet God."

When a pillow, which he had requested, was placed under his head, he exclaimed, "I shan't want it long; I shall soon be in the fire."

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "had I to meet the devil I wouldn't mind, I've been so much in his company; but it's GOD I've got to meet, and oh! my sins. Oh! that I had strength to crawl to the railway line, and throw myself under the train, and thus end this suspense. To lie here, and know that I have got to meet God is unbearable."

It was a terrible sight, so terrible that even one of his godless companions pleaded with him again and again, saying, "Turn to God, old fellow, and He'll have mercy upon you."

This went on till his relatives, unable to stand

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the sight any longer, sought to soothe him by plying him with strong drink and narcotics.

They might as well have sought to stay the incoming tide, or the march of the sun across the heavens. Nothing could hinder this exercise of soul begun by God's Holy Spirit in this young man's soul.

He knew the letter of Scripture well, but he *hated* the gospel, and charged God with being the author of his misery. All this opposition had to be beaten down. Several Christians sought to see him. Alas! how the devil often uses friends to keep the gospel from being heard. The young man had "just been washed," or he had "just fallen asleep," or his mother had "just been to see him." Three times in one day did a visitor find his way thus hindered.

But prayer can sweep away obstacles. At last the visitor gained access to the bedside of the dying man. He quoted that well-known and much blessed verse of Holy Writ:—

"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

His terrible struggle was over, and he lay quietly now, glad to listen.

"Did you say '*all*,' sir? Are you quite sure it says '*all*,' sir?"

"Yes, the verse says, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from ALL sin.'"

He lay wrapt in thought, murmuring to himself in earnest soliloquy, "All sin . . . all . . . sin." Then presently he said: "Yes, I recollect it now, for it all comes back again across my mind. But it was many

years ago, when I was in America, I went to hear Mr Moody preach, and I seem to hear it all again, for he spoke the very same about the blood as you do. Thank God . . . *all sin.*"

The visitor's heart was full. Here was another trophy of redeeming grace, a brand plucked from the burning.

Calling the next evening he found the dying man very low indeed, only able to speak in a whisper, but he greeted his visitor with a bright smile, and said :—

"God has answered your prayers; you will meet me in heaven."

The inquiry was pressed why he had this hope, and he was reminded that nothing that defiles shall ever enter heaven, whereupon he replied :—

"Because Jesus died for the likes of me."

What a beautiful answer. What a contrast between the peace and joy that filled that dying chamber, and the noise and glare of the fair that was attracting so many a little lower down the street.

Within a few hours the young man died, to be with Christ, which is "FAR BETTER."

My reader, death lies before YOU. How will you enter eternity? You may not be a drunkard, but like this young man you need a Saviour, and you need Him as much as he did.

The best of us have sinned grievously. The need of repentance presses. Oh! how little men think of sin nowadays. How careless! how indifferent! all around us are. How difficult to rouse men and women to concern for their souls.

Let me plead with you. Life is so uncertain. Death lies before you. And if you die a sinner in your sins, what comes after death? JUDGMENT. Are you prepared for that?

Oh! be like that murderer in this. He was near the day of execution. When asked what his hope was, he replied, "'God so loved the world'—God has opened wide His arms of love," and suiting the action to the words he opened wide his arms—"that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and, closing his outstretched arms in the form of an embrace, he added, "And God has folded me in His arms of love, and I enter eternity without fear."

Thus the poor murderer quoted that wonderful verse, John iii. 16, with happy interpolations, showing that the verse was not only in his mind but in his heart, and that he was a true believer in the Lord Jesus.

Can you not say that you are a believer in the Lord Jesus? Do not rest till you can.

Remember, "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth . . . from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

A. J. P.

"THAT WHICH WAS LOST."

THE burning rays of an August sun were falling in meridian power on the level and fully ripe corn-fields of Somersetshire, as, over a quarter of a century ago, I wended my way from a village,

where I had overnight preached the gospel, to another where I was announced to hold a meeting that evening. Pushing along at a good pace I saw before me, and eventually overtook, a little donkey-cart containing two women, evidently of a humble station in life. Offering them each a gospel tract, the elder, who held the reins, stopped her conveyance and thanked me courteously for the gift. A moment or two of conversation soon revealed that she was a simple and happy believer in the Lord Jesus, and knew her sins were forgiven through faith in His name.

"And do you know this blessed Saviour also?" I inquired of the younger, who was her daughter. A sad shake of the head, accompanied by a deepening of the settled melancholy of her face, was the only response she made; but her mother put in, "No, she does not yet know the Saviour. She is in great sorrow, and cannot rise above it."

I had noticed that each was draped in mourning, and now learned that the younger had several months previously lost her only child, a babe of tender years. "She has never looked up since," now added the mother, "and refuses to be comforted."

Expressing my sympathy with the bereaved mother, I said, "But it surely ought to be a comfort to you to know that your dear babe is with Christ."

"Oh!" she cried, "if I were only sure of that, I would not care what became of me."

"Sure of that," said I, "why, how can you doubt it?"

"That is the cause of her sorrow," put in her mother again. "She thinks her child is lost for

ever, and she is indifferent as to what happens to herself." How deep and real is a mother's love, I thought; but turning again to the stricken woman, I simply said, "Have you never read what the Lord Jesus says about the 'little ones' in Matthew xviii.?"

"What does He say?" was the sad reply.

Taking out a little Testament, I read, "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus *called a little child* unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. . . . Take heed that ye despise not one of these *little ones*; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of Man is COME TO SAVE that which was lost. . . . It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these *little ones* should perish" (Matt. xviii. 1-3, 10, 11, 14).

The sorrow-stricken one was arrested by the blessed Lord's statements as to His interest in the "*little ones*," and she listened with the deepest attention as I read on. At verse 11, I pointed out that the expression "that which was lost" applied simply and directly to the "little ones." They are not because young in years therefore "innocent," as men foolishly say; but being children of Adam, are "lost" as such, and therefore the Son of Man has come "*to save*" them. His work on the cross avails for them, and as they do not refuse it, He applies its

efficacy for them—and His heart is gratified in saving them.

"Observe," I added, "that in Luke xix. 10, where the Lord is dealing with and addressing Himself to a man who was old enough to have become 'chief' and 'rich,' He says, 'The Son of Man is come to SEEK and to SAVE that which is lost.' He has to seek us big grown-up folk, for, like silly, foolish sheep, we have all run away from Him when we had strength and age to do so. Not so the 'little ones,' yet nevertheless are they '*lost*' too. Them He *saves* outright. Us He has first to seek. The 'little ones'—your dear babe, for instance—never ran away from Him, so He had not to seek it; but being the child of a sinful parent, it was '*lost*,' and He died to save it, and I believe He has it safely now in His blessed arms. Don't you believe it too, now?"

The surcharged heart found relief in a copious shower of tears, as the truth of the eternal safety of her child burst upon her, and then "Thank God, thank God for that," fell from her lips. "Yes, I believe that," she added, "and oh! what a comfort to know my babe is safe with Jesus. I don't care what happens to me now that I know he is safe."

"But would not you like to be saved, too? Will you not let the blessed Saviour that has already saved your dear child, save you?"

"If He will have me," she softly answered.

"Oh! He will have you, without doubt. Just trust Him simply. You see He has been seeking you for a long time, and perhaps he saw the only

way to get at your heart—so full of earth and its ties—was to take away your darling child, thus giving you a link with heaven, and now He is calling upon you to surrender yourself fully to Him. Will you not do it?"

"He has saved my child, I will let Him save me too. Yes, I will trust Him, for He came to save 'that which was lost,' and I know I am lost, and He died to save me too. I see it all now clearly. Thank God, thank God."

I needed to say no more. The cloud had departed from her face, the load from her heart, the weight of sin from her conscience, and in the conscious sense of the favour of the Lord she rejoiced in His goodness to herself and to her child.

It is said that the Eastern shepherd if he will take his flock over a brook easily effects it. He does not drive his sheep, he leads them, and when he would have them cross the water—which they like not—he simply takes a lamb under each arm, goes over, and deposits them on the other side. The anxious dam follows its offspring without hesitation, and the flock, following suit, is soon over.

Thus is it too with us oftentimes. God takes from our side here some tenderly loved one to scenes of rest and glory on high. The hearts of others left behind them get awaken'd, and the matter ends in solid conversion to God.

Reader, how is it with you? Are you still among "them that are lost"? Why is this? Perhaps you say you cannot tell. Let me then point out the

reason to you in the words of the Holy Ghost. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to *them that are lost*; in whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). Yes, the devil brings in the things of time and sense to block out of your vision what is eternal and divine. If you are wise you will decline to be any longer duped. Birds are wiser than men. Of them Scripture says, "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird" (Prov. i. 17). But Satan sets his net for careless sinners, and in they walk, to their eternal ruin. Friend, be wise in time!

W. T. P. W.

THE FRENCH PORCELAIN PAINTER'S CONVERSION.

SOME years ago there lived in Paris a painter in porcelain, a clever, intelligent, careless young fellow. Like many French mechanics, he had drunk freely of the poison of infidelity from the writings of Voltaire. He knew nothing of the Bible, except through the objections raised against it, and was living without hope and without God in the world.

Such was his state of mind when he was taken seriously ill. He felt his end to be approaching; but his dark and comfortless opinions afforded him no support. Not a ray of sunshine illumined his gloomy prospects. His passage from time to

eternity seemed likely to be what another infidel had described as his own, "Just a leap in the dark."

Providentially there was residing in the same house an earnest Christian lady from England. Hearing of his illness, she obtained leave to visit him and to read to him the Holy Scriptures. His pale face, his lustrous eyes, his laboured breathing, showed plainly that he had not long to live. Still his mind was perfectly clear and his faculties were unimpaired. She felt deeply for him, and lost no time in telling him simply and lovingly the old, old story of Jesus and His dying love.

He listened with the keenest interest. The gospel was all new to him. It was indeed "good news." Such a religion was very different from what he had supposed Christianity to be. Like many in Roman Catholic countries, and some even in our own land, he connected the faith of Christ with the confessional, the Mass, the worship of the Virgin Mary, saints and angels, and other false notions.

Instead of these unscriptural doctrines the visitor pointed directly to the Lord Jesus Christ as the one sufficient sacrifice for sinners, and she urged him to come at once with all his heart in simple faith to God the Father through Him. As she read and explained the Word of God his prejudices and unbeliefs vanished as mists before the rising sun.

God was seen in a new and true light as the righteous, yet loving, Father. The sins and rebellion of his past life troubled his conscience; but he now found that the Bible offered him at once full and

free forgiveness of all through the Saviour's atoning blood, sealed by His resurrection and ascension. For some time he lay silently pondering those precious truths. The lady left him with an earnest prayer for God's blessing on His own message.

Next day she returned, and fearing lest her previous appeals should have failed to convince him, she then said, "Monsieur, do tell me truly whether you are now putting your whole trust in the Lord Jesus Christ?" The dying man raised himself panting for breath, and with one last effort exclaimed in French, pronouncing each letter singly, "Je l'ai" ("I have Him or it").

His wife was close by listening with deepest interest to the conversation. Her mind was darker than his in spiritual matters, and at first she misunderstood his words. They were the very French phrase commonly used by painters when they have finished a piece of work to their own satisfaction. So she thought his mind must be wandering and trifling with the great subject. As she afterwards told a Protestant pastor, she felt completely upset.

"I was quite careless myself," she said, "but to jest at such a time and under such circumstances seemed perfectly shocking." Turning to her husband she asked for an explanation. The poor fellow was just able to convey to her mind that what he really meant was to express his confidence in the Saviour. So the lady had understood him, and she left the room full of hope that the Holy Spirit had enabled the dying man to rest in the Lord Jesus and to accept Him as his own personal Redeemer.

Nor did the good work end there. Her husband's peaceful end left a deep impression on the widow's heart. From that time she began to be a regular and devout attendant at the mission services, and eventually became a decided, happy, useful Christian.

This simple account, drawn from the report of the McAll Mission, beautifully illustrates the nature of saving faith and the Saviour's sufficiency for every one's need. It offers, indeed, no encouragement to those who, having often heard the gospel, wilfully reject or carelessly neglect it. Such run a very serious risk of finding the door of mercy closed at last upon them for ever. The Holy Ghost saith, "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iv. 7).

This French painter had not enjoyed such opportunities. The Bible had been to him an almost unknown book. But as soon as the offer of salvation reached him in its simplicity, he embraced it heartily, and then could say with certainty, "I know Him."

Faith is the empty hand of the soul, and just as with our bodily hand we take our daily food, so by faith we appropriate to our need Jesus, "the Bread of life," and feed on Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving. So John the Apostle writes, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John v. 12). A poor Irish boy was therefore quite right who, being asked what is saving faith, replied, "It is just grasping Christ with the heart." W. B—t.

"YOU ARE AFRAID TO DIE."*

A PPEARANCES often deceive, for a casual observer would have detected little of fear in any of the crew of H.M.S. — as she sped onwards.

It was a hot corner in a recent naval action, and the uncertainties in such actions are great.

Amongst the crew was a sailor whom we will call Jim.

Jim was known on board as a careless fellow, who boasted that he wanted none of God, or of religion. There was nothing in them, he said, and he could do without either.

A Christian sailor who knew Jim's boastings well was engaged near him, and could see that they were not proof against the roar of battle and the probability of a shell or a torpedo landing him in eternity in a moment.

It was then, just as he happened to pass him, that the Christian looked Jim in the face, and quietly but firmly repeated the words, "You are afraid to die!"

No more was said by either.

The action soon ceased, and their ship returned to her base, little harmed.

A few days after the little band of Christians on board were gathered below for their usual Bible

* Reproduced in the "Flag Series," No. 14. May be had of our publishers, 2s. 6d. per 100.

reading, when, as they began to read, who should come down the hatchway but Jim, and take his stand at the back of the group.

Thinking he had perhaps come to oppose, no one paid any heed to him, and the reading went on, but as nearly half an hour passed, and Jim had not uttered a word, the reader, who was none other than the speaker on the day of battle, asked him what he wanted, for his demeanour was so unusual.

"I can't get those words of yours out of my mind," replied Jim; "they ring in my ears night and day. I am afraid to die; what must I do?"

A blessed question indeed. Have you ever asked it, friend? "What must I do to be saved?" is a question which makes angels rejoice. It means that an immortal soul has awakened to the fact that *he is lost*.

Have you?

Jim was gladly pointed to the Lord Jesus as the One who had *done everything*, and who was waiting to give pardon and peace to a sinner like him.

There on his knees before God Jim believed on the Lord Jesus as the Saviour who had died for him, and rose up a saved man, no longer afraid to die.

Oh! the folly of trying to do without God,—of keeping up appearances when conscience says, "You know you are all wrong."

Jim now calls himself a fool for so doing, while he delights to tell of the Saviour's grace that could receive, forgive, and bless eternally a sinner like

him; and he recommends you to follow his example, so that you, too, may not be *afraid to die*.

“What must I do to be saved?”

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

TRUE HEROISM.

WE read that when one of the most famous of the victors of the great Indian Mutiny—Sir Henry Havelock—was felled by an attack of malignant cholera, and was told that he could not survive, he calmly replied: “I have prepared for this for forty years.”

Wise man he!

In early days of health, strength, vigour, and opportunity, he did what every man, soldier, sailor, or civilian, should do. He did not wait till he had reached the fag-end of life, or the dull, feeble, powerless evening of his days, to achieve, by the grace of God, the one all-important act of existence.

He turned to God!

Yes, and so genuine was the turn that the long period of forty full years of constant and severe testing, in the awkward conditions of army life, witnessed no cowardly retreat, nor disavowal of his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He died as he lived, in triumph!

Here, then, is one well-known witness to the

saving power and grace of God; one, but there are thousands on all hands, not confined to civilians who may retire into the shelter of their sweet family circle, and thus escape the banter and scorn of the godless, but who could face the storm of opposition, and keep the flag of faith flying right on to the end. Let this fact be noted.

None dare say, with these witnesses on all hands, that such a life is impossible. It is not impossible. It is incumbent!

True, we need strength beyond our own, but He who saves can surely keep. He never fails those who trust in Him—never.

Suppose this paper, as it reaches the "Front," or the "Man of War," should fall into the hands of a young fellow of twenty years of age. He kindly reads it over—he thinks—he feels that he should get right with God—he fears—he is overwhelmed by the prospect of forty years, and, alas! he hesitates.

But he is gambling his soul for eternity—an eternal hell or heaven. The stake is too great. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31)—fearful indeed!

Friend, you must turn to God at all cost—for, mark you, once damned, it is for ever! "The wrath of God abideth" (John iii. 36).

When I was a young soldier of hardly twenty I asked my soul this question: "Soul! shall it be forty years of sin and an eternal hell, or forty years of salvation and an eternal heaven?"

Answer I must—definitely and finally.

Well, which ? There I stood before God, a sinner in need of pardon, faced by eternal consequences of weal or woe, unable to save myself by any act of mine, however meritorious, the only question being would, could God save me ?

All I can say, and that to His praise, is that He could and did.

Call this my preparation for death and eternity if you like. Anyhow, more than fifty years can witness, amid all their changes, that the blessed God can pardon, reconcile, and keep any and every man who only turns in faith and repentance to Him.

Let me (as I surely may) recommend to you, my reader, this glorious salvation—to be secured now so freely, but on the other side of death to be obtained not by the price of ten thousand worlds, and then when most wanted !

Mark the word "*now*" which occurs twice in this one verse : "Behold, *NOW* is the accepted time, behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

Then trusting the Lord Jesus as your personal Saviour,

"All your sins shall be forgiven,
 Oh ! how He loves !
 Backward shall your foes be driven,
 Oh ! how He loves !
 Best of blessings He'll provide you,
 Nought but good shall e'er betide you,
 Safe to glory He will guide you,
 Oh ! how He loves !"

THE CABMAN'S CONVERSION.

“WILL you say a few words, Doctor, to a brother in deep distress about his soul?”

The speaker was a devoted servant of Christ, now gone to be with his Master, who spent all his spare moments in preaching the gospel. His occupation was that of a cabman, and his cab, which was his own, had on it what he called “the heavenly coat of arms.” On the panel of one door was painted “God is love,” and on the other “God is light.” At night, when his grey horse was comfortably stalled, he might be often seen at a street corner, as with bull’s-eye lamp fastened to his waist, he read the Word of God, and then preached the good news to the passers-by.

Anyone who entered his cab was at once confronted by a large printed card, on which were the words, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.” He was driving me on my rounds, and I had just come down a long common stair from seeing a patient, and was stepping into the cab, when he thus addressed me.

It was a terrible day of rain, and drivers and horses were fairly drenched; but standing by his side was another man with whom he had been conversing. He too was a cabman, and Peter J—— had been conversing with him while their respective fares were engaged indoors.

Turning to the anxious man, I soon found him to be a really awakened soul, but the deluge of rain

made it impossible to carry on a conversation at that moment, so I asked him if he could not come and see me in the evening.

"I shall not be off the stand till eleven o'clock," said he.

"Never mind," I replied; "you come to my house at eleven o'clock, and I will be ready for you."

That evening, a few minutes past eleven, the bell rang, and the poor drenched cabman came in. Before saying a word to him about his soul, I made him sit down to eat a little hot supper, which I felt quite certain he must need. He sat down, ate one mouthful, and then pushing the plate from him, said: "Beg pardon, sir, but I'm that *wretched* I cannot eat any more. Oh! what am I to do to be saved?"

A long conversation followed. The sweet story of the love of Christ was unfolded, the value of His blood declared, and the estimate which God had of His work asserted. The truth entered his soul, faith grasped the simple gospel of the grace of God, his soul passed into peace, joy, and liberty, and he exclaimed: "Thank God, I see it all. I believe Jesus; I see that He died for me, a poor lost sinner; I trust in Him; I believe His blood has washed all my sins away. I see it clearly." And tears of joy rolled down his cheeks.

I then suggested our thanking God for this grace to his soul, to which he gladly assented. We got on our knees, and I thanked the Lord for His mercy to this anxious soul. No sooner had I finished than he broke out in a stream of praise and thanksgiving,

the like of which I have rarely heard from a new-born soul, and immediately after breathed the most tender and fervent petitions to God for the salvation of his wife—a sure sign of new birth. When we have learned the goodness of God for ourselves, we always desire that others should share it. And if we can impart the news of it to them, we seek so to do.

Getting off our knees, I begged him now to sit down and finish his supper. Again he seated himself, took one mouthful, and then again pushing the plate from him, said: "Beg pardon, sir, but I am that *full* I could not eat another mouthful. I'll away home and tell the wife what God has done for my soul." And rejoicing in Christ, he departed.

Reader, do you know anything about this fulness of joy, this satisfaction in Christ? Have you yet learned the blessedness of God's forgiveness? Perhaps you are an anxious soul? Is it so? Very likely you began this year careless about your soul, but God's Spirit has wrought in you, and now you have a desire to be saved. If so, do not procrastinate. God always blesses earnestness. Turn to Jesus now. Come to Him as you are. Believe His love. Trust His precious blood. Pillow your soul on His bosom of changeless love. He will not cast you out. None are too bad, too vile, too far off for Jesus to save. You trust Him. He will save you.

Are you "*wretched*" or "*full*"?

Do you ask the question, "What must I do to be saved"? Hear the divine answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

W. T. P. W.

UP OR DOWN.

WE were passing through London the other day. Coming up from the Underground Tube Station in one of the lifts, a gentleman remarked to us how much the lift cage resembled something infinitely more important.

Said he, "It is always going in one of two directions, *i.e.*, either upward or downward; and so," said he, "are we, for we are all travelling, either heavenward—upward, or," speaking with solemnised tone, "hellward—downward."

As we neared the top, and we all parted one from the other, I wondered how many would meet at the top end—the heavenward end of life's little journey hence. It took but a very short time for us to ascend that day from the station below to the street above, and it was a matter that was only a small incident in our lives, as to whether our journey were to the street or to the lower station. It would all link together some purpose in our little life, but as to the issue raised by the foregoing question, how vitally important is its consideration!

We are passengers from one place to another—from this world to the next—and into one condition or the other we *must* spend eternity! Reader, reflect, I pray you.

I passed a nursery garden a short time ago, and finding the old man who generally leaned on the

garden railing, and who was too old to do much work, absent, made inquiries after him, and found he was very ill. We left him a book, "The Journey and its End." On passing some time after, we found on inquiry that his little life's journey had ended, but of its landing-place, and where his soul went, we could not ascertain.

How foolish to neglect a research on which such valuable interests rest. If we sow to the earth, what we sow we must reap—that is a law in this world, and specially true in regard to the next. Is my reader sowing to the earth, or, as it is called, "to the flesh" (Gal. vi. 8)? If so, of the earth or the flesh, you will reap corruption. If you are sowing to the Spirit, you will "of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. vi. 8).

May you be wise, "understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. v. 17), even your salvation, for He willeth not the death of a sinner, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9).

And He says to you and me: "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 43). And then—

"My heart shall triumph in my Lord,
And bless His works and bless His word ;
Thy works of grace, how bright they shine !
How deep Thy counsels ! how divine !"

THREE QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS.

A COACHMAN, whom I met in the island of Guernsey some years ago, told me how he got peace with God.

For years his wife, who was a Christian, had taken him when they lived in London to hear all the great preachers of the day, such as Spurgeon, Moody, etc. He became as familiar with the terms of the gospel message as the preachers themselves, yet never was able to appropriate it for himself.

About three months previous to our conversation he stopped behind at the close of a gospel service, and told the preacher how he stood in the matter, viz., that he *knew* the gospel well, was getting an old man, and was troubled because he could not appropriate the message.

The preacher asked the coachman three questions. Will the reader, anxious to be right with God, allow me to ask him the same questions, and as we record the coachman's answers, will *you* too answer the questions, and take time to realise the seriousness of your answers?

* * * * *

QUESTION No. 1.

Did the Lord Jesus die for YOU?

"Yes, I believe that," answered the coachman.
What is *your* answer?

Thank God, there is no doubt about the matter.

"Christ Jesus . . . gave Himself a Ransom FOR ALL" (1 Tim. ii. 6). But how important to take this wondrous fact home *for yourself*. Thank God for the *general* statement. "ALL" takes in every sinner in every country in the world. But till you claim

the *particular* you will never get the blessing, that is, "Christ died **FOR ME.**" Can *you* take this ground?

* * * * *

QUESTION No. 2.

Was the Lord Jesus raised for YOU?

"Yes, I believe that," answered the coachman.

What is *your* answer?

The resurrection is the great proof that Christ satisfied God as to the claims to His throne in respect of sin. It proves that He atoned for sin, and therefore conquered death. It proves that Christ is a triumphant Saviour.

Faith can take up the language of Scripture, "Who was delivered for our offences, *and was raised again* **FOR OUR JUSTIFICATION.** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 25; v. 1).

* * * * *

QUESTION No. 3.

"What more do you want?" asked the preacher.

At once the scales fell from the coachman's eyes. May they fall from yours.

Trusting Christ as His Saviour, he saw in His death and resurrection all that was necessary for his salvation. What more could he want, and what more could he have? Surely nothing!

And you, my reader? What is there to prevent your receiving such a Saviour, and resting with assurance on such a firm foundation as the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank God, you are as welcome to all these glorious benefits as to the air you breathe. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

A. J. P.

A TALENTED ARTIST'S TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

NOT many years ago the Scotch express was rushing on its way to the great metropolis.

It passed in the dead of night through large towns with their sleeping populations, and through scattered hamlets, in one of which I lived. Little did I think, as from my bed I heard that fast on-rushing train, that it was so soon to be a wreck, and I am sure that none of the passengers thought some of their number were so soon to reach that destination from whence no traveller returns.

Dawn was breaking, and with it came a fog, as a result of which there was a collision. The engine was overturned, and the carriages smashed to match-wood. Word was sent along the line, and willing helpers were soon on the spot. Dead, dying, and injured were sought from amongst the wreckage, and a special train from a city, through which the wrecked train had so shortly passed, was sent to bear them to the mortuary and the hospital, where doctors and nurses, full of sympathy, did all they could to relieve and mitigate the pains of the poor suffering ones.

There have been many railway accidents since the one I relate, but the case of one who lost his life through this will ever live in my memory. It was one in which the doctors were greatly interested, that of a young man, whom after careful

examination they found to be terribly injured, in fact quickly dying.

They knew him to be a rising young artist, whose hand was just within the grasp of fame, and their hearts were touched at the thought of one with such a brilliant career before him so soon to be cut off. One doctor went to his bedside and broke the sad news as gently as he could, telling him he had better make his peace with God. Looking at them all the poor dying sufferer said, "Ah! it's all right for you fellows, you have plenty of time; but I have worked for art, lived for art, art has been my god."

Hearing this from one who was present, my heart was stirred, and I could but exclaim, "Oh! that some one there could have told him peace was already made at the cross of Jesus," for had many years been given the young artist, he never could have made his peace with God; but there was time even then to accept the peace which Christ had made when He died on the cross. Yes, one look would have been enough, had he seen Christ nailed to that cross suffering for sin, the sinless One, and trusted Him as his Saviour.

God has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 4). "So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). How then is it possible for a poor sinner to be at peace with a righteous God? Only by acknowledging to God that he is a sinner, worthy of the punishment of death, and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, "Who," in language of faith can say, "His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24).

He "made peace through the blood of His cross"
(Col. i. 20).

Dear reader, accept the peace which Christ made, and God will accept you on the ground of what Christ is and has done. Own your unworthiness and unfitness to do anything for your own salvation; for—

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

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

This is the most important question you will ever have to settle, of accepting or refusing God's salvation; don't put it off, let me beg of you. If you die in your sins, you will be raised in your sins, and judged in your sins. This is God's word, whether you believe it or not.

The questions of this life only affect us for a short time, but this is one which will affect us throughout all eternity, so once more let me entreat you to settle it now. This is one of the many opportunities God has given you, and you may never have another. If you accept Christ now, the One who has made peace for you, your heart will be filled with such a peace as you have never known before, a peace which the world cannot give or take away. May God grant it.

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 leaped 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, unfortunately 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-

* To be had in separate form from the Publishers. 3s. per 100.

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 populace 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 window 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,” etc., etc. 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. 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 slowly coming 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 the dead. 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 maybe 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, O 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 friend, 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. . . . 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 John the Baptist. "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 will 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.

“Love’s redeeming work is done;
Fought the fight, the battle won:
Death in vain forbids His rise,
Christ hath opened Paradise.”

"I CAN REST MY SOUL UPON THAT."

SHE was dying of pneumonia. But a few days previous the poor woman had been in ordinary health, washing for herself, and some of her neighbours. Now she lay dying.

Her life had been godless. She cared nothing for her soul, nor the things of eternity.

Not far from her house, at the corner of the street, was a small general shop kept by a Christian woman. She and her husband had visited and prayed with the dying woman, and we trust their words had prepared the ground for what followed.

On a Saturday night the husband called for the writer, and together they proceeded to the death-bed. What a joy to carry the message of God's redeeming love!

Suppose, reader, this was to be *your* last night on earth. Would you fear meeting God? Or would your sins, your indifference to God's loving entreaties, overwhelm you? How would you face the thought that after death comes the judgment?

After a few words with the dying woman, sufficient to gain her confidence and put her at ease, the writer inquired, "Have you peace with God?"

"I have made my peace with God," the woman replied.

"How did that take place, and when?" the writer asked.

Her answer being unintelligible, and the woman being in evident pain, he inquired, "Shall I read you some of God's word?"

To this she assented, so looking to God for guidance he read distinctly and slowly, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life*" (John iii. 16). Then, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Then, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

On hearing these last words the dying woman raised her head, exclaiming, "I can rest my soul upon that."

Some conversation ensued, explanatory of the gospel, and then the writer asked, "Are you saved?"

The reply was, "Yes, I can rest my soul upon that."

Prayer followed, and various expressions came from the dying woman. "O Lord take me," she exclaimed once or twice.

At noon next day she died. Gone, but whither? We can only rely on the faithfulness of God's word.

Reader, we beseech you not to delay the question of your soul's salvation till your dying bed. You may never have one; but, if you have, it is a poor time to turn to the Lord—all opportunity of showing by your life that you belong to Him will then be gone. But, if on a dying bed, better late than never.

God hath declared, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2.) Right here and now, get the question of your soul's salvation settled.

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1).

THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

IT was Sunday before August Bank Holiday. I was returning home in a railway train from the city of N——, having been engaged in the Lord's work. My fellow passengers consisted of a lady with a sleeping child across her knees, and a gentleman with his wife. They were all perfect strangers to the eastern counties. The lady with the babe had arranged to meet her husband at L——, but the other two knew nothing about the town, having never been there before.

Their destination was several miles to the south of L——, far into the country. Through several delays since the time of their departure from home in the Midlands they had arrived very late in East Anglia, and found themselves in the unpleasant position of nearing L—— at 10.30 P.M., with no certain prospect as to shelter.

They explained to me their position, and I offered to do what I could for them. On arriving at L——, everything was in total darkness (war conditions), and we stood outside the station not knowing what to do. However, I ventured to approach a darkened hotel near by, and found the landlady was about. A brief explanation, and she kindly made such arrangements as was possible for them. And I bade them good-night.

The incident was suggestive to my mind. I thought of the condition of many and many a

traveller to the great terminus of Eternity. Dashing along the rails of time, on, on, on, knowing for certain they must eventually reach there, be it ever so late.

Dear reader, may I ask you what are your prospects? You're travelling on a journey. Eternity is your destination. You've never been there before, and when you arrive what will you do? Are your prospects clear? Do you know where you will lay your head?

Or are you like my fellow passengers? They did not know what they would do. On arrival, there they stood, practically homeless in the unlighted street.

May I, a stranger to you, offer you help? I would point you to those "everlasting habitations" of which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke. He referred to the Mammon of unrighteousness, and our responsibility to God as to it. "Make to yourselves," said He, "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (Luke xvi. 9). He spoke of the Father's house of many mansions and of His going to prepare a place for those who trusted Him. Will you not, in truest wisdom, listen to His loving voice, and accept His gracious offer to receive you in your forlorn, helpless condition and secure for you "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"? (2 Cor. v. 1). In order that this might be so,

"He passed through death's dark, raging flood
To make our rest secure."

Accept His gracious offer, now, at once. Secure

your place. Make sure of it, lest you reach your journey's end sooner than you think and find yourself homeless, friendless, a stranger in a strange land, in outer darkness, where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. God help you, and save you in His mercy.

J. H. E.

"THESE FORTY YEARS."

IT was on the 11th November 1878 that I attended a special week-night service for young people.

I was probably one of the youngest there, but thank God, not too young to be saved. A much used servant of the Lord, from London, gave an address on the story of the flood. He told us of man's wickedness, and of God's judgment; of God's merciful provision for those who cared to avail themselves of the way of escape and find shelter in the ark; and of man's disregard of it. Then he told us that judgment, still more terrible, is coming, and that only by fleeing to the Lord Jesus could we escape that doom.

In response to his kind invitation that any, who were anxious, should remain, I did so, for the Holy Spirit of God had been working in my conscience and heart.

That night I trusted the Lord Jesus, and when I reached home my dear mother could read in my happy face the glad news that her prayers had been answered, and that her boy was saved.

As I look back, how I do thank God for saving me when so young. I have been preserved from the manifold snares, entanglements, and allurements of the world.

Then I can thank God for forty years of joy. Clouds there have been, sorrows, and vicissitudes, doubts never, but amid them all, there was always One to whom I could turn, on whom I could lean, and in whom I could confide.

“There’s a Friend, His name is Jesus ;
A Friend in every circumstance of life the same ;
He bore our sins, our burdens grievous ;
And He is never, never known to change.”

Then there has been the privilege of service. What an inestimable honour that we should be permitted to serve Him at all, feeble and obscure though the service may be. How much our precious Lord has done for us ! He left the palace of Glory ; He became a Man ; He trod the earth a homeless Stranger ; He travelled to Gethsemane ; He wended His way to Calvary ; He laid down His life ; He shed His blood. What then would we withhold from Him ?

“Were the whole realm of nature ours,
That were an offering far too small ;
Love that transcends our highest powers
Demands our soul, our life, our all.”

Now we are waiting ; for we have been “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God ; and to *wait* for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered

us from the wrath to come" (1 Thes. i. 9, 10). We have a cloudless prospect, the being with, and being like the One who is to us dearer than the dearest; fairer than the fairest; better than the best; "the chiefest among ten thousand . . . yea, He is altogether lovely" (Song of Sol. v. 10 and 16).

"Lord, haste that day of cloudless ray,
That prospect bright, unfailing;
Where God shall shine in light divine,
In glory never fading."

Warrant for this paper, if such be required, will be found in Deuteronomy viii. 2.

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments or no."

The discovery of what is in our heart is humbling indeed: self-will, unfaithfulness, all that is so painful to Him; but the revelation of what is in His heart is splendid: faithful love, unwearied care, the greatest desire for our deepest blessing; every step of the journey, every act of His hand, every dispensation of His providence, have demonstrated what is in His heart.

"In the desert God will teach thee,
What the God that thou hast found,
Patient, gracious, powerful, holy,
All His grace shall there abound."

May we appeal to our younger readers particularly to decide for Christ here and now. When you have

thought about this matter, as you have no doubt frequently done, you have wondered what it would be like. We have endeavoured to tell you from experience what it is like; but no pen can describe it, no words can express it.

Every moment you remain away from the Saviour, you are *losing*! LOSING!! LOSING!!! "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him" (Ps. xxxiv. 8).

Here is God's way of salvation in a nutshell: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

W. B. D.

TWO SPHERES.

THE last hundred years are undoubtedly marked by the greatest advance in scientific knowledge and in engineering and mechanical skill that the world has ever witnessed.

The secrets of the stars have been searched out so that the sizes and distances of many and their very composition are known; the depths of the sea and earth have been made to tell their own stories; and the forces of nature so yoked in man's service that they drive his factories and his ships, transmit his messages, carry his merchandise, and enable him to move on sea and land and in the air with speed, ease, and luxury.

Yet although man has been so successful in many

spheres, there are two in which he has made no advance whatever. It is not that he has not tried, for by a multitude of methods that have extended over centuries he has grappled with these two problems, and the magnitude of his failure is witnessed by the tremendous efforts he has put forth to wrest from what he is pleased to call "nature" the secrets of the origin of life, and the fate of those who enter upon "the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns."

For he cannot with the whole range of created things at his disposal produce life from anything that is not itself living, so that to fashion the tiniest seed, or gnat, or mollusc is as impossible for him as to order the march of the celestial orbs, or to create the world on which he stands.

Nor can he restore to life again that which was once living, be it bird or plant or animal.

His knowledge of physics and mathematics affords no assistance here, nor does his acquaintance with chemistry and geology give him any light when investigating the ways of God, or the fate of his immortal soul.

See him as he stands beside the death-bed of the one he loves most, and for whom he would willingly give ten times over every penny he possesses, could he but stay the approach of death, and note that all the combined skill and resource of the medical profession cannot give him the desire of his heart. He may rebel, he may rage, he may lament, but yield he must.

Lord Leighton on his death-bed cried out in the intensity of his dying agony, "Is there nothing in the whole range of the British Pharmacopœia that can annul this pain?"

No! There was no antidote, nothing that could allay his suffering, much less avert the fast-approaching end.

Here man is face to face with what he is pleased to call the "Ultimate facts of nature." Here in the presence of the wisdom and strength of God the infidel is either mute, or compelled to confess alike his ignorance and impotence.

But is this really an "undiscovered country"? Are these the "Ultimate facts of nature"? Are its secrets unrevealed and its power capricious though infinite?

Apart from revelation there is no answer to these questions. But happily no prolonged search of Holy Scripture is needed to arrive at their just and proper solution.

Man's inability to produce life is plainly declared, for he is shown to be in death, for the Lord Jesus declares of men, "Ye have no life in you." We read also that the sinner is without strength and is moreover "dead in trespasses and sins," and "death has passed upon all for that all have sinned."

Thus whether he will have it or no, man is away from God, is in his sins, and has no life in him!

But this is not the worst feature, for of a truth eternal severance from God must be the portion of those who die without having learnt the truth as to

their awful condition, although the remedy for this is unfolded in the very pages where the depths of man's weakness and sin are announced.

For it requires but little further search before that which can dissipate the gloom and despair is opened to the view of the true seeker—to the one who seeks as for hid treasures (see Prov. ii. 4). There in shining letters may be seen, that though death may be never so powerful in its sway, and never so terrible of mien to men, yet it has been taken in hand, met in all its terrible force, and annulled by One competent to do it.

How magnificent is the declaration that "Through death He destroyed (literally *annulled*) him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15). Thus is the Lord Jesus announced as the mighty Victor, who has broken the devil's power, and brought deliverance to the fearful and to the captive. Having risen He has burst all the bonds of death, and is thus its Conqueror.

And blessed be God, all that He has gained by His death for man is available *to the one who believes in Him*. What a blessed gift! Who would not willingly bow to such a Saviour?

But let the search be continued, and it shall be seen what is the spring whence this wisdom flowed. *It is no less a fountain than the heart of God*. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him

should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

How sharp and clearly defined then are the respective spheres of man and of God. Death and sin are man's; life, power, and glory, God's.

"Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). Sin has brought death in its train, no matter what his estate or condition. Poverty or wealth, unselfish devotion or selfish lust, pleasurable indulgence or asceticism—all are practised in the domain of death.

What keen satisfaction then must come to the one who has learnt his helplessness and his true state in death, when he hears for the first time that there is One who has proved Himself superior to all that terrified him, and who shows Himself to be the Resurrection, and in whose mouth such a declaration is no mere boast.

In the greatest struggle that has ever been witnessed He is the Victorious One. He laid down His life—not died merely, or was a martyr—but in an act of amazing power, did what was never done before—He laid down His own life, and then in another action as great took back again that life He had laid down.

Neither death, nor the sealed and sentinelled sepulchre could keep Him in the power of the king of terrors.

Could the accumulated wisdom of the ages suggest such an answer to the difficulty in which man finds himself? Jesus by His death and resurrection has

made a way of escape from the realms of death to those of life. He has made the grand highway and thrown it open for faith to tread. There are no barriers on it. Everything that could obstruct the way to God has been done away with. Death, Satan, man's weakness, unrighteousness, sin are ineffectual to stop the way to Him who has life in Himself, who is the Originator of Life, the Sustainer of Life, and the Giver of Life, to all who put their trust in Him.

What folly then is it to seek to gain by dead works (carried on by those who are spiritually dead, in a scene of death) that which is so freely given to all who will take of the water of life freely.

Oh! for ten thousand tongues to proclaim to the millions that know it not, the glad news of John v. 24: "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."

This is the only way, this is the divinely appointed way. Why not take it, and come in for all the blessing that God is waiting to bestow on those that come unto Him by Christ?

"Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all."

THE THIEF OF ETERNITY.

SUCH is procrastination. An American preacher relates the following illustration of this:—

A bright boy heard and was deeply impressed by the text, "My son, give Me thine heart." Satan whispered, "*Time enough yet,*" and he put it off.

Ten years later a brilliant collegian heard the same text under circumstances which seemed to make that the time of his salvation. Again the tempter whispered successfully, "*Time enough yet.*"

Twenty years later a statesman listened to the same text from the lips of an aged bishop, and felt it was a message to him. This time the tempter said, "*Visit foreign countries before you decide.*"

A traveller in Paris was stricken with cholera. But his greatest suffering was agony of soul because he was not prepared to die. His last words were,

"**TOO LATE.**"

The boy, the collegian, the statesman, and the traveller were one.

* * * * *

One case is cited, but there are millions more unrecorded. May your's not be an added one.

The remedy lies in your own hands. Be in earnest. Throw off the chains of lethargy. Procrastinate no longer.

How fatal is the habit. How insidious it is. What a successful weapon in the hands of the devil.

God says, "Behold, Now is the accepted time; behold, Now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Again, "*To-day*, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iv. 7).

"**NOW! TO-DAY!!**"

are words God presses upon you. Will you not pay heed, and that just here and just now? A. J. P.

LOST AND FOUND.

NOT long ago, two gentlemen of foreign appearance might have been seen standing on the steps of a building in a busy thoroughfare in the city of London. One had a diamond of considerable value to sell, the other was a prospective buyer.

The owner stood, diamond in hand, discussing its sale, when a newspaper boy in his haste jostled against him, and jerked the diamond out of the merchant's hand. On ran the boy, all unconscious of what had occurred. To the horror of the merchants the diamond rolled into the gutter, and, before it could be stopped, fell through a grating.

The grating was examined, and it was found to lead to a coal cellar. The owner of the house was requested to allow search to be made for the lost jewel, which he readily granted. For hours search was made, but all unavailing.

Then one of the merchants offered to buy the coal for £5—so as to take it away, and make more thorough search for the lost diamond. Next day the coal, weighing about two tons, was taken away in sacks, the floor carefully swept of even the coal dust, so as to make sure that the diamond would be included, and then removed to a mansion in the West End, where this merchant lived.

The process of washing the coal was begun, when to the relief of the merchant the diamond was found

in the very first sack, and the negotiations between the two merchants, thus rudely interrupted, proceeded, and in due time the diamond changed hands by purchase.

Every reader of this story will agree that all the trouble and expense incurred in the recovery of the diamond was legitimate and praiseworthy.

But can you understand people being so careful and persevering in the matter of a diamond worth about £30, and absolutely careless as to their immortal soul and its everlasting destiny? Men know that their soul goes into eternity at death. They know not when death may claim them as its victim. They know that God must punish sin, and that the Bible clearly states that sinners dying without Christ and in their sins must go to hell for ever, and yet they are careless and indifferent. Nothing moves them to concern. Can you understand it?

Unknown friend, fellow-traveller to eternity, we warn you, you have a soul, more precious by far than a paltry diamond, even if it be the Koh-i-noor or Culinan diamond, glittering in a kingly crown. The merchant was rightly concerned in seeking the recovery of the lost diamond. He did two things.

1. He bought the coal in the cellar so as to ensure the recovery of the diamond.

2. He washed the coal till he found it.

Does this not illustrate beautifully the glorious Gospel of God? We read in Matthew xiii. 44, 45, a parable of the treasure hid in the field, and the man buying the field so as to possess himself of

the treasure. We are told plainly, "The field is the world" (ver. 38).

So the Son of God, co-equal with the Father, became Man, laid down His life on the cross, made atonement, settled the whole question of sin, and acquired redemptive rights over the whole world, thus enabling God *in righteousness* to offer salvation to "whosoever will."

The merchant paid £5 for the coal; the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself—and that to the unspeakable horrors of the cross.

But further, the Lord Jesus *seeks* as well as saves. Just as the diamond merchant sought diligently for his lost gem, so in a far more wonderful way the Lord Jesus seeks. Did not the good shepherd seek for his lost sheep *till he found it*?

"The Son of Man is come to *seek* and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3).

A. J. P.

ARE YOU READY TO DIE?

ON Sunday, 10th January, after preaching on the Plaza, a stranger spoke to me, saying—

"There is a man by the name of S——, from B——, lying at the point of death in that house, the third door from here." He also intimated to me something of S——'s notorious character as a

wicked man, and said, "S—— did not send for you, but his parents were religious and perhaps you may do him some good."

I went in and found him attended by four or five men, who appeared to receive me very kindly. He lay pale and ghastly, evidently very near the grave. I said to him—

"Friend S——, do you suffer?"

"No," he replied, very abruptly. I then turned away and exchanged a little conversation with his companions, and in about five minutes I approached him again, and in the mildest and most hopeful manner I could, said—

"Friend S——, do you not feel as though you might rally and recover?" hoping to gain access to his heart. He replied—

"When I want anybody to talk to me, I'll send for him."

"I have called," said I, "as a friend, feeling the greatest sympathy for you, and am ready to do anything for your comfort in my power."

"I'd thank Mr H——," said he, upbraiding the man whom he suspected of asking me in, "to attend to his own business." And then addressing me, he continued: "Before you came in here I had some peace, but you have knocked me all into a kink, and if you will just go away, I think I can die in peace."

He lived close to where I preached on the Plaza, and he had probably heard me preach a hundred times, and thus my presence, without the utterance of a word in regard to the condition of his soul,

brought to his mind, doubtless, a thousand gospel associations which seemed to throw him into unutterable tortures. His only peace depended on his banishing from his mind all thoughts of the past and future. Poor fellow, how sorry I felt for him.

If the presence of a poor street preacher "knocked him all into a kink," to use his own language, how could he bear the presence of the holy angels, and of the great multitudes of the redeemed, were he admitted to heaven? How could he bear the presence of God, whom he had insulted and defied all his life?

How preposterous the idea of any man being received into the kingdom of glory, without a moral fitness for such a place. Heaven would be the most unbearable of all hells to such a man as poor S——.

He left the world "all in a kink," a few hours after I saw him, and eternal ages, I fear, will not suffice to straighten him out. All the kinks must be untangled on this side of death, or else remain in a kink for ever. Let every man lay this to heart, "For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccles. ix. 10).

When we stand before the judgment seat, it will be to give an account of the deeds done *in the body*. No record there of anything done by us out of the body, or subsequent to our leaving the body.

The subject matter for that final adjudication is all taken from our records on earth. Sinner, beware, "Because there is wrath, beware lest He

take thee away with His stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi. 18).

"There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5). He can now deliver thee from the guilt and power of sin, the dominion of Satan; filling thy heart with joy and gladness, and bringing thee now to rejoice in Him, with the prospect of a blessed eternity with Himself.

Communicated by H. A. M.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOU.

(BY AN AUSTRALIAN WRITER.)

THE amount of interest you will take in the subject matter of this appeal depends entirely on how much you think it really affects you. The fact that conscription existed in European countries very little affected us, but when it was discussed and legalised in this country, how deeply it interested us, because it touched directly or indirectly every individual.

Every man's interest in this great matter was intensified because of the imminent peril in which the country stood. "

How boldly and loyally have millions of men offered their lives in the service of their country, and how many of these lives have already been sacrificed at the call of their King and country.

Your special interest in their sacrifice lies in the fact that you, too, may be called to do the same.

It may be you have already become so used to the daily news of comrades, kinsfolk "gone" that it has lost some of its significance to you.

It may be you are inclined to believe things that you have heard concerning a crown of glory that awaits those who die in battle, and that the sacrifice that they have made is to be rewarded by life for evermore.

Now I would ask you to think for a moment. If this is so for the British or Allied soldier, it must be equally true for those who have laid down their lives for their Fatherland across the Rhine; and would you like to believe in a God who can dispense crowns of glory alike to all combatants who fall in the day of battle?

Are men who have taken the life-blood of thousands of innocents, who have violated every recognised law of modern warfare; are men who can drive their fellow-men to sure and certain death: are these, I ask you, when they die in battle to receive a crown of glory from the hand of a benign and almighty God?

No, no, let us not be deceived. No such crowning day awaits any soldier—British or German—however bravely he may have fought, even though he has made the great sacrifice of dying for his country.

God's way of salvation has not altered because the Germans and their Emperor coveted Britain's sea supremacy and colonial possessions.

The good news of salvation was sounded far and wide into the ears of perishing men long before either of these countries were world powers at all, and nothing can alter it.

In the Gospel of God which the Lord Jesus instructed His disciples to go into all the world and preach, we find that God offers sinful people everlasting life.

It is indeed the good news of salvation proclaimed far and wide.

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

Faith in what He has done is the only thing that can ensure us the blessings of the gospel.

All we can do for King, country, and our fellow-men, can never atone for those sins which we have committed against our God and our Creator. His judgment must fall upon us on account of these, unless we listen to and believe the good news of salvation, that has been proclaimed to us so expressly and so lovingly.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

You may ask, "What must I do to be saved?"

The answer is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). c. c.