

TIDINGS

OF

LIFE AND PEACE.

EDITED BY GEO. C.

"WE DECLARE UNTO YOU GLAD TIDINGS."—*Acts* xiii. 32.

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TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



TWO VOICES.

IT is related of Napoleon that when Marshal Duroc, an avowed infidel, was once telling a very improbable story, giving his opinion that it was true, the Emperor quietly remarked, "There are some men who are capable of believing everything but the Bible."

This remark has found abundant illustration in every age. There are men all about us at the present day, who tell us they cannot believe the Bible, but their capacity for listening to and believing everything which opposes it is enormous. The greediness with which they devour the most far-fetched stories, the flimsiest arguments, if they appear to militate against the voice of God, is astonishing.

Bunyan, in his *Holy War*, tells us that one of the schemes of Diabolus for gaining possession of Mansoul was to send against it an army of Doubters. Satan well knows the effect of doubt in undermining the citadel of the soul. He tried that plan in the garden of Eden. His voice was heard in the raising of the first great infidel question, "Hath God said?" Having thus caught the ear of our first parent, Eve, he raised the doubt in her mind as to the voice of God.

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Traducing God's character, he ultimately gave the lie direct, "Ye shall not surely die." That day the wind was sown, to-day, far and wide, we are reaping the whirlwind. (Hos. viii. 7.)

Infidel, after six thousand years, are you not better able to understand the enormity of sin? Has it so lost its appalling magnitude, that you completely shut your eyes to the awful penalty of sin? Do you call DEATH THE DEBT OF NATURE? Never! IT IS THE PENALTY OF SIN.

Like the fisherman, who, with the bait, covers his hook from the eye of the fish, Satan hid the future from Eve's view. Reader, he got *her* ears, has he got yours? It is the first step to ruin. But there is

ANOTHER VOICE.

"Hear, and your soul shall live."

Did you ever think of what it was that arrested Saul of Tarsus on his journey to Damascus—not to Damascus only, but to hell? He says, "I heard a voice speaking unto me." That proud persecutor, struck down by the light above the brightness of the sun, heard the voice from heaven, and, humbled to the dust, he followed Jesus.

If, by the ear, Satan gained at first, it is by the ear Christ gains now. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.)

The crowd may throng around us, many voices mingle their discordant tones, but there is ONE VOICE above and beyond the din of this world—the voice of JESUS. Many know that voice. "My sheep hear My voice, . . . and I give unto

“I LEANED OVER ON JESUS AS MY SAVIOUR.” 3

them eternal life; and they shall never perish.” (John x. 27, 28.)

That voice was *once* hushed in death, when alone He wrought the mighty work of redemption. *Now* He speaks from heaven. His heart is unchanged. Oh! listen. He is speaking, not of judgment now, but of grace. On the ground of His accomplished work and blood-shedding He offers you salvation.

From the right hand of the Majesty on high He now speaks. The Purger away of sin has there sat down, proof that the mighty work of redemption has been accomplished to the satisfaction of God Himself. Christ in glory is proof positive that, “all that believe are justified from all things.” (Acts xiii. 39.)

Dear, unsaved reader, it only remains for you to trust this blessed, glorified Saviour. To fail to do so is your certain doom. “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 3.) On the other hand, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts xvi. 31.) God grant that you may make a wise choice.

W. N.

“I LEANED OVER ON TO JESUS AS
MY OWN SAVIOUR.”

SO said dear Mrs. T——, with a heart filled with praise to God, when she related to the writer the way the Lord had led her to Himself.

She had been for many years a respectable member of a church, in a rural district of Northumberland. She had lived at peace, both with herself and neighbours, thinking all of them were

as right for eternity as any poor mortals could here expect to be. "As for the need of being 'BORN AGAIN,'" she said; "such a thing never crossed my mind, until I heard from one of my neighbours one day, that there were some 'new lights' started up in a village some miles off, who said they had been '*born again*,' and KNEW they were SAVED.

"Day after day this neighbour kept telling me more and more about these 'new lights'—as they were called by those outside the circle of blessing—till the names of some of my own acquaintances were registered amongst the number of those who had undergone this remarkable change. All this had a strange effect on me; for each day brought it nearer to my own door. In fact it had come so dreadfully near, that I was afraid my neighbour herself would soon be telling me she was one of them too, for she seemed to get all the news that was going about them.

"I had not long to wait before my worst fears were realized. In she came to my house one morning in a dreadful state, saying she was LOST, and her sins were sinking her into hell. She pleaded with me to go with her to a prayer-meeting that night in the village where this work of God began—as yet there had been no preaching. This I refused to do. My proud heart would not bow as yet to the fact that a good, moral woman like me, who had been regular to church, could be 'LOST,' or needed to be 'BORN AGAIN.' She therefore got neither help nor sympathy from me. This, however, did not stop her from going; for go she did, and the next sight I got of her I felt convinced, by her happy face, that she was now one of these 'new lights,' even if she had never said

“I LEANED OVER ON JESUS AS MY SAVIOUR.” 5

a word about it. But she could not help speaking, she could not keep the good news. As soon as she got home from the meeting, she rushed into my house, saying, ‘Oh, Mrs. T——, I’ve got it, I’ve got it; I’m SAVED now! I asked them to pray for me, which they did, and the Lord saved me before I left the meeting, and, oh, I am so happy now! It’s so simple. Christ did all at the cross, and you have just to believe on Him, and you are saved.’

“I could, without making a single response, only sit and listen, and wonder at all she said. A real work of God began in my own soul. I went to bed, but my eyes were sleepless. How can I resist all this? I said to myself. How can I be good enough for God, when Mrs. B——, who was even a better woman than I, saw she was lost?

“Little by little the conviction that I was a LOST SINNER, deepened in my soul, until I saw I was only fit for hell, and all my religious life was nothing more than a mere outward form, and that every sin I had committed was standing, like a huge mountain, between God and me.

“I was in a state of misery for weeks, till one day, when beating some sand, for home use, on the doorstep, I had the Bible lying open before me at John xi. In looking at verse 25, where Jesus is saying to Martha, ‘I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and BELIEVETH in ME shall never die. BELIEVEST thou this?’ I felt the Lord was addressing these words to me—yea, as if directly to me—as if He had been in visible form before me. My ready response was Martha’s own words,

‘Lord: I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.’ And while my lips gave expression to these words, I *leaned my soul over on to Jesus*, and at once I got the words, ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as *white as snow*.’ (Isa. i. 18.)

“I rose to my feet filled with joy, for I now knew that I too was *saved*. But before I got the good news told to Mrs. B—— I was confronted by Satan with the verse of scripture which says we must hate our nearest friends, or we cannot be Christ’s disciples. (Luke xiv.) After a minute’s hesitation I said, ‘Well, Andrew’ (my husband) ‘may go, and my nearest friends may go; but Jesus I cannot let go.’

“Just at this moment an unusual noise was heard among the dogs that Andrew had charge of. On going out I saw a large brown retriever dog lying growling, with one of the small pups of a white pointer bitch between its powerful paws. Undeterred by the fierce attitude of the retriever, the pointer rushed boldly forward, and with all the gentleness, yet firmness, of natural affection and instinct, she carried off in her mouth her own offspring safe to her kennel.

“This incident, the like of which I had never seen before nor since, was to me at that moment the most powerful sermon I had ever heard or read, showing how God can use, when it pleases Him, even the brute creation, to convey to our minds the blessed truths of His word. It needed no human interpreter to unfold to me the lesson it contained. It was all spread out before me in language that could not be mistaken. It was just what I had newly passed through in the history and experience of my own soul.

SHUT OUT.

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"I was the poor, weak, helpless one in the strong cruel grasp of Satan. Christ was my Deliverer. In deepest love He came from heaven to rescue me out of the hands of the devil by dying for me, and having taken me into His loving grasp I am safe for eternity."

Blessed deliverance! precious security! Does the reader know it as his? If not, rest not, we pray you, until you do know it. What is better still, you may know it now, if you do as Mrs. T—— did—lean yourself over on to Jesus as your own Saviour. In other words, trust Him, and salvation is yours the moment you do so. J. M.

SHUT OUT.

THE present day is one of great profession. While on the one hand infidelity is making rapid strides, on the other we see an increasingly loud profession of Christianity. When the question "Are you a Christian?" is put to people, a very general answer is "Why of course I am; do you think I am a heathen?" In fact a person is hardly considered respectable, unless he is in some way identified with one of the sects or religious movements of the day, and thus bears the *name* Christian. The Word of God, which is the divine programme of the world's history, shows that it would be so in this the end of the age. But the very same word also shows plainly, that

POSSESSION NOT MERE PROFESSION

will alone pass muster at God's judgment-bar.

If the eye of any mere professor should light on this article, we would direct his attention for a moment to two deeply solemn Scriptures in Rev.

iii. 20, and Matt. xxv. 10–12, both of which have a direct reference to himself. Let us look at the first. From *v.* 14 the church of the Laodiceans is addressed, and in the verses that follow there can be no doubt that we have a picture of present-day Christianity. “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing”—thoroughly satisfied and in its own eyes lacking nothing. That is just the ground the professor takes: he goes to church, pays his dues, takes sacrament—perhaps holds some office—and flatters himself that he is getting along finely, and if anybody is fit for heaven, surely he is. But stay.

WHAT IS GOD'S OPINION?

Mark it well. Thou “knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Is not that heart-searching, O professor! That does not look much like being fit for heaven does it? Your profession may pass before men, and even before yourself, but it will not do for God. *He reads the heart*, and a coat of religious whitewash will not do for Him. A little further on we have the reason why God cannot accept it; it is because *there is no Christ in such a profession*. In *v.* 20 we find that Jesus is outside of it all, knocking for admission. “Behold, I *stand* at the door, and knock: if *any man* hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” What could be more touching? Laodicea making such great profession, and yet finding no room for the blessed One whose name it professes.

JESUS IS SHUT OUT.

He *stands* outside, and with that pierced hand knocks—knocks for admission. Friend, can it be

SHUT OUT.

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possible that *you* have a name to live and are yet dead in your sins? Have *you* taken the name of Christ upon your lips and the service of Christ into your hands, and yet never received the *person* of Christ to your heart? There are many, alas! like this, and it is to such the Saviour speaks here: "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him." "Any man"; that means *you*. But the latch is on the inside, and if He is to have admission, you must open your heart's door to Him. He will not force Himself in. Need, felt need, must let Him in.

WILL YOU LET HIM IN?

He promises to sup with you. This is communion. A feast of joy beginning the moment He enters, and lasting throughout eternity. Oh, reader, whosoever you are, rest not satisfied until you receive to your heart Him, through whose merit alone you can be saved!

Let us now turn to the other passage in Matt. xxv. 10-12. Here we have professors again, but now the tables are turned. It is no longer Christ knocking. It is the professor knocking. Think my reader! Unless you know Christ experimentally *you* will be in that plight. The picture is plain enough. The ten virgins represent the *professing* Church, but only five were *possessors*, having the oil. When the cry went forth, "Behold the bridegroom!" they all bestirred themselves. Those who were real, the five wise, were ready. The other five, who had passed the eye of man, now find, when they have to meet the searching eye of the Lord, that there is something lacking, and they go to purchase the oil of divine grace. *But it is too late.* "While they went to buy, the

bridegroom came and *the door was shut.*"
The real ones are shut in for eternal blessing ;

MERE PROFESSORS SHUT OUT

for eternal judgment. They knock, and plead, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But it is too late. In grace *He* once knocked, and waited on them. For hours, days, months, years, He stood outside pleading for admission, simply that *they* might be blessed. But no. There was no room for Him then. They were satisfied with their profession, and thought they could get along without Christ ; without being born again and saved through His blood. They professed to know Him, but their profession was false, for here He says, "Verily I say unto you, *I know you not.*" And now their doom is sealed. We are told in 2 Thess. i. 8-10 that they "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe"; 2 Thess. ii. 12 says that they *all* shall "be damned."

Friend, let me warn you against building your hopes on *mere profession*. Such hopes will surely land you in hell. Apart from Christ there can be no salvation. Have you ever, for one moment, thought on the horrors of hell. It will be terrible even for the vilest and most degraded of earth's sinners, but methinks it will go sorest with the moralist, the professor, the church-goer, who did not seek a personal acquaintance with Christ.

WHAT AN AWFUL MEETING

there will be in that day ! The professor and the profane ; the philanthropist and the profligate ;

THE GREAT INTRUDER.

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the temperance advocate and the drunkard; the virtuous woman and the daughter of shame. All alike *shut out* from the Lord's presence, and *shut in* together to the lake of fire. And why? because they obeyed not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor received the love of the truth that they might be saved. Let me plead with every soul that reads this to *seek Christ at once*. If you have been building on a false foundation, forsake it instantly. The waters of judgment will soon wash such foundations away, and will sweep *you* along with them to the lake of fire. Nothing will stand that awful test but what is built on the "sure foundation." Let me beseech you therefore, unknown reader, not to rest a moment until your feet are planted securely on the immovable Rock of Ages. H. G.

THE GREAT INTRUDER.

AN elderly man was going out of doors to do a little work. Just as he crossed the threshold he felt unwell, and, re-entering his house, sat down upon a chair, and "immediately expired."

A middle-aged man was attending to his business, as usual, when he suddenly became very ill, and had to be assisted home. He had barely entered his residence before he "passed away."

A young man was riding along on his bicycle, as he had done many times previously, when, to use his own words afterwards, before he "had time to do anything," a collision occurred, and he

was taken to the hospital mortally injured. Four days later he was dead.

A boy, on his first day at school, ventured into danger, and in the afternoon of that very day his short life was ended, and his "mangled remains" were lying in the mortuary "awaiting identification."

The above may be called *every-day events*, so frequently do we hear of the unexpected and unwelcome intrusion of the great enemy—DEATH. As being "nothing out of the common," they might be dismissed without further remark, were it not that they are such forcible reminders of the words, "*Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.*" (1 Chron. xxix. 15.)

They prove conclusively that no age is exempt from the universal uncertainty as to how long one's life will last; and they also suggest the personal enquiry which I venture to address to all who may ever read this paper; viz., If YOU are called upon to quit this life as suddenly as any of those I have mentioned, how will it fare with your soul? Shall you "depart to be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23), or shall you go to "the lake of fire"? (Rev. xx. 14.) One or the other it *must* be, but which? Excuse my pertinacity; it is the great importance of the matter to yourself which impels me to ask again, Which would it be?

If you "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xvi. 31), and are saved by grace through faith (Ephes. ii. 8), full well you know that you have "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter i. 4), and the word of God assures you that you "shall never perish." (John x. 28.)

“WHITHER GOEST THOU?”

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But if you are an unsaved sinner, “having no hope and without God in the world” (Ephes. ii. 12), you have not a moment to lose. If you delay much longer, it is quite possible that even before you have “time to do anything,” the dread “Intruder” may be upon you, and push you into an eternity of endless misery, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark ix. 44.)

May God in His mercy awaken you to realize your perilous position, and while there is yet time, may He give you grace to hear His word (John v. 24), believe in His Son, and thereby “receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43); and “being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans v. 1), and go on your way rejoicing “in hope of the glory of God.” (Romans v. 2.) J. G.

 “WHITHER GOEST THOU?”

ON, on, on, at the rate of thousands of miles in a single minute, man is borne along on this earth. That intelligent being into whom God breathed the breath of life, in whom dwells a soul destined to exist throughout eternity, cannot stand still while time, in its sure and silent march, moves on. To halt for an instant is an utter impossibility. Go FORWARD YOU MUST! Whether you think you can compare your voyage to the smooth gliding of a boat over a calm lake, or whether huge, raging billows of temptation and trouble toss your frail bark hither and thither; whether you are asleep or awake, it is nevertheless a fact, that time is bearing you swiftly along.

Of all rivers, time is the swiftest, and all upon its bosom to-day will surely reach the fathomless, immeasurable ocean of eternity some day. There time is no more, it is lost in the vast immensity of that which is unbounded.

There are but two states in which to spend the ETERNITY that AWAITS US IN THE NEAR FUTURE. The one where reigns eternal bliss, where sorrow and sighing flee away, where myriads of redeemed and glorified saints shall continually praise and adore the One who died to redeem them, where every crown shall be cast at His feet, and every harp tuned to sound His praise. No sin shall enter to mar the joy or disturb the calm of that blest place. No discordant note shall break the harmony of the triumphant song that hosts unnumbered will there sound forth.

But in the other state, untold misery and endless remorse will ever dwell. There the robber, the murderer, the gambler, the swearer, the out-of-Christ religionist, and the dark fiends of hell will find a common dwelling place. There will be heard, instead of the rapturous hallelujahs of the ransomed throng, the groans and laments of bitter remorse and despair, but (did you ever pause to think of this?) there none but Jesus will be owned as Lord! Every tongue shall confess "that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 11.)

Reader, in which of these two states will *your* eternity be spent? Have you on board your bark the only true Pilot—even Jesus? He is the only One that can guide you safely into the haven of rest; the only One that can keep you off the rocks and shoals, where you would be wrecked to your eternal ruin. Or are you drifting, caring not

ENQUIRER'S CORNER.

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whither. If this last be your case, was ever suicide more determined than your own? Oh! awake, awake, awake! In the name of the living God, I beseech you to arouse from the deadly slumber into which the deceiver of souls has rocked you. Go on no longer with such folly and madness, but cry from the depths of a heart in earnest—"Lord, what must I do to be saved?" Then will the answer, with its clear and silvery accents, fall on your opened ear. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

Again I venture to ask my reader, "Whither goest thou?"

M. M. P.

ENQUIRER'S CORNER.

DEEPER ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST.

THANK God for your longings after Christ. Only don't get occupied with the "*living*" and the "*leaning*," but rather with the *love* that faith leans upon—"the love of Christ which passeth knowledge!"

The Holy Ghost is the One that ministers of His love to us, and therefore we have to take diligent heed that nothing in us, or in our ways, is allowed to grieve Him. It is negligence as to this which hinders the apprehension and enjoyment of divine love in our souls.

I quite agree with you, and believe the verse you quote. The crushing of an idol that only leaves a bitter smarting, or an aching void, is of little value. Yet, surrender *is* surrender, notwithstanding. Only you must see that if sur-

render is to be worth anything it must be to make room for that which you value more than the thing surrendered.

Get with HIM, dear friend. Reach Him in the place where He now is. Tell out the tale of your coldness in *His* ear. Make known all your exercises at His feet.

Keep your mouth, and heart, and ears open to Him, and all that you wish for will surely flow in. The empty shell, dropped into the ocean, has no need to cry, *Fill me.* GEO. C.

“ONLY A TRACT.”

“IT was only a tract in the cottage, left with a friendly smile;
But the woman’s face grew brighter, as she bent to her daily toil;
And the messenger given so kindly was placed with care away,
To read in the quiet evening at the close of the busy day.

“It was only a tract in the cottage, but its message was clear and plain;
And the voice of Jesus was calling—and He did not call in vain—
And one more sheaf was gathered, another soul was won.
It was but a little service, but the Lord pronounced ‘Well done.’”

“BLESSED are ye that sow beside all waters.”
ISAIAH xxxii. 20.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



NEAR, BUT MISSED IT.

“**I** WAS once in a certain place, where several people were getting what you call ‘converted.’ Indeed, I was within the toss of a halfpenny of being converted myself; but it all passed off again, and I have never been troubled with those kind of feelings since.”

So spake a fashionable lady as she sat at dinner with an officer in the army, as gay and thoughtless as herself. Alas! to be so close to the blessing, and yet to miss it! If that lady should ever reach eternal perdition, what unutterable remorse will the memory of those flippant words bring her. “Within the toss of a halfpenny of being converted!” Whatever her words might have really meant, they left the heart-saddening impression that she had been once amongst the “*almost persuaded*.” But there had been no *real* work wrought in her soul. Felix “trembled,” but it only made him wish to get away from the searching light of the truth — “judgment to come.” “Go thy way for *this time*; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee,” were words which made only too apparent his true condition. But we are not told that he ever “trembled” again under the word of God, or

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ever found "the convenient season" he presumed upon.

"Near to the door, and the door stood wide,
Close to the port, but not inside;
Almost persuaded to give up sin,
Almost persuaded to enter in;
Almost persuaded to count the cost,
Almost a Christian, and yet lost."

A Christian man still lives in the North of England, who was once as near to damnation as the lady just spoken of was near to salvation. He had spent all, at least to his last halfpenny. How should he spend that? He was despairingly miserable at the moment. But could he not find a short way out of it? "Oh, yes," whispered his old master; "you have just got enough to pay the bridge-toll. Pay your halfpenny, and jump from the bridge into the river below, and end your misery." He obeyed. The solitary coin was paid, the bridge was reached. Now for it! *End your misery!* But wait, whispered another voice, *will it end your misery?* "AFTER DEATH THE JUDGMENT"! Jumping into the jaws of death will *not* end your misery. It was enough. He fled from the bridge. God had spoken; his precious soul was ultimately saved, and to-day he is a rejoicing Christian.

Truly, if we may use the poor worldling's words, he was literally within the "toss of a halfpenny" of eternal damnation, yet, through grace, he missed it, and his old master missed him. Thrice happy he!

Are *you* aware, my reader, that you are getting perilously near—not, perhaps, to your last halfpenny, but to your last half-hour of Gospel opportunity. Have you yet seen nothing in Christ to attract you? Nothing in your own

"BETTER FELT THAN TELLT."

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deep need to drive you to Him? Well, remember, as a general rule, people die as they live; and that SALVATION MISSED is DAMNATION REACHED. If you continue in your sins, EARTH ONCE LEFT IS HEAVEN EVER LOST.

Are you feeling the burden of sin? Are you realizing the world's emptiness? Are you discovering what a dupe of the devil you have been?—what drudgery his service is? O, turn *to God* from your idols. He will bless you.

Are you longing for deliverance, sighing for peace? The precious blood of Christ is all you need for a guilty, upbraiding conscience; His changeless love is enough for the cravings of an aching breast.

There are, no doubt, tens of thousands in hell this moment of whom it might be said, They were once near salvation, *very* near, but they missed it. May such never be true of you. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "Be it known unto you . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

Let "this Man" have your confidence. God has raised Him from the dead, and glorified Him. He has *God's* full confidence, for He has committed all things into His hand. (John iii. 35.) Let Him have yours. "Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.)

GEO. C.

"BETTER FELT THAN TELLT."

AN elderly woman in the north of England was asked by someone, who was rather sceptical, what she meant by saying that she was

converted? Being a simple-minded person, and not gifted with great descriptive powers, and never having been to college, she was unable to give a learned theological discourse upon that vital subject. But her soul being in the full enjoyment of *God's great salvation in Christ*, she answered significantly, "*It's better felt than tellt.*"

It was a short sermon, but a pithy one, and, we venture to say, far more real and convincing than a vast number of theological discourses proclaimed from many a pulpit in Christendom.

Conversion is a reality. It is a real turning to God from the world, the flesh, and the devil; and without it, notwithstanding the loudest profession, there is no entrance into the Kingdom. Are *you converted?* You may not be able to *tell out* clearly the story of that great change, but we know that if you are, you *realize* it, for it is a real living work of divine grace in the soul. E. H. C.

FROM A RAILWAY CLERK TO A RAILWAY GUARD.

(EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.)

MY dear S——,—Your interesting letter of yesterday seemed to come to me like the returning of bread cast once upon the waters. (Ecc. xi. 1.) . . . The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John i. 7.) We can't see the blood, neither can we see the remembrance, nor consciousness of sin; but they are facts, the one in the written word, the other in us. Oh, then, let us feed upon that

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precious Word! May we really *feel* that it is the Word of the living God.

“A man of subtle reasoning asked
A peasant if he knew,
Where is the internal evidence
That proves the Bible true?
The terms of disputative art
Had never reached his ear;
He laid his hand upon his heart,
And simply answered *HERE!*”

That's the key to the Christian's power—*heart work*. I was asked to speak to an infidel the other day. We beat about the bush for some time, until he plainly said that he did not think there was a God. “Well, my friend,” said I, “we are agreed upon that point; I don't *think* there's a God, for I *KNOW* there is, and, what is more, I know Him. And,” said I, “do you think that our forefathers who opened their bosoms to the sword, and kissed the stake that was to burn them, only *thought* that there was a God? Oh, no! they *knew Him*, and they knew that our Lord Jesus was that God manifested in flesh. That as ‘out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh,’ so Jesus (though still in the bosom of the Father) came, and was the ‘*Word made flesh.*’” The poor man was dumb. He gave way at once. I told him that people calling themselves infidels and atheists in our days, are usually those who are living in such awful sins, that they find it keeps conscience quiet to persuade themselves that there is no God, no judgment, no hereafter. I tell you what it is, S——, we have much to glory in as believers in God, through Jesus the Christ. The evidences are so great that nothing but the grossest ignorance can hold men back, unless it be the other extreme, worldly wisdom,

by which people know not God, and which only blinds the eyes and encrusts the heart against the reception of the truth.

In all our efforts, S——, we must try and hide ourselves behind our precious Saviour, lest they look exclusively at the speaker, and see not that blessed One spoken about. It is not more preachers that we want; it is more private man to man conversation. That is where my work for the Lord seems to lie. I ask Him to give me a message, and then seek to set Him before them in all His living power. Then I say, "Perhaps you have been waiting for an invitation? Well, now you have got one. I am only like a telegraph wire, and God is sending you a message through me."

We must keep our lips as with a bridle when the wicked are in our presence. When a number of them get together, let us find something to do elsewhere. We can't do much good when two or three are together, unless they are either Christians or anxious enquirers. It is when we get them *alone* that we can speak out of a full heart.

* * * *

I rejoice with you that the Spirit of God is moving o'er the hearts of the dear ones at home. When He says, "Let there be light," the veil will be torn off, and the god of this world put to shame. We knew what it was, dear S——, to turn to "our own way," but we found the way of transgressors hard. Conscience accused, and the inherent knowledge of good and evil seemed to point us forward to the judgment. Then we began to sew together fig-leaves of good resolutions, and to hide ourselves behind church

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ordinances. We went to this or that "physician of no value" (Job xiii. 4), but the "hurt was not healed." We were set in slippery places, and many were the falls into the mire of sin. In vain did we try to wash our hands, like Pilate. Memory pointed back, and conscience accused, till our bosoms were like the "troubled sea." And how came all this? Was it of ourselves? No! It was the Spirit of God striving with us, till the heart cried, "What must *I* do to be saved?" Oh, how like cold water to a thirsty soul did the message come—"Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world"! And our hearts leaped when He said, 'Come now, and let us reason together, though *your* sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Oh, think of that moment when you knelt at the feet of Jesus for the first time in earnest, and laid bare your soul's disease as to a Good Physician. How you ate those words of His, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace."

Do you remember, S——, when a certain great man was at death's door a few years ago, as he lay almost exhausted the physician conceived what was the only remedy. A sheep without blemish or disease was killed in the chamber; the skin was torn off, and the man's naked body wrapped in it; life and heat were restored, and the man's life spared. What a trumpet-tongued description is this of the great work of Jesus. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." He is now our righteousness, our "best robe." *Don't get lifting up the robe, S——, to look at your own black skin, or you will never have a settled "joy and peace in believing."* Live "looking unto Jesus." "Consider Him," and walk in love as an imitator

of God. You know children ought to take after their Father. "Rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him." Leave the past, and "take no thought for the morrow," forgetting the things which are behind. Press forward. God's time is now. Lean on His Almighty arm, and keep in step with Him. Tell Him everything as it occurs. The battle is His, therefore trust HIM; He will keep you from falling, and present you "more than conqueror" at last.

Yours with Christian love, ——.

"HOW CAN I BE SAVED IN CONSISTENCY WITH THE HOLINESS OF GOD?"

A few years ago I was staying with an aged relative, who was seriously ill, in a small town in one of the Midland counties. On the Lord's-day I enquired if there were any old people in the neighbourhood I could visit.

The reply was, "Oh, yes; there are two old women over eighty, and one is a very wicked woman, but the other not so bad."

So I thought the worst is the best for me. On my way I met an elderly woman, of quiet, respectable appearance, whose face spoke of the enjoyment of "the peace of God." Wishing to discover if she knew something of this treasure which "passeth all understanding" (Phil. iv. 7), I asked her if she could direct me to the person I was seeking.

"Oh, yes; she is my sister, and I am very sad about her, because she *refused the call* a good

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many years ago, though I hope she is thinking more of it now.”

“Oh, then, you know the Lord, do you?”

“Oh, yes; and I know that I was ‘chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.’” (Eph. i. 4.)

Blessed answer! How rarely, in a passing way, is one privileged to meet with one that so simply and fully believes God’s Word, and does not think it presumption to do so.

May you, my reader, not *refuse the call* to be saved. May an *eternity of joy*, and not an eternity of misery, be yours.

I found the poor woman, alluded to, in bed, in a bare-looking room, with a wrinkled, haggard face, and very miserable expression—a striking contrast to her sister. I was soon rejoiced to see one thing, namely, that her eyes were being opened, to see her lost condition before God. Never did I witness such bitter misery. The sins of a life-time were rising up before her in their true character, and, around her, she thought she saw demons hurrying her to that place of “*hopeless despair*,” “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.)

She spoke to me of her history, and confessed that it had been one of self-will and open wickedness. She shuddered at the remembrance of it.

I spoke to her of Christ, and of God’s simple way of salvation for those who know themselves to be *lost sinners*. I assured her that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” even such as she was. (1 Tim. i. 15.)

Then came a question which fairly startled me, especially as it came from one who could

neither read nor write. It was this, "*How can I be saved in consistency with the holiness of God?*"

Yet this is a question which may well come from the inmost depths of the soul of one who has rightly seen what he is in the sight of a holy God. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity," said the prophet. (Hab. i. 13.)

Dear reader, have you thus seen *yourself*? And with it have you seen that the death of Christ perfectly met all God's righteous claims, perfectly expressed all His boundless love; and that now, without the least abatement of His holiness, He can clear the sinner, who believes in Jesus, of all charge of guilt?

She had learnt that "God is light." (1 John i. 5.) She could say, "Thou hast searched *me*, and known *me*." (Ps. cxxxix.) And what had the piercing rays of this light revealed to her? That she was "*lost*," "*undone*," "*unclean*" (Isa. vi. 1-5), only fit for the flames of hell.

Then it was my delight to tell her, from God's Word, that He is "*love*" as well as "*light*" (1 John iv. 8, 16); and to show her how fully He had expressed it in giving His Son. "God so loved the world" (and she was one in it) "that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." She listened most attentively, and I left with her those three blessed words uttered by the mighty Conqueror Himself, "It is finished." (John xix. 30.)

In a later visit, when I remarked that I would ask my friends in town to pray that she might be saved, she literally clutched hold of my arm, saying, "Do you think, then, I *shall* be saved?"

"IT IS FINISHED."

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I left the place shortly after, quite believing that she would, ere long, be brought into the family of God, and that I should meet her in heaven with the Lord Jesus. Though I had not the personal joy, in this world, of seeing her at peace with God, yet her sister wrote of her death about a year afterwards, expressing herself satisfied that she had rested in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that His blood had cleansed her from all sin. (1 Cor. vi. 11.)

S. W. S. J.

"IT IS FINISHED."

ALL are familiar with the memorable words, "It is finished." Our eternal welfare depends on them. They tell of the accomplished work of redemption. What effect have they had upon *you*? Do you know their priceless value for your precious soul? An earnest word with you about them. Attend.

Who finished the work? There can be but one answer—Jesus, Jesus, the Son of God. When man was utterly at fault, and all his works vain, God so loved the world, He gave His Son—His darling—to accomplish redemption's mighty work. The Son—incarnate, sinless—suffered, died and bled. Jesus, the Son of God, the holy Lamb of God's providing, fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, offered Himself without spot to God a sacrifice for sin. All God's holy judgment fell upon Him. Forsaken, He drank that bitterest of all bitter cups, cried "*It is finished*," and died. Alone, the Beloved of God—Jesus, the Son of the Blessed—finished the

mighty work, once for all, to God's everlasting praise.

When did He finish it? All praise to His most glorious Name, *long, long ago*. Nineteen centuries, nearly, have rolled slowly by since Jesus died. When all the waves and billows of God's holy judgment had passed over His spotless soul, He cried "It is finished." The great transaction was done. All was completed *at that moment*, solemn above all, when He emptied that cup. *Then* it was that God was glorified, Satan's power broken, sin judged, and infinite glory brought to Him Who sent Him. Long, long ere you and I, poor sinner, had heard of Him, He sat triumphant in the highest glory, proof that His mighty work was done.

Where did He finish it? On Calvary. In the place called Golgotha, outside the gate of that wonderfully-favoured, but wicked city, Jerusalem, Jesus suffered and died. In the midst of that privileged people, in the midst of their favoured land, Jesus, lifted up betwixt heaven and earth on a common felon's cross, wrought redemption's mighty work, once for all. Surrounded by the power of man and Satan, Jesus, betwixt two thieves, cried "It is finished," and died. "Truly this Man was the Son of God."

How did He finish it? By meeting all the holy claims of God in offering Himself a sacrifice for sin. Sin, the foul blot on God's fair creation, had utterly ruined man and the whole scene around him, and had shut him out from God. Powerless to recover His lost position; powerless, of himself, to come back to God, Jesus undertook the mighty task of meeting his desperate case. He came into the world as man, offered Himself

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for sin, and, bearing its full judgment, finished the whole work which His Father gave Him to do. Having bared His holy bosom to the awful stroke of offended Majesty; having satisfied divine justice and judgment, He cried "It is finished"; and then, having commended His spirit to His Father, He yielded up the ghost. God's answer to that finished work was the resurrection. Divine power raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory. There He took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, enthroned and crowned with honour and glory as the mighty Victor.

Why did He finish it? To glorify God, to vanquish His foe, to put away sin, and to save you and me, the guilty and lost!

"'It is finished,' sinners, hear it,
Hear the dying Victor's cry!
'It is finished,' angels bear it,
Sound the joyful news on high."

Yes, blessed be His Name, Jesus, the Son of God, nearly 1900 years ago, on Calvary's cross, finished the work, obtained redemption, sat down triumphant at God's right hand, *an everlasting Saviour for every one that believeth*. What think ye of Christ? He died for sinners—guilty, ungodly, lost. His precious blood was shed to make atonement for the soul, to cleanse the vilest from all sin in the sight of a thrice holy God. (1 John i. 7.) He died to save us from all the eternal consequences of our guilt and ruined state, that we might share with Himself for ever all that God has given Him as the Man Who glorified Him *in His finished work*.

Reader, are *you* resting thereupon? If not, why not? It is the height of folly to delay.

All your doings are worse than fruitless. *The work is done*—done perfectly, done for all, done for ever. On the ground of that work you have but to bow in self-loathing before God; you have but *to believe on Him Who did it*, and salvation—full, present, and eternal—is yours this day. “*It is finished.*” Will you, then, troubled one, rest there now? E. H. C.

“READ IT SLOWLY.”

WHILE waiting at the junction for the train to arrive to take us on to our destination, an express train suddenly whizzed past us.

“Stand back!” was the cry of the porters, as it approached; and as we stood aside, and watched it flying past us, a leaflet was thrown out of one of the carriage windows, which fell almost at our feet. It contained an interesting story of an old woman in India. She could not read; but one day someone called, and read to her from the Word of God. That well-known verse in John iii. arrested her—“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.” The words were strange to her, never, perhaps, having heard them before; but the story of the wondrous love of God, in the gift of His Son, just suited that poor old sinner, and, stretching forth her hand, she said with emphasis, “Put my finger on that, and read it again, *and read it slowly.*” It was read to her again—“slowly,” as she wished it to be read, and then she desired to possess a book like that, and

be taught to read it too. "*God so loved.*" It was that which charmed her most, creating a yearning to know more of it.

Reader, has this sweet story of redeeming love ever melted your heart? If not, *read it slowly*; take in every word, that, under its mighty influence, your rebel heart may be melted, your stubborn will subdued, even by love divine!

"GOD—SO—LOVED—THE—WORLD—THAT—HE—GAVE—HIS—ONLY—BEGOTTEN—SON—THAT—WHO—SOEVER—BELIEVETH—IN—HIM—SHOULD—NOT—PERISH—BUT—HAVE—EVERLASTING—LIFE."

Not only has God loved, but He has given the fullest expression of that love—He has given HIS SON.

Satan has, for ages, exercised his sinful influence over men, by diffusing into their hearts the thought that God hates them. It is true God hates sin, for "*God is light*"; and what can be more diverse than light and darkness? "Light" must banish darkness from its presence for ever. But "*God is love*" as well as "*light*," and light and love both met at the cross of Christ. "Love" gave Him to die. Darkness covered Him when hanging as the sin-bearer on that cross of shame. There all the claims of a holy God were met, the judgment due to the sinner was borne by that holy Substitute. God's justice was satisfied. Love triumphed. And now "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Look not within your heart for love to God, but just take one look into *His* heart. Fathom, if you can, those measureless depths of love that led Him to give His only begotten Son. Then open wide *your* heart that, like a mighty

torrent, it might pour itself into it, carrying you back to the place from whence it flows—the heart of God.

There, in the “light,” cleansed from all sin, the believer is placed—“for the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin—that in it he might delight, and find his home in the place where everlasting love delights in the objects whom it has so blessed.

Put your finger on that blessed verse, and “*read it slowly,*” and as you read it may your soul be flooded with the unbounded love of Him who gave His only begotten Son, that you might not perish, but have “everlasting life.” E. E. N.

FALSE HOPES AND FALSE HAPPINESS.

“**E**XTINGUISH hope, and happiness is gone. Let the faintest glimmering of hope remain, and a man’s misery is not complete. Poor, unconverted sinner! It is the most dismal feature in the misery of that hell toward which thou art hastening, that there is no hope there. False hopes may flatter and deceive thee, till thou art cast into the pit of darkness; but once there, no single ray of hope, true or false, will ever penetrate the eternal gloom.” W. T.

“False happiness is like false money; it may pass for a time as well as true, and serve some ordinary occasions, but when it is brought to the test we find the lightness and alloy, and feel the loss.” P.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



GOD'S "ALLS."

IT is a very striking fact, that man's universal ruin is linked together in Scripture with that which alone can meet it—God's all-reaching grace. It is just like God, for God is love. The word *all*, so small in itself, but so immense in its scope, sums up this glorious truth. Let the word of God speak, and let the reader listen to its pointed language.

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and *all* the world may become guilty before God. . . . But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto *all* and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 19–23.)

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon *all* men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all* men unto justification of life." (Rom. v. 18.)

"For God hath concluded them *all* in unbelief,

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that He might have mercy upon *all*." (Rom. xi. 32.)

"For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if One died for *all*, then were *all* dead." (2 Cor. v. 14.)

No language could depict more forcibly the terrible state of man naturally, and at a distance from God—*all* gone astray, *all* guilty, *all* under judgment, *all* in unbelief, *all* dead. This *all* is wonderfully *inclusive*. None can get out of it, none can elude it. It is irrespective of race, nationality, class, custom, or creed. It sums up the whole human race, and death and distance is stamped upon *all*. Naturally, we none of us like it. As a doctrine it is unpalatable; but it is true, and all will have to own it one day. Thank God, if we have been brought to own it now. God is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance. Repentance is to own it, and is the first step in the way of salvation.

There are two great classes of people in the world to-day, who are in error as to this side of the truth. The first presumes to deny the ruin of man; and for such there is manifestly no salvation. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The second class admits man's depravity by nature, but denies that his ruin is hopeless. Improve, say they, reform, live morally and uprightly, imitate Christ the great Exemplar, and so fit yourself for God. To such, the death of Christ is the answer. God estimates man both at his best and at his worst, and sums up the whole world "guilty." If ruined man could fit himself for God, why the death of Christ? Why

THE TWO "ALLS."

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those awful sufferings upon the cross? A much-to-be-regretted error on the part of those who crucified Him, says one; the noble death of a martyr, says another. Oh! dear reader, see in the death of Christ, God's estimate of man. God, who is holy, makes Him to be sin for us, and spares Him not the judgment. God, who has been offended and sinned against, provides Himself a Lamb, provides Himself a ransom. God Himself sets forth Christ Jesus the propitiation, on the ground of whose shed blood, He comes out in all the love of His heart to the whole world. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." Poor lost man in the place of distance, cannot save himself, cannot bridge the distance from his own side. How, then, is he to be brought to God? Thank God, He removes the distance from His side. Christ having met His claims, it is God's delight to display His love and grace to *all*.

How significant a thing this "*all*" of *propitiation*? If *all* have gone astray—those who are brought, through grace, to own it can say, The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us *all*; if *all* are guilty, if *all* have sinned—God's righteousness is unto *all*; if *all* are under condemnation—the free gift is towards *all*; if *all* are concluded in unbelief—God's mercy is upon *all*; if *all* are dead—Christ died for *all*.

But, says someone, if God's grace is to *all*, will not *all* be saved? Never! True, the river of God's love flows out to *all*, but, dear soul, you must stoop down and drink, you must believe and live.

This brings us to

THE ALL OF SUBSTITUTION.

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him *all* that believe are justified from *all* things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

Here we have a more *exclusive* company. Why so? Because this *all* excludes the unbeliever. Note what it says—*all* that believe are justified from *all* things. The first *all* embraces the whole world; the second marks the class who believe in Jesus. Reader, are you numbered amongst this company? Are you amongst the *all* that believe? If you have grasped the fact of Christ’s work for *all*, as a Man lifted up upon the cross, as a ransom for *all*, turn your eyes now by faith to that same Man, once the suffering Man, now the glorified Man at God’s right hand, and receive the blessed message—“Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him *all* that believe are justified from *all* things.” If the first *all*, as we have seen, has a twofold application, so this second *all*—“*all* that believe are justified from *all* things.” If you believe in Jesus, you may claim Him as your Substitute; as the One who took your place, and bore your sins in His own body on the tree.

Every believer may know that *all* his sins are forgiven—that he is justified from *all* things—and so have peace with God, for Jesus was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The one who has had most forgiven, is the one

“I WISH I COULD BE MADE OVER AGAIN.” 37

who will love Him most. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” (1 Tim. i. 15.) So said Paul, the once blasphemer, the persecutor, the injurious. So overwhelmed is he with the thought, that he breaks forth in praise — “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Bernard de Morlaix, a monk of Cluny, writing amidst the darkness of the 12th century, grasped this thought. Describing the blessedness of the glorified saints, he says—

“Their breasts are filled with gladness,
 Their mouths are tuned to praise,
 What time, now safe for ever,
 On former sins they gaze;
 The fouler was the error,
 The sadder was the fall,
 The ampler are the praises
 To Him who pardoned all.”

Dear soul, God desires your blessing, bids you appreciate His satisfaction in the work of Christ, and invites you to share His joy for eternity.

S. P. A.

“I WISH I COULD BE MADE OVER AGAIN.”

A YOUNG woman, brought up in a respectable, religious circle, began to wake up to the fact that she was not right with God. Coming under the sound of the gospel, she became convinced of sin, and of her need of salvation. But, like thousands more, before seeing through faith that Christ is the alone Saviour, and resting on His finished work, she tried to help to save herself. The

usual experience followed. She discovered daily more and more her utterly sinful state, and her total inability to put herself right. In the midst of her distress of soul she exclaimed, "I wish I could be made over again, then I should get a fresh start, and go right away."

Now the very thing she was sighing after was the very thing God does for us in His grace, though (as, later on, she found to her joy) in a totally different way to what she was then wishing. God does not get rid of us *actually*, as children of fallen Adam, and create us over again *materially* without a sinful nature. But, blessed be His Name, it is very clear in His Word (John iii. 7, 8; 2 Thess. ii. 13), that where a soul, awakened by the action of His Spirit, believes on the Lord Jesus Christ His Son, He not only forgives all that person's sins, but sets him aside judicially for ever in Christ's death, and creates him anew in Christ risen. (Rom. vi. 6; Eph. ii. 10.)

A great many, alas, are satisfied if they only know that their sins are forgiven. But God is not satisfied with anything short of having us before Him in Christ, in perfect liberty. Now the way to enter into this is clearly unfolded in Rom. vi., which we earnestly commend to our readers' study. Entering, in the power of the Holy Ghost, into the truth there unfolded, we are in Christ, where there is *now no condemnation* (Rom. viii. 1), and *we are free*. Then we have a new start, and *can* "go right away." Henceforth we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 9.) We are no longer in Adam, but in Christ. We have put off the old man, and put on the new. (Coloss. iii. 9, 10.) Self is henceforth

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looked at as an utterly corrupt and worthless thing; and, occupied with Christ in the power of the Spirit, we have an entirely new start according to God, and can go right away to the goal—*Christ Himself in glory.*

Further, being *in Christ*, there is a new creation. Old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.) We have only to wait in patience for the accomplishment of His full purpose, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and we shall be perfectly conformed to Christ in glory for ever.

It is a wonderful thing to be created over again in Christ (Eph. ii. 10; iv. 24), and to get a fresh start for glory. Reader, is this blest portion yours? E. H. C.

TRYING TO BELIEVE.

SO many look at believing as some difficult task which they, on their part, must perform before God, on His part, can give them the longed-for blessing. After some special effort to accomplish this great work, they look in upon themselves to see if a right result has been produced, and in this way vainly try to get satisfaction. All this is self-occupation from beginning to end. They try to produce something in their own feelings, by their own efforts to believe, and presume to be their own judge as to whether the thing arrived at is genuine or not. SELF! SELF! SELF! Then, usually, it is some sort of *natural* emotion that they expect; and, of course, it must be of a kind they have never felt before.

But conversion is not a *physical* change in our

feelings, it is a *moral* change, produced by the Spirit of God in our souls. When a man is indifferent about sin one day, and dreads it and longs for Christ the next, it is surely proof that a change has been effected. But it is a moral change. The conscience has been awakened by the light. The light has exposed what he is in view of what *God* is. Nothing will meet such inward cravings but the One who *could* meet, and *has met*, all God's claims against us. It is by this means that the sinner realizes that he *cannot do without Christ*. Then it is he learns with joy that this blessed Saviour exchanged the adoration of angels in heavenly glory, for the shame and suffering of the cross, in order that He might secure such sinners as himself for His own and His Father's joy for ever.

If the sinner's awakened conscience *cannot* rest satisfied without the Saviour and His sin-atonement work, the Saviour's love *will not* rest satisfied till that convicted sinner has received the longed-for blessing.

It is the GOSPEL which brings this glad news to a guilty, self-condemned one, and it is important to see that it is this GOSPEL which he is called upon to believe.

He is *not* commanded to believe that he is *saved*, but to *repent and believe the gospel*, and it is only when he does thus believe that he gets the assurance that salvation is his. There are four great facts about the gospel, and any one of them ought to be a cure for *trying* to believe.

1. Where it comes from—*Heaven*. (1 Peter i. 12.)

2. Who sends it.—*The blessed God*. (Acts x. 36, 1 Tim. i. 11.)

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3. Who brings it.—*The Holy Ghost*. (1 Peter i. 12.)

4. Whom it is about.—*The Lord Jesus Christ*—His precious blood and heavenly exaltation. (Romans i. 3, 2 Cor. iv. 4.)

What a message it is! It comes from a place where no lie and no liar can enter. It comes from a God who cannot lie—who hates lying. It is brought by the Spirit of truth, and it is concerning Him who is the very embodiment of truth itself.

Yet a poor sinner will coolly say, he will *try* to believe it!

You are bad enough, my reader, to deserve the judgment of God, and God has been good enough to send His beloved Son to bear that very judgment. This you are called upon to believe. Not that *you* are good, but that God is. Not that you are worthy, but that Christ is worthy. Not what you feel about *yourself*, but what God feels about *Christ*.

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” (1 Timothy i. 15.)

May the Spirit of God direct the heart of every troubled reader away from his worthless self, to the worthy Saviour.

What think ye of *such* tidings? GEO. C.

 CONSCIENCE WHISPERS.

“How oft amid the giddy throng
Has conscience whispered, ‘THOU ART WRONG;
THOU ART NOT FIT TO DIE.’”

FITNESS FOR HEAVEN: WHO HAS IT?

HOW many people there are in these so-called Christian lands who are, by one means or another, vainly trying to fit themselves for heaven.

The very fact that they are *trying* to fit themselves for that place, plainly shows that they still feel their *unfitness* for it.

That the most religious man is, in himself, as totally unfit for heaven, as the woman of Sychar's Well, who had had five husbands, is plain enough, from the Lord's own words to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.)

When a soul is awakened to feel its true state, a step has been taken, no doubt, in the right direction. When Job said, "Behold, I am vile," he discovered something he had never known before. When he exclaimed, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," he had found out his true place before God.

Let me say, in all plainness, that no one will ever get true fitness for heaven, who has not discovered his own total *unfitness* for it.

How, then, are we fitted? is a question of vital importance, seeing that the everlasting weal or woe of every man hangs upon it.

Many think, like a lady with whom I once conversed, that it hangs upon our own personal goodness. Speaking of a deceased gentleman, whom she held in high esteem, she said, "If there is one man in heaven, *he* is sure to be

FITNESS FOR HEAVEN: WHO HAS IT? 43

there, for he was such a *good man*." "Well, ma'am," said I, "if that man is in heaven, he could not be there but on the same ground as the dying robber — as a guilty sinner cleansed from his sins by the precious blood of Christ, and saved by God's sovereign grace." "Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 9.)

No one was ever fitted for heaven on the ground of his own goodness. "There is none righteous, no, not one." (Romans iii. 10.) "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans iii. 12.) "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans viii. 8.) "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.)

An old bishop, when he was dying, said to some friends gathered around his bed, "I have just taken all my good works and all my bad works, and thrown them right overboard, and I am floating into heaven on the plank of free grace."

Nothing but the work of Christ can give us fitness, or title, to stand in the light of God's holy presence. The moment a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and has received the Holy Spirit, he is as fit for heaven as if he had been there for fifty years. In Col. i. 12, Paul does not say, which *is making* us meet (or fit), but "which **HATH** made us meet." We give thanks to the Father for what is already done, namely, that we who believe in Christ are fitted for the very light of God's glory. Christ Jesus is, of God, made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. i. 30.)

If we take the dying thief as an example, we find, after he confessed his guilt, that he turned to Jesus and said, "Lord, remember me when Thou

comest into Thy kingdom." His hands and feet were nailed to a cross, and he was, therefore, powerless to do anything to fit himself for heaven. However willing he might be to perform good works, if such *could* have atoned for his past guilt, he could not do them.

How, then, did the Lord meet his sad case? Did He tell him that he was too great a sinner to be saved? Did He bid him wait until, by doing better for the future, he had reformed his wasted and mis-spent past? Nay! nay! there was no time for that. The man was in the iron grip of death, and was about to pass into eternity to meet a holy God. He wanted salvation *immediately*, or he must perish in hell-fire everlastingly. His request was listened to at once. Nay, he got far more than he asked for. *Instead of waiting to get the glory of the kingdom, Jesus says, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise."* (Luke xxiii. 43.) What a glad surprise!

What, then, fitted the dying thief for such holy companionship, for such a blessed place? Not, surely, his prayers, for he only uttered one prayer that we read of, and that a very short one. Not even his penitential tears. There is no divine record of such. And certainly not his attending feasts or fasts for the purification of his soul, nor performing good deeds of any kind. No, no, it was nothing less than the all-cleansing blood of the blessed Saviour, who, in rich grace, died for him, thus making a full and perfect atonement to God for all his guilt. The dying malefactor could truly have said—

"Thy blood is my claim and my title,
Beside it, O Lord, I have none."

FITNESS FOR HEAVEN: WHO HAS IT? 45

"It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.) "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 22.)

What a magnificent triumph of divine grace, that could save a man from the very deepest degradation and the most appalling doom; that could snatch him from the very jaws of the devil, from the verge of a burning hell, and fit him at once to be Christ's companion in paradise, fit him to enter the presence of God's brightest glory! What joy it must have been for a sinner, who deserved the very lowest hell, to go in company with God's blessed Son into such heavenly festivity! If man's sin closed the gates of an earthly paradise upon him, God's wondrous grace opened wide the doors of a heavenly paradise to him.

It has been said that grace is "something for nothing," which is quite true so far as it goes. But God's grace is much more. It is nothing less than the full display of His boundless love towards unworthy, hell-deserving objects.

No one could purchase salvation. Nor, in his own merits, was any child of Adam's guilty race ever entitled to it. On the contrary, if God had acted in strict justice, and given us what our sins merited, He would have cast us into hell for ever.

Could we obtain salvation by our own works, we should make God our debtor. Salvation would not be of grace. But God will not be any man's debtor. He wants us to be His debtors for all eternity. Salvation has been procured for all who are not too proud to take it for nothing. It is offered "without money and without price." Divine grace has brought it down to *you*, my

reader, *as you are, and where you are*. Nothing will rejoice God's loving heart more, nothing please Him better, than that you should receive the gift He offers, and thus be brought into the full joy of salvation.

It has been said that "faith appropriates what love provides, and nothing pleases love better than that faith should appropriate largely." Appropriation simply means that you take it to yourself, and make it your own. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," is a divine command.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." God must ever have the more blessed place. "If thou knewest the gift of God," said Jesus to the poor Samaritan sinner, "thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."

Dear reader, let the thought be banished from your mind for ever, that God is *asking* anything from you. GOD IS A GIVER. He delights in giving freely and bounteously. Let Him fill your heart with joy unspeakable, by receiving Christ as His own love-gift to you. There is enough in Him to fill and satisfy your heart with boundless joy. You shall never thirst again for the unsatisfying pleasures of this poor world, if you drink of His infinite fulness.

Blessed Lord Jesus, Thou art not only our Saviour from hell, but Thou art the satisfying portion of Thy people's hearts. Thou fillest the infinite heart of God with unchanging delight, and if so, Thou canst fill the hearts of all who receive of Thy fulness with pleasures never-ending.

P. W.

ENQUIRER'S CORNER.

SOLID SATISFACTION.

I AM sorry you do not get what you want, but the secret is surely this, you are, for solid satisfaction, looking at the *wrong person*.

Read John iii. 35: "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into *His* hand," and Isaiah liii. 10: "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in *His* hand."

If you would only go to the Father, and enquire what He thinks about Jesus, He would tell you that *He* considers Him worthy—*well worthy* of His entire confidence; that, in proof of this, He has put everything into His hand; that He has implicitly trusted Him with the mighty work of redemption, with the great concerns of coming judgment, and finally with the sceptre of universal government. He would assure you that His good pleasure would yet prosper, as it has ever prospered in His hand; that He is His beloved Son, in whom He has found all His delight.

Don't try to take the measure of *your own* realization of His worth. If you do you will surely miss the very thing you so much long to possess. You must accept *God's* estimate as the only trustworthy one.

The other day my spectacles got a little out of order at one of the joints. I at once found an obstacle in the way of putting them right myself, and for this simple reason, I had to *take them off* for that purpose. Of course I soon discovered the loss of them, for without them I was unable to see properly, and the work in hand necessitated that I should see as well without them as if I had them on.

Now, in like manner, you cannot examine your faith, and, at the same time, have the comfort of realizing that which only faith can give you to realize. Think this carefully over. Faith *does* not look at faith. Natural sight *cannot*. It has often tried to do so, and has, as often, been disappointed.

It is CHRIST HIMSELF and the FATHER'S THOUGHT OF HIM that faith is rightly occupied with, and you only grieve the Spirit by turning anywhere else for satisfaction.

HOW MUCH OWEST THOU?

"THE day of grace is almost o'er,
The judgment time is just before—
"How much owest thou?"

* * * * *

That day of doom, with joy unmixed,
Is for God's righteous reckoning fixed—
"How much owest thou?"

Who may that awful day abide?
Who from God's holy presence hide?—
"How much owest thou?"

If *one* dark deed will forfeit heaven,
And strict account of *all* be given—
"How much owest thou?"

THE BELIEVER'S ANSWER.

*No righteous charge 'gainst me is laid,
Jesus hath full atonement made ;
Debtor to grace I rejoice to be,
Debtor for all eternity.*

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



“IT IS REPORTED THAT YOU——”

“IT IS REPORTED.” What tales of sadness and joy have followed these three words before now. Add two more, and you could hardly find a man on earth that would not be all attention instantly. “It is reported *that you——*” For where is the man who has not *some* secret that he would not like to become a common report in the ears of his fellow men?

We expect therefore, dear unconverted reader, to get your earnest attention, since we have to say that a Report has reached us about *you*.

About *me*?

Yes, a serious one, and about *you*.

Ah, but you must not believe every report you hear.

True enough; but there is no mistake about this one.

Then pray let me hear it?

Well, it appears that every tittle of your history has been minutely watched by an eye that nothing escapes; and what is more, all has been accurately recorded. (Proverbs v. 21, xv. 3; Eccles. xii. 14; Rev. xx. 12, 13.) Weigh well the evidence, and if you think you can disprove it, go to the Chief Witness and say so.

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The report states that you have been cruelly deceived by one who seeks, with subtlety, to accomplish your everlasting ruin. (Rev. xx. 10; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) And the worst part of the deception is that you have been induced by your subtle enemy to refuse the kindness of your truest Friend, and carefully to avoid being brought into contact with Him. (John v. 40.) Is not this also sadly too true?

It is stated that you even know (though your enemy would fain have you forget it) that, in connection with the charges to be brought against you, a certain "officer" is on your track to arrest you, and that that "officer" *may* put his cold hand upon you at *any* hour, day or night, waking or sleeping; and that, though you are in terror of his very shadow, you obstinately persist in pursuing your old course. (Job xxiv. 17; Matt. v. 25, 26.) You cannot deny the truth of this.

But wait a moment, there is

ANOTHER REPORT.

This is a *good* report; so good, indeed, that human ears never listened to a better. But it is not *about you* this time, though sent *to you*.

One great comfort about it is that you have not to try to be anything but what you are in order that this report may benefit you. As sure as the first report has come from heaven *about you*, the second—the gospel of God's saving Grace—has been sent from heaven *to you*. (1 Peter i. 12.) You are not asked to be worthy enough to receive it. You are told that it is the *report that is worthy* of being received. (1 Timothy i. 15.)

FAITH'S CONFIDENCES.

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Be assured of this, that whether you are constrained by the Spirit of God to believe this "faithful saying" and come to Christ, or prevailed upon by the enemy to refuse and stay away, your soul is beyond all description precious. "Lose it, and your all is lost—LOST FOR EVER!"

You must either "repent" or "perish"; "turn" or "die." You must either *make haste* and come to Christ for salvation, or *loiter* and be *lost*. "Linger not" is mercy's cry. Another day of lingering may land you in a night of despair. It has been said, that "hell is the truth seen too late." Loiter not another moment lest *you* be for ever too late. Remember that once in hell all the blame will be locked up in your own bosom, and what bosom could bear it? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" WHY WILL YE DIE?
GEO. C.

FAITH'S CONFIDENCES.

THEIR wish was fulfilled. The guilty throng had gained their way, and, amidst jeers and shouts of scorn, Jesus was crucified.

Strange and awful were the surroundings of that cross: unfathomably mysterious were the words which fell from the lips of the Crucified; but at last "It is finished," loudly uttered, told that all was over, and the next moment the Saviour was *dead*.

The morrow was the Sabbath, and the crowd—all too eager to rid themselves of Jesus, but far too religious to defile themselves for that holy day—besought Pilate to make sure that death had taken place, and that the body might be removed.

Examination only proved the reality of His death; but, as though to put the matter for ever beyond doubt, a soldier's spear was thrust into His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (John xix. 34.)

The sepulchre made sure, the stone sealed, the watch set (Matt. xxviii. 66), all told of *man's* interest in the death of Jesus. At any cost must the world be preserved against imposture.

But, after all, *God* had an interest in that death. The One so ruthlessly rejected, both by Gentile and Jew, by religious and profane, was God's blessed Son, come in flesh, to be the Victim for sin. That death and blood-shedding, already spoken of, were but accomplished to meet God's claims against the sinner, though *man's* unbending hatred against God was thereby proved up to the hilt.

Slowly the Sabbath passes. The first day of the week begins to dawn, when, lo! the guarded grave is suddenly emptied; the once dead, but now risen Jesus, passes its portals; God-sent angels roll back the sealed stone; whilst affrighted women, and still more affrighted keepers, attest the reality of that wonderful event. Subsequently, as we know, hundreds saw the risen Saviour (1 Cor. xv.), victorious over sin and death; and not a few saw Him when His feet last touched the earth, and when He ascended from it into the air, till a cloud received Him out of their sight. (Acts i.)

Now, reader, we do not know how far you realize the meaning of this story; but, rest assured, the world has not seen the last of Jesus. Though unseen, He is living still, and will, ere long, burst forth in glory upon this guilty scene.

FAITH'S CONFIDENCES.

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Meanwhile God waits, that He may be gracious; and if hitherto you have been unrepentant, cleaving to sin and self, let me entreat you now to slight Him no more.

Amongst those who will read these pages may be found one trembling sinner who has been convicted of sin by God's Holy Spirit. *Your* state, dear soul, is that of deep enquiry; and you could not think of being at rest until you are assured of God's forgiving love. Others may still hope to gain His favour by their doings, miserable and doomed to disappointment as the hope is; but the language of *your* heart is—

“Not the labour of *my* hands
 Could fulfil the law's demands.
 Could my *zeal* no respite know,
 Could my *tears* for ever flow,
 All for sin could ne'er atone?
Thou must save, and Thou alone.”

Let me point out to you four verses which will help you to see the means of salvation, and also some of the results which attend it. The first is Romans iii. 25—

“THROUGH FAITH IN HIS BLOOD.”

If you read the whole verse carefully, in its context, you will see that it is brought in after the sinner's guilt—*your* guilt—has been thoroughly investigated, and sifted to the very bottom. (See *vv.* 9–23.) It is in the full view of all that you have done as a sinner that God sets Christ Jesus before you as a propitiation, “through faith in His blood.” You will understand from this that, whatever claims God has against you because of your sins, He has found such an answer to them all in the blood-shedding of Jesus, that He is free to forgive and bless you, if you will now trust in

that blood alone. Indeed, He is not only *free* to do so, but is *righteous* in blotting out your sins for ever. Not only was this the ground upon which the "sins that are past" are forgiven (*i.e.*, the sins of believers previous to Christ's death), but it is the basis upon which *you* shall to-day have the remission of *your* sins. Thank God for the blood! Now, in unfeigned renunciation of all other methods, let your faith be in that blood, and the remission of sins is straightway yours.

The second verse is Romans iii. 26. Here you will notice that God is just, and the Justifier of

"HIM WHICH BELIEVETH IN JESUS."

In the previous verse, which we have just examined, it was the blood of Jesus which God set before you, as the only way in which your sins could be removed. Here He would have you lay hold of a further thought, *i.e.*, that you should confidently and unreservedly commit yourself to *Jesus* as your personal Saviour. That which He has done for you is calculated to drive away all distrust from your burdened heart, and to awaken your full confiding trust in *Him*. Do you not believe in *Jesus*? Does not the very thought of all His love—proved by His bearing your sins on the tree—make you ashamed of the last vestige of unbelief, and lead you, at this very moment, to place your soul, your destiny, your all, in His hands? If so, God justifies you completely from all your sins. He convicts you of them, but it is only to assure you, on believing in *Jesus*, that He will never impute them to you any more. You are verily justified from all things. (Read Acts xiii. 38, 39.) He is *just* in doing this, as in all His ways, for He has already imputed the

believer's sins to Jesus, when He hung as your Substitute on the cross. There they met with their righteous deserts.

A third verse is Romans iv. 5. This will bring home to you in deeper measure how fully your salvation is of God, and how altogether apart it is from any works of merit on your side. To the one who

“BELIEVETH ON HIM THAT JUSTIFIETH THE
UNGODLY”

does the blessing belong. Some might think, “Is it not the *good* who come to believe in Jesus?” Certainly not, if we are to believe Scripture. For does not chapter iii. 12 tell us, “There is *none* that doeth good, no, *not one*”? It is after showing how *ungodly* we are that this magnificent verse comes in in chapter iv. God justifies the *ungodly* man who abandons all trust in his own efforts, and believes on God alone. Instead of looking to any way of his own, he is content and glad to be saved from his sins in God's way. The chief reason why I refer to the verse at this time is to point out that *God Himself* is now the Object of your trust. It is not merely that *the blood of Jesus* has been shed for you, or that *Jesus* is the Saviour of every believer (though this is all so true), but *God Himself* is become your confidence. Many think that if they go to Jesus He will save them, *but that if they go to God He will judge them*. How fully this verse contradicts any such wretched thought of our blessed God! *He* it was who gave Jesus; and *He* it is who justifies us, when we trust to the person and work of Christ alone. *He* it is who reckons us righteous before Him, so that we can

come happily into His presence without fear. What a God!

Let me direct your attention, lastly, to Romans iv. 24—

“WE BELIEVE ON HIM THAT RAISED UP JESUS OUR LORD FROM THE DEAD.”

The God whom we trust has so completely satisfied Himself about our sins, that the very One who was delivered for them all has been raised from amongst the dead. This announces *His* discharge from all the pains and penalties He undertook to bear; hence the believer knows that God now holds *him* to be righteously discharged from all those pains and penalties too. In the court of heaven's justice, the moment you believe the gospel of God, you are reckoned a righteous man before God. It is not that you have been righteous *in yourself*, but, Christ having borne your sins and atoned for them all, God's justice now shelters and protects you, instead of condemning you. The waters of the Red Sea (which afterwards overthrew the Egyptians) formed a wall on the right hand and on the left for those people who were sheltered by the blood of the Lamb. (Ex. xii. and xiv.) The very justice of God which once awed you and terrified you now befriends you, because you trust in Jesus' blood.

But our verse teaches us more. It brings before us the fact that God has now before His eye the Man who went into death, but who came out of it again. It is through this Man that God is pleased to bestow every bit of blessing upon you. All is yours in Him. You cannot read Romans v. without seeing this. *Through Him* peace, grace, and

PRAYER OF THE DEAD FOR THE LIVING. 57

glory are yours. *To Him* you owe it that you will never be under wrath again. *Through Him* you joy in God. Connected *with Him*—not now with Adam—you stand before God.

In closing, remember, dear soul, that Jesus is your *Lord*. This surely indicates that each one believing in God is henceforth governed by *His* will. May your future be bright with His praise. (Rom. x. 9.) W. H. W.

PRAYER OF THE DEAD FOR THE
LIVING.

IT is taught by some that the prayers of the living avail for the dead; that the sorrow and possible torment of those who have passed from this world is mitigated by prayers ascending from sinners here. So, many do of their charity pray for the souls of their departed ones. Is this doctrine found in the Holy Scriptures? We may boldly say that it is not.

Again, it is also taught by some that the prayers of the holy dead avail for the living; that saints now before God engage themselves with the sorrows and trials of those who are upon earth, and aid them by their intercession and supplication. So, many call upon the saints, desirous of having their aid. But again we may ask, Is this doctrine found in the Holy Scriptures? Indeed it is not; and therefore all its comfort is false and delusive.

But one thing we have found in searching the Scriptures, and startling it may be. Our Lord Jesus, when here on earth, spoke of a man who

died, and found his place in hell's torments. He lifted his voice in earnest intercession for the living. How different is this from human dogmas! One in torment pleading for those on earth!

Perhaps our reader would like to know more of this. He cannot do better than take a Bible (for doubtless he has one, or can obtain one), and turn to the gospel according to St. Luke, chap. xvi. vv. 19-31. Here he will see the whole matter as the Lord sets it forth.

Now mark the peace and plenty of this man in life; his pain and torment after death. What brought him into torment? SIN. Unrepentant and unsaved he passed from the pride and pomp of greatness into the extreme poverty that beseeches for the smallest drop of water; from princely ease into deepest anguish. Is there no escape? None, for there is a great gulf fixed. Is there no mitigation? None; the mercy of a drop of water is denied. Does not his prayer avail? No; there is no grace, no salvation, no alleviation in hell. Do not his living relatives pray for him with effectual intercession? There is no word of any such thing. Surely the tender heart of that precious Saviour would not have omitted so important a point had it been true.

Now we come to his own intercession for others; "I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." His anxiety, you will mark, was not that they might be comforted and helped in things of this life, but lest living carelessly they might die as he had done, and pass into torment.

PRAYER OF THE DEAD FOR THE LIVING. 59

Oh, how much do men think of present things, and how little of that which is before them in eternity!

Is then this intercessory request granted? It is not. Wherefore? Is the compassion of God limited? Is He not willing to afford all needed warning to the living lest they pass into torment in hell? Let us hear the answer of Abraham. "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." God has fully set forth, in the Holy Scriptures, what man needs to know. They contain all the solemn warnings, all the cheering exhortations, and all the manifestation of God's grace, that is necessary for man's guidance, and there is a refusal to supplement them by any other.

"Nay" again it is pleaded, "but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." The answer is simple, striking, and solemn; "If they *hear not* Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

It is often said, and flippantly spoken, in regard to death and that which is beyond, "Ah, no one comes back to tell us what is there!" No, for it is not permitted by God. He has spoken to us by His word, and if man requires more it is in vain. The incredulity that will not receive the Word of God would not be persuaded by one rising from the dead.

Dear reader, what place has the Bible in your heart? Do you value it as that in which God speaks to your soul? Do you heed His warning of eternal judgment? Do you accept His rebuke of sin? Have you bowed before Him in sincere repentance? Have you read and believed the sweet story of His grace and love?

If so, you will know that One has risen from the dead. In connection with it there was the fulfilment of Abraham's words. Those who heard not Moses and the prophets, believed not when He rose from the dead. A lie was invented, and accepted widely, to account for this wondrous thing. (See Matthew xxviii. 11-15.) But how precious is the fact to the believer, for the One who is risen is the One who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree. (1 Peter ii. 24.) He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. (Romans iv. 25.) As He suffered the judgment of God and died on account of our sins, His resurrection is to us the plain proof that all our sins are gone, and our judgment is exhausted. And inasmuch as He was raised from the dead by God, we know that His satisfaction is complete and perfect. Thus, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now can we sing—

“There is no condemnation, there is no hell for me,
The torment and the fire my eyes shall never see.”

Instead of all this we have peace, grace, and the hope of glory.

Dear reader, in face of all the unbelief which is prevalent, we beseech you to search the Scriptures, hearken to them as the Word of God, heed their warning, embrace their messages of grace and salvation, believing on Him whom they present to you, that is, on God's beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

J. R.

MANY COMING EARLY—FEW COMING LATE! 61

MANY COMING EARLY—FEW COMING LATE!

IF you should question the accuracy of the following tables, they can easily be verified by asking any given number of christians the period of their first turning to God. You will find them, in the main, only too correct.

The probability of conversion very rapidly diminishes as age creeps on. Of a 1000 christians make five classes—the first, those converted under 20 years of age; the second, between 20 and 30; the third, between 30 and 40; the fourth, between 40 and 50; the fifth, between 50 and 60.

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

But you ask, Why stop at 60 years of age? Well, if you will have a sixth class:

Between 60 and 70 years of age. . .	1
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Another, and quite independent, examination was made of 253 christians, with these results:

Under 20 years of age . . .	138
Between 20 and 30 years of age. . .	85
„ 30 and 40 „ . . .	22
„ 40 and 50 „ . . .	4
„ 50 and 60 „ . . .	3
„ 60 and 70 „ . . .	1

Satan told a man near B——, in Herefordshire, many years ago, that he was young, and need not care yet about his soul's salvation.

The enemy came again to him when he was old, but to tell him that having spent the best

part of his life in his service, it was too late now to be saved at all.

The primitive christians were very strict about receiving people into the church, and required to be satisfied as to their conversion, and subsequent holy walk.

One very aged Roman gentleman, named Marcus Caius Victorius, was converted from Paganism to Christ. He came to Simplicianus, a minister, and told him that he heartily owned and embraced the christian faith. But neither he, nor the church, would receive him for a long time, and the reason was the exceptional case of one being converted at such a great age. But after he had given evidence of the reality thereof there were acclamations and singing of psalms, the people everywhere crying out:

"Marcus Caius Victorius has become a Christian!"

This was recorded as a wonder.

The young we affectionately and earnestly entreat to get this momentous question settled without delay.

To our aged readers we would quote a statement from God's own Word, for while in the body there is hope—

"Behold! NOW is the accepted time;
Behold! NOW is the day of salvation."
(2 Cor. vi. 2.)

"If I could find the *oldest* heart
That longest has withstood
The wooings of Almighty love,
My Saviour could and would
Forgive the awful life of sin,
And take the aged offender in,
My Saviour could and would."

Jesus said, "ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE TO HIM
THAT BELIEVETH."
W. M. W.

N.B.—“NO CREDIT GIVEN.”

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N.B.—“NO CREDIT GIVEN.”

EVERYONE born into this world is naturally an UNBELIEVER. I once saw a placard hanging in a shop with the words on it which stand at the head of these lines. It was a solemn commentary on man's true state of mind towards God. But it was not merely the *shop-keeper's* way of conducting his business. It is the language of every unconverted man to God—his mode of conducting the business of his immortal *soul*! Will it pay?

Unbeliever! God has visited your world—your town—your street—your house—yes, your *heart*, and THIS is the reception that He has met with from you. Placarded outside your door, and within deeply engraven on your heart, are those defiant words from you to Him—

N.B.—“NO CREDIT GIVEN.”

That placard in the shop *looked* like an insult to every honest customer who entered it. It *seemed* to proclaim that the owner treated them all as rogues, and unworthy of confidence. Make the best you can of it, they were, at least, unworthy of trust in *his* eye.

God has come into the world, and this is how you have treated Him. Think of it, my friend, and don't try to dismiss it because it is an ugly thought for you. It is. But if ugly, it is the truth. If you are not at this moment a believer, the placard still hangs there, the words (unspoken, perhaps), are nevertheless the language of your heart. *He* reads them. To God you have never said

ANYTHING ELSE.

Alas for you, my friend! You will soon be a suppliant at another "house of business." You will soon, it may be *very* soon, pass away from this scene wherein you still are an indifferent unbeliever of God. "He that believeth not [*i.e.*, gives not credit] hath made Him a liar." I tell you that you will read *again*, and then as a rejected suppliant, these awful words which have until now been the language of *your* heart, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Are you ready for this? Are you prepared to hear from the lips of the blessed God Himself, as you present yourself before Him,

"NO CREDIT GIVEN."

Oh the awful sorrow of that word to you! Oh the awful turning away, to enter the "GREAT FOREVER" under the eternal frown of God!—the company of "the fearful and the UNBELIEVING," the neglecters and the despisers! Oh, take that awful placard down! "*Believe*" in your heart—and let the words "No credit given" as to God, no longer be, as they have till now been, the true description of your case. Amen.

H. C. A.

"JESUS LOVES *ME*."

A MAN, over ninety years of age, was asked by a Christian, "My dear, aged friend, do you love Jesus?" His deeply furrowed face was lit up with a smile that years of discipleship had imparted, and, grasping his hand, he said, "Oh, sir! I can tell you something better than that." "Indeed, what is it?" "Oh, sir!" he said, "Jesus loves me."

J. W. H. N.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.

CHANCES.

“**H**E got his chance last night, but he didn’t take it!” said a member of a lifeboat crew, with reference to the captain of a ship which was wrecked, with the loss of twenty lives. The lifeboat’s help had been declined, as the captain hoped to save his ship, but his hope of attaining safety by his own efforts proved vain.

Of how many souls who have passed into eternity may it not be said, with reference to SALVATION, “he got his chance, but he didn’t take it?” Not only is this the case to-day, but it was so of old. Let me give you a few instances from Scripture.

“As it was in the days of Noe . . . they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.” (Luke xvii. 26, 27.) “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” (1 Peter iii. 20.) They got their chance, but they didn’t take it.

“And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said,

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Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law." (Gen. xix. 14.) They got their chance, but they didn't take it.

Judas Iscariot was the close companion of Christ during the three-and-a-half years of His wondrous life of service on earth. He heard His words of grace, beheld His acts of power, and was an eye-witness of His whole manner of life, but, after all, he betrayed his Master, and destroyed himself. He got his chance—and what a chance—but he didn't take it.

Simon the sorcerer was a witness of the great revival in Samaria; and was himself so impressed by the preaching of Philip, and the miracles he performed, that he yielded mental credence to the truth, and was baptized. But a word afterwards shewed that he had neither part nor lot in the matter, for his heart was not right in the sight of God. (Acts viii. 5-24.) He got his chance, but he didn't take it.

Felix, the governor, "sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." (Acts xxiv. 24, 25.) He got his chance, but he didn't take it.

King Agrippa, moved by the pressing appeal of the same apostle when his prisoner, was almost persuaded to be a Christian. (Acts xxvi. 27, 28.) He got his chance, but he didn't take it.

And now, on the other hand, let me give you a few examples from the Word of God of some who got their chance, and took it.

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of

things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." (Heb. xi. 7.) He got his chance, and took it.

Unlike the last, whom God found righteous in his generation, Rahab was a poor harlot; but, being also moved with fear of things not seen as yet, she harboured the spies who entered Jericho, and having obtained a promise from them of security (Josh. ii.), acted upon it, and filled her house with her relatives, who were the only persons spared when the city was taken. (Josh. vi. 22, 23.) She got her chance, and took it.

Jesus, as He passed along, "saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow Me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him." (Luke v. 27, 28.) He got his chance, and took it.

While on His way to Jerusalem to die, Jesus, passing through Jericho for the last time, was arrested by the importunate cry for mercy of a blind beggar, and, at his desire, gave him his sight. (Luke xviii. 35-43.) He got his chance, and took it.

Passing out of the same city, He was met by Zaccheus, who, not to be deterred by the thronging crowd through his smallness of stature, ran before, and climbed a tree to see Jesus. Jesus looked up, saw him, went to be his guest, and pronounced the words, "this day is salvation come to this house." (Luke xix. 1-10.) He got his chance, and took it.

Paul, having come to Philippi, went out on the Sabbath to a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made, and spoke to the women that

resorted thither. A certain tradeswoman, named Lydia, attended to that which was spoken of Paul. (Acts xvi. 13-15.) She got her chance, and took it.

Awakened out of his sleep by an earthquake, a gaoler, in the same city, with his conscience deeply convicted before God, fell at the feet of Paul and Silas, and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He received the blessed answer, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house'; and "the same hour of the night" he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." (Acts xvi. 22-34.) He got his chance, and took it.

The day is coming, my reader, when one of these two will be truly said of you—"He got his chance, and took it," or, "he got his chance, but he didn't take it." Which will it be? In the day that your earthly history comes to be summed up, will the first, or the second, have to be said of you? See to it, and see to it *now*, that you are not letting your chance escape you.

Had Noah delayed, destruction would have overtaken him as it did all outside the ark. But, *directly* Noah was warned of God, he set about securing the means of salvation.

Had Rahab delayed to put the scarlet line in her window—fit emblem of the blood of Jesus, the sinner's only refuge—her house would have fallen with the remainder of Jericho's walls.

Had Levi postponed responding to the call of Christ, he might never have had another.

Had blind Bartimæus continued calling for money, and not called for mercy when he did, he would never have had another chance of reaching the Saviour's ear and heart. Or had Zaccheus lost

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his chance of seeing Jesus, he would never have had another. For that was His last journey through Jericho.

Take warning then, dear reader, from the men before the flood, from Lot's sons-in-law, Simon the sorcerer, Felix, Agrippa, and from the captain of that ship who refused to be rescued when he might have been landed, with his crew, in safety. Imitate the faith of Noah, Rahab, Levi, Bartimæus, Zaccheus, Lydia, the Philippian gaoler. Now is your time, for "*now* is the day of salvation." "*To-day*, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Let it not have to be said of you, "He got his chance, but he didn't take it."

W. G. B.

HE DID NOT CONSIDER.

OFTEN, before now, the sight of a stranded ship has proved a timely warning to other vessels, even when neither light-house, nor any other beacon, has marked the treacherous hidden reef.

The following extracts have been sent to the writer, and are here inserted in hope that some young man, in like danger, may be warned in time. It is too late to consider the course of your vessel when her keel is grating on some sunken rock, too late when she is shivering from stem to stern as though afraid of the consequences of the dead stand she is about to make.

A little further in the course which *you* are pursuing, my reader, though all is fair to the outward eye, may find you shivering on the brink of a lost eternity. Is it not time to consider what

such a "DEAD STAND" will involve? Here is a beacon for you. Pause and consider.

"A black felt hat and several articles of clothing were discovered yesterday afternoon on the banks of the Thames, near Isleworth, together with the following letter, written in pencil, in a good, bold hand :

"Good-bye to friends and enemies. I have come to the end of my journey at last, and life has no further charms for me. Before I go let me give one word of warning, especially to young men. Avoid betting and the race-course as you would avoid poison. Four years ago I was a rich man, possessed of something like £20,000 from one source alone. My fortune reverted to me suddenly, and I lost my head over so much gold, and immediately launched into a fast life. The company of bad women and low and illiterate men was my delight almost as soon as I set foot in London, coming straight from the peaceful village of Upwey, in Dorsetshire, where I had resided for years amid good surroundings. My gay companions quickly introduced me to the gambling-table and the turf. Intoxicated with pleasure, *I did not consider* for one moment whither they were leading me. Every race-meeting I attended, and seldom won as the result of my friends' (?) advice.

"There are thousands of low, cunning blackguards, frequenting the race-course, who live by the stupidity of men like myself. They live to lie, and cheat, and blaspheme, *utterly regardless of a hereafter*. I have lunched with princes, dukes, and lords, and have assisted to swell their ill-gotten gains. The race-course is a veritable hell upon earth, and betting is England's curse, and will ruin her in the end.

"I am about to do as scores of others, in their desperation, have done before me. Poverty and starvation have taken the place of affluence and comfort. My friends have forsaken me, and life is no longer worth living. Please communicate with

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—— —, Durden Street, Bristol. He knows all. When I am picked up, perhaps —— and his pals (here the name of a well-known sporting man is mentioned) will subscribe towards giving poor Jack S—— a decent burial. Farewell.”

* * * *

“The principal room at Monte Carlo Casino was crowded on Thursday night by a throng of fashionable men and women, most of whom were eagerly following the play of an English doctor named S——, who was having an extraordinary turn of luck. The doctor finally accumulated an enormous sum, and was in the act of rising to leave with his winnings, when his pent-up excitement brought on an attack of apoplexy, and he fell dead across the gaming-table. The event caused some sensation, but as soon as the body had been removed, play was resumed as though nothing had happened.”

So much for the world they both seemed to love! “The rich man’s wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.” (Prov. xviii. 11.) But what is the use of his “high wall” if it is not high enough to keep death outside. Of what avail is it that he lives in a “strong city,” if he cannot resist the siege of the “king of terrors.” He may *seem* safe for the moment, but the believer *is* safe. Read the previous verse, “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and *is safe*.”

“Poor Jack S——” found very soon, yet sadly late, the mocking emptiness of everything in this world. Its riches did not satisfy, and its poverty only drove him to desperation. Sorely oppressed, and utterly disappointed, he found “no comforter.” All he could hope for from the world he had served was a “decent burial!”

Are you serving such a world as this, my reader? Outwardly the course of S. S. was a contrast to that of poor Jack S. Yet, when the end was reached, there was not much to choose between the brilliant winner and the disheartened loser. That fine "run of luck" only proved a blind rush to ruin. What shall it profit a man who has ninety-nine successful throws of the dice, or makes a fortune by as many successful bets, if, at the hundredth throw, or by the last wager, his all is staked and lost? And "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?" Think, my reader, think seriously of this. Had these two young men foreseen the sad end of their sinful course, how they would have recoiled with a shudder from the first step in it. But they did not consider. And *you* will do well to remember, my reader, that you cannot enter the devil's coach and stop just when you think fit, or go to sleep on his couch and fix your own hour for waking. An alarm clock would not serve the enemy's destructive ends. Should his victim awake, through other means, he either soothingly whispers "Too soon, sleep on," or roars defiantly, "Too late, too late. Face the worst; there is no hope now: *God* will not receive you."

Is my reader pursuing a path that only *seems* right? Let me entreat you then not to trust your own understanding in such a vital matter. The world's best offers are but the devil's best baits. The fatal barb lies hidden beneath the tempting exterior, and, once "caught," you will find that the real enjoyment of the bait only existed in your own imagination. Truly, "There is a way

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that *seemeth* right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. xvi. 25.) Again we say, Pause and consider.

But how vastly different the portion of those who are brought to taste the love of Christ. Love takes a delight in blessing and honouring its object: and "the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it." (Prov. x. 22.) "In His favour is life." (Ps. xxx. 5.) His "lovingkindness is better than life." (Ps. lxxiii. 3.) Think of the apostle Paul, as he writes from a foreign prison to the believers in Philippi. What content, what joy, what triumph! (Read Phil. i. 21-26; iv. 4-12.) To him life was indeed well worth living, since Christ and His saints were well worth serving.

Would you be the possessor of *real* good. "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." (Job xxii. 21.)

"Were the vast world our own,
With all its varied store,
And Thou, Lord Jesus, wert unknown—
We still were poor."

But how *can* I make God's acquaintance? He is making Himself known in the gospel of His grace—the gospel "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. i. 1-3.) He has declared the love of His heart in the gift of Jesus as a Saviour for sinners. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) Believe on Him of whom the gospel testifies, and all that is worth having will be yours. Turn to God from the world's best offers. Christ alone can satisfy an aching heart, and give peace to a guilty conscience. Thank God, tens of thousands of the

worst of sinners have been turned to God from their evil ways, and among the number many betting men, and not a few are this day standing as living witnesses to the saving power of the blood of Christ, the satisfying power of His love. Come to the same Saviour. Come, now, and you will surely find that life is worth living, for Christ is worth serving.

GEO. C.

TOM'S LAST RIDE IN THE DEVIL'S SERVICE.

“**W**HAT a strange title,” you say. Possibly you may think so, but the sequel quite justifies it.

Tom actually went into the stable, took out his father's horse, mounted it, and rode off at a good speed to assist the devil in keeping in his cruel grasp a poor sinner whom the Lord had set His heart upon saving.

A servant of the Lord had been preaching for several nights in the large kitchen of a farm-house in the North of England, when a very distinct work of grace began to be manifested, many becoming anxious, and others finding peace.

The farmer and his wife being both Christians, were much exercised about their family, and earnestly prayed to God for them. It was not long before they saw an answer to their prayers, in the conviction and conversion of part of their family. But if God was working to bless souls, the devil soon made it manifest that he too was working to hinder blessing. Tom, one of the farmer's sons, became very miserable through the meetings, but, instead of being broken down

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under the sense of his sin, and crying to God for mercy, he hardened himself against the Spirit's strivings, and became a ready tool in the devil's hands for stopping, if possible, the Lord's work.

He went to his father, protested against the meetings, and did his utmost to get him to stop them, angrily saying, "I can get no peace in the house with these preachers coming about it." But all his persuasions and protests and threats were of no avail. His father simply and firmly replied, "The house is mine, and I will carry on the meetings as long as the Lord is working, and as long as I have a desire to do so."

Satan having failed to stop the meetings, he had now another suggestion for Tom, "Don't go to any more of them. Leave the house before they begin, and keep away till they are over."

This satanic suggestion was accordingly acted upon. The first Lord's-day after this Tom went into the stable before the meeting commenced took out his father's horse, and rode off into the country a good many miles, with a feeling of relief that he was now quite free from all that had been making him so miserable.

As he had no watch with him, he had to guess the time by the distance he covered. When he thought he had gone far enough, he turned, rode back, put the horse in the stable, and went to the house, expecting the meeting would be over, and preacher and people gone; but, on opening the kitchen door, to his great surprise, the preacher was still on his feet addressing the meeting. A seat was found for him near the door, and—to use his own words to the writer—he had not been seated many seconds before he felt the power of the word so much that it was just like

God speaking to him personally. He was in an awfully wretched state; and when the meeting closed, he rose to leave the house as quickly as possible; but in his confusion of mind he had, when he entered, not noticed where he had placed his cap, and now he could not find it. This little incident, in which the hand of God was manifest, detained him till all who had to go had left the house. Being thus left, the preacher took the opportunity of having a personal talk with him.

During the conversation a terrible conflict was going on in his soul between Satan, who wanted to keep him in his "kingdom of darkness," and the Spirit of God, who was seeking to win him for Christ. But thanks be to God, the devil was defeated, the victory was the Lord's. Tom surrendered his heart at last to the One who not only had a claim upon him, but who loved him and died that He might make him His own for ever. But he did not yield, as we have seen, till after a most determined effort, by his ride that night, to assist the devil to defend his soul against the invasion of God's Spirit, who was bent on taking his heart *captive* for Christ. Thank God, that was his "last ride in the devil's service." He is now a "soldier of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. ii. 3.)

Now, reader, what about yourself? Has not this narrative a voice for you? Have you not had convictions, and stifled them? It is really a dreadful thing to resist the strivings of God's Spirit. Those who do, usually become more hardened, and many have died in dark despair, looking back to a certain moment in their history as that which sealed their doom. But, thank God, you are within the reach of mercy yet; and though, like Tom, you may have fought hard

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and long to resist the claims of a Saviour's love, we beseech you to surrender now, late though it be. We can fully assure you of a hearty welcome. Forgiving all the past, He will make you His own for ever.

J. M.

SECURE FROM JUDGMENT:

HOW DO I KNOW IT?

(Extract from a Letter.)

YOU need not be surprised if the majority should call in question the eternal security of the believer. It is the fashion nowadays to throw doubts on what God says. But you will observe that the fact of the believer having eternal life, and the assurance that he will never come into judgment for his sins, *does not rest upon the strength of his faith*, but on the unimpeachable authority of the Son of God. (John v. 24.) Either the believer shall not come into judgment, or else the Son of God does not speak the truth. How awful the position of those who prefer the latter thought.

You will find that those who call your security in question, do not see that all your sins were laid on Jesus at one time, and *that* 1860 years ago. He does not atone for your sin, every time you commit one; it is all done by His *one* offering of long ago. (Hebrews x.) Nor is it your confessing and repenting that *atones* for the sin, though both repentance and confession have their place in God's ways. (See 1 John i.)

It is the blood of Jesus, shed once for all, that has for ever atoned for every believer's sins; and if after conversion a believer should stumble, it interrupts his communion, but does not break his

relationship. It robs *him* of joy, but does not strip the *blood* of its value. Repentance and confession are necessary if the believer would have his communion restored: and if he neglect them, he may be placed under the government of God as to his body, this even going so far as his being allowed to die. (See 1 Cor. xi. 30-32.) Sometimes sickness and trial are sent if a believer is naughty; but when in this way we are judged of the Lord, it is expressly *that we should not be condemned with the world*. May God keep you from the wretched, dishonouring uncertainty into which Satan has succeeded in placing many devout and pious souls, and all because they *will* think that their final salvation depends in some way on their efforts, or their faithfulness. On Jesus alone hangs your salvation, past, present, and future: and *if He can break down*, then will the strongest believer, as well as the weakest, for ever and for ever be lost. (Acts iv. 11, 12.) W. H. W.

THE GOSPEL BRINGS, NOT DEMANDS.

HOW favoured are those who know the joyful sound of liberty to the captives! Earthly figures are so poor that they fail to describe the gospel and its attendant blessing. A wrecked mariner had been floating upon the open ocean for several days, without fresh water and with little food. There was the ocean all around him, but it only mocked his raging thirst. When almost dying he observed a white sail in the distance. Hope entered his breast. Strength re-entered his frame. He devised means to attract the notice of the approaching ship. He was

seen at length and was taken on board. *He was saved!* The gospel comes where lost men are: it *brings* salvation. It is exactly suited to the necessities of sinners. It is the word of life, of peace, of power, of liberty, of heaven, because it is the word of God.

Dear reader, have you experienced the power of the gospel? If not, I will only detain you to ask you one question: "*What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*" * * *

FAITH'S SHEET-ANCHOR—"I BELIEVE GOD."

"**W**HAT is it to believe?" once asked a lady. "Simply," we replied, "to accept without question what God says—simply to take God at His word."

This is well exemplified in the Apostle Paul, during the storm which resulted in his shipwreck at Melita. (Acts xxvii.) When the worst had come, and all hope for the safety of the lives of those on board had been taken away, Paul stands forth and exhorts them to be of good cheer, for that there should be no loss of any man's life among them. (v. 22.)

On what ground does he make this bold prediction, which every probability seemed to contradict? Let him speak for himself. "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." (vv. 23, 24.) This was enough for Paul. To him it made the life of every one on board perfectly

safe. He did not hesitate through looking at the strength of the storm or the frailty of the ship; nor did he consider the opinions of the experienced seamen. *God had spoken.* That was everything to him. He accepted the message without a single question as to how it was to be performed, and addressed his companions in these beautiful, encouraging words, "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for

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that it shall be even as it was told me." (v. 25.) Blessed, happy man! who could thus simply accept what God had said. Thrice happy is he who, in like manner, accepts and trusts God's Word in the much greater question of the soul's salvation. Such a one enjoys the unspeakable blessing of perfect assurance, his sheet anchor being—"I BELIEVE GOD."

Nine years ago I was one day talking to a young man who was very anxious about his soul. After having said a good deal to him, we knelt, and asked God to open his eyes to the truth. When we rose from our knees I repeated, "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.) We sat in silence for a short time, then he looked at me and said, "I don't *feel* anything, but I confess the Lord Jesus; and I believe that God raised Him from the dead, and God says I shall be saved." Only a few days since I again met that man—a bright, happy Christian, rejoicing in the assurance which was begun that day. Reader, do you enjoy the assurance which results from being able to say, "I BELIEVE GOD"? H. D.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



HOW I WAS CONVERTED.

AT the age of twenty-three, still living in sin, I received, one day, the startling news that *death* had visited our family. My eldest brother Jem lay dead, and I was called to see him and attend the funeral. God now spoke to me louder than ever, by DEATH—and such a death—a *drunkard's death*. There lay poor Jem in the cold grasp of death—the cause, delirium tremens. My feelings were beyond description as I gazed upon that once handsome face, now cold and motionless, bearing the marks of sin, and of Satan's power. I shuddered, for I knew that *that* would be the end of *my* sinful life if I continued as I was. Thoughts in quick succession flashed across my mind; thoughts of death, judgment, hell, my sins, my guilty history, my eternal woe—the lake of fire. Unhappy as I was when I thought of the future of my dear brother, I was much more so when I thought of my own.

Well, we buried him on a cold November day in London. Christmas came, and the old year began to die away. A Watch-night service was being held at the Wesleyan chapel, and I stepped in and took my seat behind one of the pillars,

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quite at the back where no one could see me. The minister rose and gave out his text from Luke xiii. 6-9: "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard: and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." Every word was telling upon my soul. I thought the sermon was specially for me. I was cumbering the ground, no good for God or man. "*Cut it down*" was what I deserved, but the dresser said, "Spare it another year, if it bear fruit, well: if not, then 'cut it down.'"

The service ended, I went home to reflect. I thought of God's mercy in sparing me another year. What should I do to repair the past? I could not *undo* it. Such thoughts came before me, for I did not know the God of all grace, nor what Jesus had done for me. For five months I continued in this unhappy condition, longing to be right, wishing I could live my life over again, wishing I had never sinned, despairing of heaven, fearing to die. About this time God saved a cousin of mine in Australia. Filled with the Holy Ghost and the love of God, he came to me, and sought to bring me to Jesus. He gave me a little book to read, entitled "*Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment.*" I put it in my pocket, not prizing it as I should, and went to bed without reading it. But God was watching me, and that night He spoke to me in my sleep. I dreamed

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that I was on hell's brink. Suddenly I fell over and thought I was slipping down its sides through its smoke and fire. I awoke, with "Thank God! I am alive; not yet in hell!" It was four o'clock in the morning, and I could sleep no more, lest I should awake in hell. I then turned to the little book and read these words, "Dear reader, you are travelling to *Eternity*, but *where* will you spend it, in heaven or hell?" It was this that troubled me. Where should I spend eternity?

The little book went on to explain, that, travelling to eternity, there were three classes of persons:

"1st Class—Those who *are saved and know it*."

"2nd Class—Those who are not sure of salvation, but who are *anxious* to be so."

"3rd Class—Those who are unsaved, and who are totally indifferent about it."

"Which class are *you* travelling?"

This question pulled me up, and I had to say 2nd class, though I wished it was 1st.

But I continued reading, for I was anxious. I came to page 10, where I read how God taught His people of old the way of redemption thus, "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt *not* redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem." (Exodus xiii. 13.) It was here I learned for the first time that the death and judgment I so much deserved, the Lamb of God had borne for me.

God's light was beginning to dawn upon me, and I continued to read. Presently I came to page 18, where it said, quoting the word of God, "These things **HAVE I WRITTEN** unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God;

that ye may KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life."

Did not this bring gladness to my poor heart? It did indeed. To think that Christ—God's Lamb—had died in my stead, and that God had written to me to say I had eternal life through believing on His Son. I could not stop reading that little book. On I went, page after page, until I had finished it, when I leaped to my feet praising God for all His love and grace in giving His dear Son to put away my sins. From that moment I could truly say, through grace, "I am travelling 1st class to heaven."

Now it was only 4.30 a.m., and I got down on my knees for the first time since I was a boy of fourteen. Well do I remember my prayer that morning; it was the only one I could think of:—

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee. Amen."

Though I was a man of twenty-three, this was my prayer, and the Lord answered it and received me just I was, for did He not say when on earth, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3.) My prayer being ended, I remained before the Lord for two hours enjoying His love. Filled with joy unspeakable, I then went downstairs to meet my friends and neighbours, and to confess Christ, who, having had compassion on me, had done such great things for me.

H. N. I.

"TO DIE IS GAIN."

THE following letter was written by a Christian a little while before he entered into rest—and was the last he ever penned :

"DEAR BROTHER,—Good bye. I have been unwell for some weeks, and now it turns out to be stoppage of the bowels, and possibly cancer. They are going to operate to-morrow, and the three doctors give little hope of success. But the Lord sitteth above the water-floods, and to die *is gain*. Pray for me and mine, please. I must go back to bed. Best love to all.

Yours affectionately,

"J. W. M."

None can read this pathetic note without being moved by the sublimely simple, child-like, unquestioning faith of the writer. Perfectly calm amid the tossing of the water-floods that threatened him, he could confidently say, "To die is gain!" Blessed statement!

The worldling says, "To live is gain; wealth is gain, pleasure is gain, ambition, fame, worldly position, power, all these are gain." How few can say, with the great apostle, "But what things were *gain* to me, *those* I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." And, again, "For to me to *live* is Christ, and to *die* is gain." (Phil. i. 21.)

To die is gain? Ah, too well does the worldling know that death cuts him off from everything he holds dear. And do not you, my unsaved friend, know full well that all your hopes and aspirations, pleasures and possessions, must be left behind when the hour of departure

comes (and come it *must*), and you are called to leave this world. Remember Luke xvi. The rich man *died*, but what then? In *hell* he lifted up his eyes. This was no gain to him—all loss, absolute loss, eternal loss! But if we have riches beyond the grave, if we have Christ for a Saviour, Christ for an object, then, and only then, can we truly say “to die is gain.” Gain? Yes; blessed, eternal gain. Eternal glory, eternal joy, eternal association with, and likeness to, the Lord Himself: what gain!

The world can never satisfy you, but Jesus can. The world can give you no lasting joy, but at God’s right hand there are “pleasures for evermore.” Thank God, the *work* of Christ meets the need of my once guilty conscience; the *person* of Christ meets the longings of my once unsatisfied heart, giving it its needed object and filling it with a joy that will last for ever. And though I am called to break with everything here, it is but to enter into the blest realization of what is mine there, and hence “to die is gain.”

W. B.

HARDNESS OF HEART.

“**H**OW *hard* I have become!” was the thought that suddenly seemed to dart into the mind of a Sheffield butcher as he was preparing to leave his shop and slaughter-house for the night. The longer that thought remained in his heart—for, no doubt, the Spirit of God had placed it there—the more alarmed did that godless, drinking butcher become. It was, as he told the writer, his very *hardness* that alarmed him.

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He thought of his long years of recklessness and sin, for he was past middle age at the time; he thought of God, and of the awful state of hardness which he had reached. Hard indeed he must have become to be able to continue in such a course so utterly unconcerned!

Thank God, his eyes were now opened, and his soul graciously reached by power divine. Later on his conscience was set at rest through the precious blood, while his heart found a satisfying object in a living, glorified Christ. For a few years he was allowed the privilege of serving Him below: now he has the higher privilege of resting with Him above.

Reader, have *you* never been alarmed by your hardness? Have you never paused to enquire the stage you have actually reached?

Carefully consider the steps down. Do any of them describe *your* condition?

A careless mind,
 A rebellious will,
 A hardened heart,
 A seared conscience,
 (And just one step more)
 A SOUL LOST FOR EVER.

Thank God, your soul is not damned for ever. But be assured, there is nothing you need fear more than a hardened heart and a seared conscience. They are certainly next door to damnation. On which step do you stand this moment?

At first the devil supports a man in his rebellious position by the apparent bright offers of self-gratification in the pleasures of sin. "*Do as you like*" is his gospel. "Take your happiness into your own hand. Enjoy life; forget death."

Like the wooden frame, set under an arch to support it in its position during construction, the devil at first props up the soul with the offer of worldly pleasures and fleshly lusts; then when the soul has become hard enough he can actually afford to remove the *pleasures* of sin, and give his victim a taste of the bitterness of sin, and this without any fear of losing him. It was thus he propped up Judas by the prospect of money, and just mark what followed. When the ill-gotten gain had been thrown down, when its possessor despaired of finding the smallest satisfaction in it, the "old serpent" still held his victim in his cruel grip. Judas went and hanged himself, and was numbered with the lost.

But what is it that subdues a man's will, softens his heart, changes his mind, purges his conscience, saves his soul? It is the knowledge of Christ. Read in Acts xvi. of the jailer's conversion, and then refer still further back to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (chapter ix.); and you will see, that whether it is by a light direct from heaven, and Christ personally presented to a religious Pharisee, or by a midnight earthquake and Christ preached to a heathen jailer, it is the same gracious interference of the blessed God, bringing about a personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, that alone accounts for such a marvellous change. May God grant that such a change may be realized by every unsaved reader of these pages, for His own name's sake.

GEO. C.

"TO-DAY, if you will hear His voice, *harden not your heart.*" (Heb. iii. 7, 8.)

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GUARD.

(EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.)

Between trains,

"Redeeming the time."

IT is quite a cheering event to look out for you every day (in the Express), but your chariot moveth like lightning—the wheels say, "onward progress." Yes, the whole thing is, like all others here, labelled "passing away." The A. P. makes this place uncommonly worldly and wicked. But the buzz is only like the breeze on the ocean; it is but the surface that is troubled. Down deep in the heart all is calm. Jesus, our blessed Lord Jesus, is so precious, so full. "All I need in Him I find." O my brother, cling closely. Don't brood over what *you* are, but rejoice in what *He* is. Don't be troubled about the little *you* are doing, but rejoice in the great work *He* has done for you, yes, for *you*, S. Keep the eye of faith fixed on Him. The more we grow like Him, the louder our life speaks for Him. And then let your heart go out to instruct those who oppose themselves. If you can't speak *to them* of Jesus, then speak *to Jesus* of them, and "what shall the harvest be?"

Every hour brings us nearer to that day of days when we shall no longer see through a glass, darkly, but face to face. May you and I and all ours meet then "to go no more out."

* * * * *

Bear this ever in mind, "*Self nothing, Christ your all.*"

“Strong in the grace of Christ,
And in His mighty power ;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts,
Is more than conqueror.”

Look up and say, “The Lord is on my side;
I will not fear, etc.” (Psalm cxviii. 6.)

“Though hot the fight, why quit the field,
Why must I either fly or yield,
Since Jesus is my mighty Shield ?”

Beloved, put on “the whole armour of God.” (Eph. vi. 11.) “The armour of light.” (Rom. xiii. 12.) Who can estimate the peace and glorious effect of walking in the Spirit, and not after the flesh. The worldling is *ruled by his body*, but the Christian *rules over his*, through Christ which strengtheneth him. What fruit had we in those things whereof we are now ashamed? Alas! we knew too well that the end would be sorrow and death. But now (O joy unspeakable!), having been made free from sin and become servants of God (and what a blessed Master!), we have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life; for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. vi. 21, 23.) O glorious prospect! O inestimable Gift! we can’t buy it—nor earn it—nor merit it in any way, but must accept the gift—Christ himself. “He that hath the Son hath life.” You see, my dear S., it is not religion, nor baptisms, nor sacraments, nor priests, nor angels that can save us. No, it is “Jesus only”—and Jesus is God—and “God is love.” Oh the mighty power of love. It is because we are saved and made the children of God that we are religious, for “every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as *He* is pure.” (1 John iii. 1, 3.)

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Walk humbly before God. Take Christ alone as your example. The more you realize His company the more you will grow like Him, for "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and everything that is lovely and of good report.

Don't feel down-cast because of evil men. What did Jesus suffer in this respect? And is the servant greater than his Lord? Do not put yourself in their way unnecessarily; "walk in wisdom toward them that are without." I do not mean that you are to put your light under a bushel. No, let it shine before men, and they will glorify God. (Matt. v. 14-16.) *Remember the candle will never burn clearly while there is a thief in it,* and it is the little foxes that destroy the vines (Cant. ii. 15). By God's help kill the little foxes or *they will grow* into large ones. And as a new-born babe desire the sincere milk of the word, that *you may grow* thereby, for I am persuaded that you "*have tasted* that the Lord is gracious." (1 Peter ii. 1-3.) Never argue upon God's truths. "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes, and the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." (2 Tim. ii. 23-26.) God knows how conscious I am of my shortcomings in all that I am writing to you, but pray for me, —, as I do for you. He giveth liberally and will not upbraid us. (James i. 5.) O what a God is ours!

* * * *

“NO GOD.”

“The fool hath said in his heart, No God.”

PSALM xiv. 1.

DO you, my reader, fall within the scope of this statement? It is an awful thing for the living God to say of any man, “Thou fool,” and besides this, it is as well to remember that your scepticism cannot alter the blessed fact that He exists, and that you have to do with Him.

“No God!” Consider a moment. How can man, in reality so puny, though in his own eyes so great, presume so to assert? He has never been beyond the confines of this narrow earth, and it is but a speck in God’s vast creation. How can he say that there is no God until he has traversed the length and breadth of this vast universe; until he has searched back into the hidden recesses of eternity, and returned with news of a perfect blank, and no discovered trace of a presiding God?

The celebrated astronomer, Kircher, having an acquaintance who denied the existence of God, convinced him of his error in the following manner:

When expecting a visit from his friend, he placed, in a prominent position in his study, a handsome globe, whereon was a representation of the starry heavens. His friend arrived, and, observing the globe, asked from whence it came, and by whom it was made. Kircher replied, ironically, that he had not brought it, nor was it made by any person whatever.

“That,” said his friend, “is quite impossible.”

Kircher, however, seriously persisting in his assertion, took occasion to reason with his friend on his atheistical principles.

“You will not believe,” said he, “that this

small body originated by mere chance, and yet you contend that these heavenly bodies, of which this is but a faint resemblance, came into existence without order or design."

My friend, there *is* a God, as we who know Him can testify, and as (prejudice aside) a serious perusal of the Scriptures would convince the most sceptical. The Bible is, without a shadow of doubt, God's word to this poor world. It tells how God, looking down upon mankind in their paths of departure from Him, yearned in His infinite compassion to save them from the consequences of their sin; yet, having an eye too pure to behold iniquity, and men being utterly unable to atone for the least of their sins, those sins must be purged by the blood of a substitute. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Hebrews ix. 22.) "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. vi. 23.) All on earth, lacking a substitute, must die for their own sins. Only One was found able to sustain God's judgment, and this One His own, His well-beloved Son.

Consider it well, my reader—this sacrifice was for you. God gave His only-begotten Son that your sins might be washed away from His sight, that you might be saved from everlasting burnings, and brought into the place of a son before the Father. Was ever love like this?

Had *we* suffered the penalty of our own sins, we should have been justly consigned to everlasting damnation. But Christ, the Prince of glory, by whom all things that are created were created, came down in lowly guise to this earth, became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, was despised and rejected of men. Those He came to bless only met His love with hatred

They scourged Him, they spat upon Him, and finally they crucified Him between two malefactors. Before expiring on that cross, He cried, "It is finished." What was finished? The work which saves your soul and mine when we believe in Him. Is it not sufficient? It has so satisfied God that now He is just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. God has declared His perfect satisfaction in the work of Christ by raising Him up from the dead, and placing Him at His own right hand in glory.

Ah! my friend. Can you reject, or even neglect, such love as is shown forth in Jesus? He, blessed be His name! has done a perfect work, and, as the clock of Time still ticks on, His arms are outstretched towards you. With yearning love He entreats you thus, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." You cannot add one tittle to the work, for it is already perfected. It only remains for you, as a repentant sinner, to trust Him *now*. Before to-morrow dawns the pendulum of Time's clock may, for you, have stopped its swinging. Then what an eternity of woe! One shudders to contemplate it. It has been truly said, "Procrastination is the recruiting officer of hell."

Consider well, my reader, that at any moment Christ may catch up His saints. Then, if you have not accepted this love which passeth all understanding, what horror will be yours! What remorse for all eternity! Your day of grace will be ended, and the door of mercy closed for ever. But if, when the door is closed, you are shut inside, joy unspeakable in the presence of Jesus will be your portion for evermore. Thus far it lies with yourself to fix your eternal destiny. Oh, accept His tender beseechings, and come to

LEFT NO ADDRESS.

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Him! He longs to save you *now*, and just as you are. I would plead with you. Decide now, for "*Now* is the accepted time; behold *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) K.

LEFT NO ADDRESS.

"MRS. — is dead, and she hasn't left her address!"

Such was the remark made to me in a jesting manner by a young man the other day, in reference to a woman who had just died. In thinking over the remark afterwards, I was greatly impressed with its solemn character.

"She hasn't left her address." May I pause one moment to ask you a question, my reader? Called from this world to-day, would *you* leave an address behind you? And if so, what would it be? It is a solemn question, and I beg you to seriously consider your answer.

It would have to be something like either of the following: "I have gone to Heaven, to be 'with Christ, which is far better': saved through the blood of Jesus." Or, "I have gone to Hell. I neglected God's wonderful salvation, offered without money and without price, and damnation is now my eternal doom."

A dear young friend in America told me the story of his conversion. It was something on this wise. He was living in Kansas City, and one day turned into a meeting-house to hear the gospel preached. The text the preacher spoke from was Jer. viii. 20. "The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and *we are not saved.*" This scripture was used by the Spirit of God to

make him perfectly miserable about his state. He knew he was *not saved*, and he feared lest "the summer" of God's grace, the day of salvation, should close ere his soul was saved. Thank God the question was eventually settled. Indeed, my friend could get no rest till he knew from God's own word that the question of his sins had been fully met by Christ on the cross; till he saw that through His death God had been perfectly satisfied, and that this satisfaction had been proved in that He had raised Him from the dead. What a wonderful salvation!

Reader, thy days are numbered, and thy many sins numbered too. Prepare to meet thy God.

In order to meet Him as your Saviour-God, you need a *Mediator*. God Himself has found such a Mediator—the Man Christ-Jesus. He is enough. God delights in Him, and there will be great rejoicing in heaven if you now bow, and own that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We read in Acts vii. of the martyr Stephen. He proclaims before the multitude that the very Jesus of whom they had been the betrayers and murderers was now at the right hand of God. When they heard this "they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. . . . And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." He had gone to be forever with the Lord; that was *his* destiny. Would it be yours?

W. H. H.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



A GOSPEL ADMIRER, BUT LOST.

IF you merely admire the thing that you need, without accepting it, you deprive yourself of the good of it quite as much as if you openly rejected it.

We have heard people when returned from gospel meetings use such expressions as—

“What a splendid sermon we have heard”!

“How well he has preached”!

“What eloquence! and how earnest”!

“What a work was the work of the cross”!

“How very admirably adapted”!

“What a happy place heaven must be”!

“What a dreadful place hell must be”!

Yet if you ask them pointedly whether they have fled “from the wrath to come” through believing the gospel; whether they have availed themselves of the redemption accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ, they give you the cold shoulder, and turn away. How is this?

Don't you see that, though “Gospel Admirers,” they are “Christ Rejectors.” But *why* do they reject Christ? They have no conviction of sin, no sense of their real need of Him. They admire the Fountain, but have no thirst; they admire

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the Lifeboat, but never knew what it was to feel hopelessly wrecked.

Without doubt this "*admiring*," when there is no sense of need, has a most hardening, deadening effect. Of all the subtle wiles used by Satan to the eternal damnation of precious, priceless, immortal souls, perhaps this is one of the most successful. Men would never admit of the things of time and sense being treated in such a way. What would you think of a man in a house on fire, who, when the "escape" is placed within reach of his window, instead of at once getting clear of a fiery grave, complacently begins to admire the fire-escape, and to expatiate upon its good construction and usefulness, showing how well he is acquainted with its workings and the efficiency of the brigade? The more earnestly the firemen (at considerable inconvenience to themselves) entreat him to "escape," the more eloquently he admires the ample provision made! Yet withal he persistently refuses the offered help.

Surely you would say that any "Fire-escape Admirer," who was, nevertheless, a "Fire-escape Rejector," had no real sense of his perilous position.

In a conversation the other day we asked Sir Charles Firth, the originator of fire brigades in Yorkshire, and who reports to high authorities upon all important fires in the United Kingdom, if, in all his wide experience, he had ever heard of a person refusing to escape from a house on fire when the needful machine was put within reach. His emphatic reply was "*Never!*" And we have Sir Charles' permission to print this answer. But, dear reader, it is too frequently the case that when the only divine escape is

placed within reach of souls on the downward road, they *admire*, but reject. Even though it is an escape from the endless torment of the lake of fire to the unending joys of heaven they *only* admire.

God says to all, "How shall we *escape* if we *neglect* so *great salvation*?" The fact is, there *is no* escape. And if there is no escape for *neglectors*, how can there be for *rejectors*?

In infinite love and grace the blessed Saviour, on Calvary's cross, endured the fiery judgment of a holy God so that hell-deserving sinners, who accepted Him as their substitute, might escape from eternal damnation, and have a joyous place with Himself in eternal glory.

When Christ was here amongst men; when He preached the gospel to the poor, healing for the broken-hearted, deliverance for the captives, recovering of sight for the blind, liberty for the bruised; when He preached the acceptable year of the Lord, we read that "all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." Yet the next thing they did was to try to seek to throw Him over the brow of the hill. They admired, but they rejected.

But mark. At the close of this day of grace "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; *the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.*" No escape then! "But the long-suffering of our Lord is SALVATION."

Friend, your *knowledge* of the gospel may be considerable, but we ask pointedly and personally, which of the two classes referred to are you really

in? Is it the "*Admirers and Rejectors?*" or the "*Believers and Acceptors?*" Which? If in the former, and you leave this world in that state, your eternal portion, remember, will inevitably be where no "escape" can ever come. If in the latter, where escapes are neither required nor desired, you will be with that gracious Saviour who rescued you from ruin—with Him, and like Him for ever. Accept Him as your Saviour now, and you will admire Him for ever!

"Jesus is a *mighty* Saviour,
Strong His outstretched arm to save;
He has vanquished death and Satan,
He has triumphed o'er the grave."

J. N.

A RAILWAY CLERK TO A RAILWAY GUARD.

(EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.)

ONE of the greatest signs of our times is the fact of there being so few who really understand where we are in the world's history. We hear a great deal about civilization, education, social improvement, commercial enterprise, etc., yet all nations are arming to the teeth, and the very air smells of gunpowder and bloodshed. Science and art are brought to the factory for the invention of the most infernal implements for the destruction of human life.

As for education without the knowledge of God, why it only makes men act like clever demons. We see every day the most highly educated people living the farthest from God. As for social life, why society was never in such a corrupt state. Matrimony is despised as a

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needless ceremony. Children are beyond the subjection of parental rule. In fact, let any one read 2 Tim. iii. 1-5, and tell me if it is not a summary of the state of things around us. Look at the rush for the Morning news and Evening papers! Why the fact is, men's hearts are beginning to fail them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth. And shall *we* fear, ——? Oh no—

“We left it all with Jesus, long ago,
 All our sins we brought Him, and our woe,
 When by faith we saw Him, on the tree,
 Heard His still small whisper, 'tis for thee,
 From our heart the burden rolled away,
 Happy day?”

Yes, dear S——, our Lord Jesus will soon be back again, “*This same Jesus.*” He will catch up His living believing ones, and raise His sleeping ones to meet Him in the air.

Then, after the appointed time, will earth's last storm burst. *He* will descend to the earth with all His saints, and His feet shall stand at that day on the Mount of Olives. (Zech. xiv. 4-9.) Then will He set up His Kingdom on earth as Prince of Peace, and the nations will beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Then shall the earth bring forth her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us. O let the nations rejoice and be glad, let the floods clap their hands and let the hills be joyful together, for He cometh to judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Now, the law can be twisted about to suit those who have most money; then, the poor shall

receive justice, judgment, and equity. Now, many have only the form of godliness; then, "all shall know the Lord," for "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Oh S., let us live for that time. Let us ever abide in the "Rock of Ages." Those who do not hide now, will then call on the rocks and hills to cover them.

We are never more on the watch than when diligent in our daily work, "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

* * *

SOMETHING MORE IS WANTED.

IT was at the close of a gospel meeting in Jamaica that I found a woman in great trouble.

"Will you tell me what distresses you?" I asked.

"Oh! Sir," she said, "there is something more wanted."

"Indeed, what is that?" I enquired.

"Well," she said, "I do really trust in Jesus, I know He died for me, and without Him I must be lost for ever, but *something more is wanted*."

"You are sure that Jesus died for you?" I asked.

"Yes, I am sure of it."

"And that He is able to save you?"

"I am sure of that as well."

"Do you think He is willing to save you?"

"Oh! I know He is," was her earnest reply.

"And you tell me you really trust in Him as your Saviour."

"Yes," she said, "I do, but I am not happy, *something more is wanted*."

"Yes, I see just where you are," I replied, "you have really trusted your soul to that blessed Saviour who died for you, and His work makes you eternally safe, but you want to have the assurance of this, and that can only be had from God's word. Now look at these words, it is God who is speaking here and He says, 'Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him *all that believe* are justified from all things.' (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) Now here is God's unchanging truth—*all that believe are justified.*"

"You are a believer?"

"Yes," she answered, wiping away her tears.

"Then what does God say of you?" I asked.

"I'm justified," she answered, with a sigh of relief.

"How do you know?" I queried.

"It says so there," was her reply.

"Then do you want anything else?"

"Nothing more now, Sir, that's enough," was the emphatic answer she gave, as for the first time in her life she grasped the wonderful fact that she was cleared of every charge of guilt before the God against whom she had sinned.

I give the substance of this simple conversation for the sake of many others who are in a similar difficulty. Perhaps my reader is one. You have really discovered that you need the Saviour, and you have trusted Him, but you can't look up and say—thank God! I am saved. Now let me ask you. "How do you know that you are a guilty sinner?" "Oh!" you say, "God says so in the Bible and I have found it to be true." "And you believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save such as you?" "Yes," you reply. "But

how do you know?" "Why God says so in His word." Right. Now that same word tells me that Jesus finished the work that God gave Him to do, and that as a consequence God has raised Him from the dead and given Him glory, which is a proof beyond denial that He is forever satisfied with the work which Jesus did. "Do you believe that?" "Yes," you reply, "I could not doubt it, because God says it." "Quite so." Now the same God of all truth who sent His Son, and tells us of the work which He has accomplished for sinners says, "all that believe *are* justified." "Are you one of the 'all that believe,' if so, are you justified?" You say you would not like to be presumptuous about it. But it is not a question of what you would like but of what God has spoken. Will you honour Him now by only accepting His testimony concerning His Son, and not His testimony concerning "all that believe"?

"I thought I had to feel it, and did not know that it was simply by believing," said one to whom I quoted the above precious scripture, and this is where many go wrong; they put the cart before the horse and look for the happy feelings before they have the honouring faith.

Now the order is as follows:—

God declares a wondrous *fact*. I put my *faith* in what God declares, and the happy *feelings* are the result:—

Fact.

Faith.

Feelings.

Now take God at His word, bid good-bye to doubts and fears, and rejoice in the knowledge of His Salvation.

J. T. M.

A RAILWAY INCIDENT.

IT was a very hot day in September, as an express train steamed out of a London terminus, and for the first hour the six occupants of one of the carriages were all more or less inclined to slumber. Presently, however, an animated discussion arose between a very stout man in one corner and a tall, thin one at the other end opposite. The subject was teetotalism. The former, a strong advocate, gave himself out as a fine specimen of total abstinence (his wife said he weighed nineteen stone), whilst the latter, a free and easy man of business, an Irishman, pleaded for alcohol.

In the middle of the carriage sat an evangelist, who, whilst listening to their sallies for and against, was looking to the Lord in silent prayer for a word in season which might be profitable to all. The eyes of both the combatants spoke clearly that they would like him to express himself, but all seemed rather disconcerted, when he rejoined to the effect that there was a question of far more pressing importance for their consideration, namely, that if an accident were to occur, and those present met with a violent death (a not very uncommon event in this world), *were they ready?* Had they an interest in Christ? Were all assured that their sins were forgiven, &c.? For whether a man abstained or not, death was here, and might come at any moment, and neither temperance nor teetotalism would save the soul. Each must have a present interest in Christ, and His precious blood, for that.

The Irishman said he went sometimes to

chapel, but he was afraid, if he were to die, he would go to the bad place.

"If you do, you will never get out," was the reply; which for the moment seemed to produce a few serious thoughts. (John iii. 36.)

But the total abstainer went on another tack. Though by the tenour of his speech *a religious man*, the introduction of the blessed name of the One whom he professed seemed very unwelcome. Thinking apparently to silence the Lord's servant, he began to recount how he had been present on the occasion of the examination of three young men who desired to be accepted as nonconformist preachers, "And," added he, "they gave such a glowing account of their own goodness, &c., that I said to myself at the close, these young men are too good for preachers, they ought to go to heaven, they are too good for this world."

This sally was evidently meant for a hard hit for the evangelist, but was met with the rejoinder, "Well, do you know what I should have said? If these three young men spoke of *their own* goodness and righteousness as their qualification to be preachers, they were nothing less than Pharisees. My title, and the only title for any sinner to go to heaven, is *the precious blood of Christ*. There is *no other way* than through Him, and nothing else but His blood can wash our sins away. And *now* is the time to receive His blessing, and to know Him. The question of walk and conduct comes in after."

This pretty well brought the travellers to silence, and there seemed to be a general sense of relief as the train pulled up, and nearly all alighted.

Alas, alas, as only too often, *Christ*, only pro-

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fessed on Sunday, was unwelcome. Neither the easy-going worldling nor the religious self-improving chapel-goer wanted *Him*. A once-a-week profession thousands will put up with, it is respectable, decent (and may help a bit, too, think many; at least it is on the balance side of good), but Christ, a living Christ, whose precious blood cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7), is only welcome to the troubled soul, or the true Christian. But these friends, like thousands more, well content with themselves and their own manner of life, had not yet apparently arrived at soul-trouble.

Dear reader, what think ye of Christ? Whether hitherto utterly careless, or occupied with teetotalism (or any other *ism*, for that matter), the great question of all questions for your soul at this moment is, Have you an interest in Him? Is He your Saviour? Are *your sins* washed away by His most precious blood? If not, why not? *Now*, and *now only*, is the accepted time. May be, you have been long halting, *now be decided*. It is Christ you need, Christ you must have, or be lost for ever. Dost thou believe on Him?

E. H. C.

ONLY TWO STILES OFF HOME.

A DEAR child of God lay dying. As he felt death approaching, he said to someone who was standing at his bedside, "I am going home as fast as I can, and I bless God that I have a good home to go to."

What had he to fear? Death had no terrors, since its sting had all been borne by Him who has entered heaven, carrying with Him the eternal

value of His precious sacrifice, which secures that bright home to all who put their trust in Him.

What of yourself, dear reader? As time hurries you on as fast as it can to eternity, is it carrying you home to heaven, or bearing you in your sins to hell? It must be one or the other. The blood of Christ makes heaven "*home*" to all who trust in it.

As a martyr approached the stake, someone questioned him as to how he felt. "Never better," he replied, "for now I know that I am almost at home." Then as he looked over the fields, and beheld the place at which he was to be immediately burnt, he exclaimed, "Only two more stiles to get over, and I am at home at my Father's house!" This is victory truly, in the face of defeat. Nothing can give this confidence and boldness but knowing Him who has conquered death. "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

May this confidence be the reader's portion, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

E. E. R.

"NOT HERE, NOT THERE!"

FOR EVER—WHERE?

IT was a serious meeting—*most* serious. And was it specially arranged on his account, and he not there?

Ah yes. It was the very fact of his absence that constituted the sadness of the occasion. For, strange as it may sound, if it had even been

possible for him to be present at this meeting, it would never have been called at all,—it was *because* he had gone that it was arranged.

The treasurer of a Building Society absconded, and a meeting of its members was called to examine how his *financial* matters stood. But the meeting we refer to, was not for such a purpose as this. The absent one had not absconded: he had been apprehended. A sure-handed detective had taken him off most unceremoniously. Yet he well knew that this officer was coming.

Then why not try to escape?

Well, he *would* have evaded him if he could, but evasion was impossible. Indeed, all the skill and power both of devoted friends and paid agents proved utterly fruitless to keep at arm's length the unwelcome visitor. There is no question they did their utmost, yet their best was baffled, and it had to be whispered round the house after all, "He has gone." Then the special meeting above referred to, began to be spoken of. What meeting? Well, it was the meeting of relatives and sympathising friends around the grave of a young man, who, it is to be feared, died in his sins. And, unless you repent, a similar meeting will probably be called for you before many years have fled.

When the funeral of that "rich man," mentioned in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, took place, it was, after all, only the clay tabernacle that they buried. *He* was not there. "In hell he lifted up his eyes . . . in torments." He had left all that he valued on earth, and kept nothing. It is true he retained his memory, but that was only a source of inexpressible remorse.

"I am leaving this pretty little home for you, my dear," said a dying gentleman to his wife, "And I am sure you will take a delight in keeping it as near as possible to what it now is."

"But what have you got for yourself, my dear?" was a question that brought no answer.

What have *you* got for yourself, my reader? If called to-day to part with everything that could gratify your natural senses, what have you got for yourself? Have you yet found an undying portion for that heart of yours? Have you got salvation? Have you received Christ? Without Christ, your narrow span of life here is only the outer porch to an eternal prison house, the certain way to an undying death.

However many might attend your funeral and mourn their loss in your departure, it will only be your *body* that they quietly lower into the grave. You will then have passed ALONE into the realities of eternity. Not that you will be *certain* of a funeral. Thousands are hurried off so rapidly, that their death and burial are but one event. How absolutely true of them, "*buried without ceremony.*" Not till the sea shall be commanded to give up her dead, will those vast thousands be told, save that in God's account they have already been numbered.

But there is another meeting which has been arranged, though it has not yet taken place. We mean the gathering together in the clouds of those who, in this day of grace, have repented of their sins, and believed the Gospel of God's grace in the gift of His beloved Son. Will you not be there, dear friend? Thank God you *may* be. "They that are Christ's at His coming" surely will be. (1 Cor. xv. 23.) Is He necessary

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to you? If you *cannot* do without Him, depend upon it He *will* not do without you. Every believer can say, “It was my badness that made me first seek Him; it was His goodness that made Him first seek me. I was so bad I could not do without Him; He so good He would not do without me.”

But since the time we first came to Him, we have found another reason why we could not do without Him—His own personal blessedness and unchanging worth. His precious love has formed a bond that nothing can separate.

“Lord, from Thy love I cannot part,
Nor would'st Thou part with mine.”

You may, my reader, know the unspeakable reality of such a bond.

“What can wash away thy stains?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!
So that not one spot remains?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus?”

But if you die in your sins, as surely as they will say on earth NOT HERE,
they may, looking heavenward, add with equal certainty,
NOT THERE.

It is for you, therefore, to consider seriously

WHERE THEN? FOR EVER—WHERE?

The blessed Lord made this solemn matter unmistakably plain when He said to certain bystanders, “Ye shall die in your sins,” and “Whither I go ye cannot come.” (John viii. 21.) Yet, in the very same chapter, we have an account of His touching grace to one whose very sinfulness detained her in His holy presence until every self-satisfied accusing Pharisee had been made to feel the powerful gaze of His all-searching eye, and to beat a hasty retreat in consequence.

He is the same Saviour still. If He will not tolerate empty show and self-righteous pretension, thank God He will not turn away the guiltiest sinner that comes with a broken spirit and contrite heart to Him. He will graciously welcome, abundantly pardon, eternally save. Will you not come to such a Saviour, my reader?

"I have seen the face of Jesus,
Tell me not of aught beside;
I have heard the voice of Jesus,
All my soul is satisfied.
In the brightness of the glory
First I saw His blessed face;
And from henceforth shall that glory
Be my home, my dwelling place."

GEO. C.

A TIME TO GET.

THE WISE MAN says, "There is a time to be born, and a time to die." But between those two points, a time to *get*, and a time to *lose*. (Eccles. iii. 2, 6.)

GET WHAT?

THE WORLDLING says, "I will get me wealth, position, ease."

Listen to God's verdict concerning such.

"Thou fool!" (Luke xii. 20.) This is only for time, and is loss.

GET WHAT, THEN?

O, READER, get that which is for eternity, and true gain.

See what one of Wisdom's children got —
FORGIVENESS, SALVATION, PEACE. (Luke vii. 48-50.)

And as

YOUR TIME TO DIE

may be just at hand

GET THESE BLESSINGS NOW.

J. H.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



HEAVEN HAS BUT ONE DOOR.

A FEW days since I saw the mosque of St. Sofia, in the city of Constantinople.

This building was erected by Justinian, 537 A.D., as a Christian temple, but when the city was captured by the Turks, in 1453, it was converted by them into a mosque, and for 440 years has been used by the followers of the False Prophet for the worship of Mahomet's Allah.

The Turks endeavoured to remove from the structure everything which they considered to be evidences of Christianity. On the ceilings and walls were paintings representing Scripture scenes ; these have been painted over. A large cross carved on a white marble wall has been partly chiselled out, but in spite of this its outline remains.

One thing greatly interested me. Nine gates lead from the inner portion into the nave. The middle and principal gate is the "Porta Basilica." Above this gate is a brass tablet let into the marble, on which is carved a dove hovering over an open book, on whose pages are these words : *The Lord said, "I am the door : by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."*

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It is singular to find this Scripture in a temple used by the fiercest antagonists of the Christian faith. Singular, and to my mind, full of meaning. It seems to stand there as a Divine protest against the teachings of Christ's blasphemous rival. For five successive centuries Caliphs, legions of priests, and millions of devotees have entered by that gate to pray, and to listen to the teachings of Mahomet, for the salvation of their souls, but as they entered the Son of God spoke to each and every one, and this is what He said: "I AM the door: BY ME if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

I turn from St. Sofia, but I hear the Saviour saying the same words still, not to Moslems only, but to ALL.

These words, so full of love and meaning, were uttered long ago. He who spoke them is on earth no longer, but to-day the words are here, and possess all their original authority and virtue.

By them Jesus is calling the attention of mankind to Himself. There *is* a world where everlasting love, and joy, and glory dwell; HE is its door of entrance. There *is* a House wherein the Father dwells, and where shall also dwell the Father's children; Christ is the door of entrance. There is a place of safety from the coming wrath, a place secure from judgment's awful storm which darkly broods above this sin-ruled world; Christ is its door of entrance. "I am the Door," says He: "by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

Oh! rare words, fraught with sweet comfort to the troubled soul, "He **SHALL** be saved"!

Jesus would draw away the eye, the mind, the

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heart, from self, from law, from priest, from teacher, symbol, works, from ALL to Himself alone, the supreme, the *only* Saviour.

There is no way to blessing but Himself. He says it, "I am the door." There is no other door. Salvation for lost man is found in Him alone. He says it, "By ME he shall be saved."

This is very blessed, for it is His glory that all the sinner's blessing should be found in Him. Was not the sorrow His? the shame and bitter tears His portion? the judgment of the cross the awful cup He drank? And is not the answer to it all contained in this, that all God's gifts to man are found in Christ, all are administered by Him; that through the Nazarene, the Crucified, God's blessed Son, now glorified, there flow to-day rich streams of grace to sinners in their sins?

Reader, heaven has but one door, and Jesus is that door; there is only one Saviour from the approaching judgment, and Jesus is that Saviour. Tell me, if you refuse this Jesus, how will you reach heaven? How will you escape the wrath which has been accumulating through the long ages of Divine silence and long-suffering?

Listen. He says, "If *any* man enter in, he shall be saved."

If *you* will enter in, *you* shall be saved.

Are you prepared to give up everything, and trust yourself to Christ alone? to place your soul without reserve in His dear hands? Oh! are you? Dare you trust Him? Come! shall I put it thus? Nay! Dare you *distrust* Him? God's blessed Son lingers yet in patient love, and calls you to Himself with this: "I AM the door: by ME if *any man* enter in, HE SHALL be saved."

W. H. S.

THE LAST OF THE *DRUMMOND CASTLE*.

A PLEASANT voyage, scores of persons full of life and spirits, looking forward to see their relatives, friends, &c., in the old country, and being probably the last evening on board, a pleasant concert to while away the dulness. How little they thought of the sequel! Fog surrounds the ill-fated vessel, but, with a captain and crew who have many a time safely piloted her to her desired haven, what is there to fear?

What's that?—the vast frame suddenly trembles like an aspen-leaf! She has touched a rock. In flows the remorseless sea, and head forward pitches the well-known *Drummond Castle* with her living freight beneath the waves. A short struggle for life, bitter cries of anguish and despair, a few heart-felt prayers for mercy, and all is over. Three only, preserved in the merciful and inscrutable ways of God, survive to tell the piteous tale. Men and women, rich and poor, young and old, passengers and seamen, all alike were suddenly summoned to a watery grave. In the midst of life and hope death came with its inexorable summons, and scores of our fellow-creatures found themselves face to face with eternity and *God*.

Who of our readers will ponder over and learn from this solemn event? The next summons may come to *you*. Are you ready to meet it? If *you* had been one of those thus suddenly called away by a violent death, where would *you* be now? *With Christ?* or with the *lost?* Undecided sinner, you have trifled long enough with this all-momentous question, the salvation of your

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soul. God spares you, though many others are summoned away, and in infinite grace pleads with you once again, "Be ye reconciled." How long halt ye between two opinions, and run the awful risk of a Christless death, with eternal judgment beyond?

One does not suppose that the *Drummond Castle* contained greater *sinner*s than other vessels; for "*all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" (Luke xiii. 1-5; Romans iii. 23.) But we warn and entreat you once again, in view of this awful catastrophe, speaking so loudly to all of us, bow now in deep self-judgment in the presence of the Supreme Ruler over all, the living God. Believe on His Son. He is the gift of unfathomable love to this poor, poor world.

Give heed, ye careless ones, ere it be too late for ever. Vain triflers, pleasure-seekers, world-engrossed professors, *halt*. Look eternal realities in the face. The *whole world* lieth in the wicked one, and its doom is sealed. There is only one way of escape, and *now* is the time to avail yourselves of it. God offers you *Christ*, and you refuse Him at your own peril. God offers you salvation; neglect it if you dare. Who are you to run in the face of the Almighty, to pursue your own will, and live for time and your own selfish desires and lusts, when He has commanded you to repent? Be warned! we cry, Be warned! Death is right ahead of you, and beyond that you *must* meet Him. Eternal woe will be your most sure portion, *unless you receive Christ*. He, the gift of God's love, gave Himself a sacrifice for sin. Raised and crowned in glory, God offers you to-day the full, free pardon of all your sins, and everlasting salvation in His blest name,

(Luke xxiv. 47; Acts xxviii. 28.) Judge self, and believe on Him; then is this pardon, this salvation yours. His precious blood will cleanse you whiter than the driven snow; His Spirit will dwell in you, and you will be meet for the glory of God.

Satan may charge you with a misspent life, with failures and sins without number. God knows all about that. But His salvation is perfect and eternal, wholly suited to the deep need of one whose heart-felt cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Bow to Him, believe Him, thank Him, and henceforth worship and serve Him. E. H. C.

"A MANSION UP THERE."

I WAS in an omnibus lately, the occupants of which were, besides myself, two gentlemen and an elderly woman. One of the gentlemen was telling the other that he had lately bought a piece of land, and intended building a fine house on it. He descanted in glowing terms on the beautiful position of the land, and described the house he intended building. When he had finished, the elderly woman, I have mentioned, turned to him, and said, "Sir, I have heard all you've been saying, and though I have not got a piece of land or a house down here, I have got a *mansion* up there," pointing upward with her hand. The gentleman asked her what she meant, on which she repeated what she had said, and added, "The Lord Jesus shed His precious blood that I might

have a mansion up there." "Then I wonder," said the gentleman mockingly, "that the Lord has not given you something down here." "No," she said, "I don't want more down here when I've got a mansion there, and I hope, sir, we shall meet in heaven." "Well," he said, as he got up to leave the omnibus, "I pay my debts like an honest man, and if that isn't enough to take me to heaven, I don't know what is." I thought, as he left, Poor man, that will certainly take you to the other place, for the great debt of sin will remain unpaid for ever if you know not the Saviour who came to die. How could any sinner answer to God for sins which only the precious blood of Christ could atone for?

And yet how many there are who, even if they would not professedly rest their hope of escape from the judgment of God on the payment of their debts, are practically travelling on the same downward road, for they are really trusting to the empty forms of a lifeless religion, and repeating with their lips that which they know nothing of in their hearts. Dear reader, let me ask you solemnly, as in the presence of God, Are you satisfied and happy when you think, as you *must* do sometimes, of that eternity into which any moment may usher you? Do the outward forms of religion, the repetition of creeds, or forms of prayer, bring you the knowledge of forgiveness of sins, and peace with God? Will such things satisfy the holy God before whom you *must* one day stand? Do those solemn words of the Son of God, spoken to religious Nicodemus, ever ring in your ears and touch your conscience, "Ye

must be born again" (John iii. 7), [or, as you will see in the Revised Version, "from above"]? You may try in vain to get rid of their solemn reality, by an effort to believe that the sprinkling of water in baptism will give you life from above, life from God, or take away the sins of a lifetime. Ah, God is a God of reality, and some day you will find it out. You may deceive others, and may even deceive yourself with an outward show of religion, but you cannot deceive God, and it is with God you have to do. The sands of the hour-glass of your little life are fast running out, and soon (how soon who can tell?) the last grain will be gone, the last breath will be breathed, and then ETERNITY. It is not comforting, is it, to think of eternity, without knowing where you are to spend it? Once more let me bring before you the words of the Son of God, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3.) Now what did the Lord Jesus mean when He spoke those words? Of course, He *meant what He said*: "Except ye be *converted*," not as perhaps you would like to read it, "Except ye be baptized and confirmed, or become religious." Dear reader, do you know what it is to be *converted*? It is an *intense reality*, which means first that you turn to God, and have to do with Him about your sins; and that thus *convicted* as a sinner, you find that Another, the blessed Son of God, has had to do with God about those sins, and has settled, *once and for ever*, and *with God Himself*, that terrible debt of sin which you could never settle. Then, as you simply and fully

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believe in Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, you thank Him for all He *has done* for you—you have "peace with God," and this is conversion.

You become truly a Christian, not in *name* only, but in *reality*. You realize that you are a child of God, not as man would have you believe, by the sprinkling of the water of baptism, but as God tells you, "by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iii. 26.)

Yes, this is conversion, dear reader. And being brought to God in all the acceptance of the One whom He calls "the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6), a joy will fill your heart to which you have hitherto been a stranger; a joy which all the religion in the world has never given, and can never give you. And that "mansion up there," as my dear old friend said, will be yours, because Christ has won it for you, through His precious blood. But, *make no mistake, you will never reach it in any other way*. You "must be born from above" if you are to spend eternity with Christ in glory; and the only alternative is banishment for ever from the presence of God to that terrible scene, where, to use once more the words of the Son of God, three times spoken, "their worm *dieth not*, and the fire *is not quenched*." (Mark ix. 43-48.) What an answer to those sceptics who would have you believe that punishment is not eternal, who talk as if a sinner, with an undying soul, dying unsaved, and in his sins, could ever get rid of those sins, and escape the judgment of God due to them! Of one thing you may be *quite sure*, that when the Son of God used those solemn words, *He meant what He said*.

Oh ! dear reader, the one who writes this paper beseeches you, as a sinner saved by grace himself, to turn to God, while He gives you the opportunity. *To-day* (not to-morrow) is the day of salvation. *To-morrow it may be too late.*

A. P. G.

“A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOUR.”

THE above words form a complete sentence in Isaiah xlv. 21.

Had you, or I, been asked to complete a statement which began with “a just God,” we should, no doubt, have ended with “*and a Judge.*” Reasoning from the premise of justice, we should have concluded by judgment. Justice, when sin is in question, necessitates condemnation, as cause and effect; and, hence, the justice of God, as it reaches guilty man, requires his punishment.

Well, *that reasoning is perfectly correct.* It is admitted in a conscience which is not altogether seared; but our statement, which would seem to contradict this reasoning, is quite as correct. Ah ! Reason comes very often far short of the truth. Grace oversteps the limits of reason. It is never unreasonable, never marked by anything but the most profound wisdom; but it soars infinitely beyond the mere conclusions of the human mind, however accurate these may be.

“A just God and a Judge” is reason ! “A just God and a Saviour” is grace ! But, then, how can God be both a Saviour and a Judge ?

Can there be any contradiction in His ways ? If He must punish the sinner, how can He save him ? If sin demand judgment, how can it be cleared away ?

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These are important questions. The fact is that God is as just in saving as in judging! His character remains unimpeached in either case.

“*A just God and a Saviour*” is proved in the scheme of the gospel. It has been elaborated for us in wonderful detail, in the Epistle to the Romans. Thus we read in Romans iii. 26, “To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

The Justifier of whom? Of him that believeth in Jesus. He is the Judge of all else, but the Justifier of the man who believes in Jesus. And how so?

If you owed a debt of money which you could not pay, you should, in justice, be sent to prison. If, however, I paid your creditor in full, in equal justice, you should be discharged. That is clear—my interposition on your behalf makes all the difference. Substitution—one standing in the place, and bearing the penalties, of another—explains the whole thing. The justice that condemns the offender, or punishes the substitute, liberates and justifies the one substituted. Thus God justifies him who believes in Jesus, and is just in so doing! All praise to the blessed Lord Jesus Christ! He is the glorious Substitute! What a charm there is in the name of *Jesus*—“Jehovah-Saviour”! The eternal Son became man, died under the judgment due to man, met and exhausted that judgment, was raised in righteousness, in token, too, of the completeness of His atoning and substitutionary work, so that the God who gave Him is now just when He justifies the sinner who believes in Jesus!

The facts are divine, the foundation eternally

solid. "It is God that justifieth." He is "a just God and a Saviour"!

True, it is the believer, and he alone, who is justified; not another soul, no matter what his plea, or his works, or his fancied deserts may be.

To believe in Jesus implies that you have taken your true place before God, as a lost, guilty and hell-deserving sinner, who can plead nothing at all but God's sovereign mercy and Christ's atoning death. It is no mere theory, nothing sentimental, or emotional, or meritorious. It is the cry of an undone soul on the verge of damnation, who can do absolutely nothing to merit salvation, but who, in despair, flies to Jesus. That soul is welcome! That soul is speedily justified. Crowds of instances pass before the mind: Mary, Saul, the malefactor, &c. &c. Grace is for such; salvation is for such; God is for such! How grand to appropriate the sentence, and instead of saying, "A just God and a Saviour," to say, *My* just God and *my* Saviour!

It is the legitimate language of faith. You will never be sure, nor certain, so long as you are merely counting on mercy—never!

Justice has acted. God's righteousness has been manifested: His character as a Saviour-God is revealed. Only get to see that He is on your side, and your peace will be as deep as eternity. The character of God is between the believer and condemnation! "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

J. W. S.

He that thinks he has no need of Christ has too high thoughts of himself. He that thinks Christ cannot save him has too low thoughts of Christ.

"*ONE* OF THEM." WHICH ?

ONE night, when about eighteen years old, as I was washing my hands previous to getting tea, these words, in clear and solemn tones, rang in my ears, "There's a heaven, and there's a hell, and *you* will go to one of them." It seemed like a voice from heaven, and so startled me that I involuntarily looked round.

The solemn alternative was thus put before me. Would I choose heaven with its joys unutterable, or hell with its woes and torments eternal.

I sat down to tea with the rest of the family, but they knew nothing of the storm that was raging within. I seemed to hear nought but those solemn words, "There's a heaven, and there's a hell," etc., as with thunder-tones they echoed in my inmost soul. Never can I forget the impression they made on my mind.

All interest in things here ceased. I seemed to have nothing before me but this, heaven or hell. Which ?

I tried to forget the awful words, but it was absolutely impossible. I paced the streets amid the busy throng, hoping to divert my mind, but to no purpose. Eternity, with its solemn realities, almost wholly occupied my mind.

God had indeed spoken to my soul. He had raised a storm there, and none but He could calm it.

I buried the thing in my own bosom as long as I could, but the time came when I could do so no longer.

One night, when alone with my mother, I said to her, "Is Uncle N—— converted ?" She

seemed astonished at such a question from me, and said, "Why do you ask that, W——?" The spell was broken, my pent-up feelings gave way; I burst into a flood of tears, and then related to her the deep exercise of soul I had passed through.

My mother's heart was filled with joy and gratitude, and my father's, too, for they now saw an answer to their earnest prayers for the conversion of their children. Indeed it was the beginning of a great work in our family, for all were afterwards brought to know the Lord. Should it not encourage Christian parents, and believers generally, to persevere in prayer for the salvation of those near and dear to them?

And now, dear unsaved reader, a word with you. Have you ever seriously considered where you will spend *your* eternity? In heaven or hell? One or the other it must be. Which?

If you through grace take the place of a guilty, lost sinner before God, if you look to Christ, if you have faith in His precious blood, and rest on His finished work for salvation, you will spend your eternity with Christ and His redeemed in glory.

But if you refuse to own yourself a hell-deserving sinner, thinking that your own goodness or morality will suffice as a ground of standing before God, and you die in that state, you will spend your eternity with the devil and the damned in the lake of fire.

Oh! we beseech you, bow to the truth of God's word as to your guilty condition, and accept Christ as your Saviour.

Depend upon it, if you will not have Christ now, if you prefer the world, with its fleeting

THE LAST MAN YOU WILL EVER SEE. 127

pleasures, the time will come when you will bitterly regret your fatal choice.

Oh! if you pass into eternity unsaved, you will there have to express, with wailing, the bitter cry of a lost soul, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

"Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Be wise to-day; to-morrow may be too late. It is madness to defer. "Procrastination is the thief of time; year after year it steals, till all are fled." Delay no longer. Flee to the opened arms of Jesus. Decide to-day. W. R. C.

 THE LAST MAN YOU WILL EVER SEE.

DID it ever strike you that the last person which the eye of every unsaved one will rest upon, will be the Man who died for sinners? The last they *wish* to see is the last they *will* see. And is it not a serious thing, think you, that God has appointed a MAN to judge men. All judgment has been given to Jesus because He is the Son of man. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John v. 22, 27.) The Man who suffered will be the Man to judge. And who so fitting as He, the altogether sinless One? Who better knows the deserts of sin than He who once bore its full penalty? It is *this* Man who will execute its full judgment upon the sinner who despises God's grace and refuses His call; and He will do it without respect of persons.

What excuse could *you* give, my reader, for the sin of rejecting Him, if called before Him as you

read this? Would you not be speechless in His presence? What have you got against Christ, that you should reject Him?

After seeing the face of Jesus as He sits as your Judge, you will never rest your eye on another face for all eternity. From His holy presence you will descend to an eternal night, that "*outer darkness*," "the blackness of darkness for ever." (Jude i. 13.) "They shall never see light." (Psalm xlix. 19.) It will be darkness ever, light never.

How vastly different the lot of even the very feeblest believer! "That they may behold My glory," was the gracious request of the Son of God to the Father ere He left this world; and "They *shall* see His face," is the Spirit's testimony since. (Rev. xxii. 4.)

"There, with unwearied gaze,
Our eyes on Him we'll rest,
And satisfy with endless praise
A heart supremely blest."

But not only shall *we* be satisfied, but, sweeter still, *He* shall be filled with satisfaction also. Yea, while remembering all the bitter soul-travail He passed through to bring us there, He shall, for the love He bears to us, be abundantly satisfied, and consider that the "treasure" brought to glory is well worth all He gave to get it. Could love go further? Oh, my reader, IF YOU ONLY KNEW HIM! GEO. C.

DEATH is upon man at the very beginning of his history, and will push him out of this world at the end. It is not that death is *going to meet* him, though in a sense that is true, but its sentence is *already* upon him, and nothing but life in *Another* man (Christ) can deliver him from it.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



GOD'S GLORY IN THE GOSPEL.

LET it never be forgotten that the glory of God is bound up in the salvation which He sends to us. This could not possibly be if man had to contribute the weight of a feather, or co-operate to the extent of the movement of an eye-lash, in the matter of salvation.

This is a point of immense interest and value, and one eminently calculated to strengthen the foundations of the Christian's faith, and to lift him beyond the reach of every doubt and every fear. God's glory is at stake in the salvation which He has wrought out for us and sent to us. What strength is here! What comfort and consolation! What peace and liberty! What courage and confidence! Nothing can exceed it. If a single flaw could be detected in the salvation of God—a single thing defective—a single point unprovided for—the slightest possibility of failure, from first to last—from the moment when the soul first tastes the sweetness of divine grace, until it bathes itself in the very fulness of divine glory—if it were possible that a saved soul could be lost—if a single want of that saved soul were not perfectly provided for, whether in the way of "wisdom, righteousness, sanctifica-

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tion, or redemption"—if, in short, there were a single missing link in the golden chain of salvation, then verily would the lustre of the divine glory be tarnished, and the enemy of God might triumph.

But no, reader, it cannot possibly be. "Salvation is of the Lord"; and this holds good whether it be a question of deliverance from the smallest difficulty lying in our daily path, or of the full, final, and everlasting salvation of our souls, actualised in the very presence of God and of the Lamb. It is all of God, from beginning to end. It wears the stamp of His omnipotent hand upon it, in its every stage. It flows like a shining river from His loving heart; and His glory is involved in the integrity of its every aspect and its every branch. It comes to us as free as the very air we breathe; and, when we get it—or rather when it lays hold of us—it is as permanent as the throne of God Himself. It is the fruit of the will of God, as accomplished in the perfect work of Christ, and attested by the record of the Holy Ghost in the scriptures of truth. (See Hebrews x.)

Such is the salvation which God sends to the Gentiles. And may we not triumphantly inquire, "What else could it be as coming from the hand and the heart of such a God?" Surely nothing else, nothing less, nothing different. God must be God in all His actings and in all His ways. His glory shines in everything to which He puts His hand. If He saves, He saves like Himself. Can any one, with a single ray of the true knowledge of God, imagine that He could send us a salvation with a flaw of any sort whatsoever?

C. H. M.

YOU HAVE TURNED, BUT WHICH WAY? 131

YOU HAVE TURNED, BUT WHICH WAY?

IT is a matter of solemn interest that everyone who has really listened to the Gospel message has "*turned*." But there are two ways of turning. The Thessalonians heard the Gospel and "turned to God," as the apostle reminds them in his letter to them (1 Thess. i. 9); but the same apostle, writing to the Hebrews, speaks of a turning in the opposite direction. Mark his words: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we *turn away from Him* that speaketh from heaven." (Heb. xii. 25.) Now, my dear reader, you have turned; but which way, to God or from God? You have heard the Gospel testimony: how have you treated it?

Many, many years since a servant of Christ was privileged to speak to thirty or forty people who, up to that point, had turned a deaf ear to the heavenly message. Thus he addressed them: "Suppose you should see coming down from heaven a very fine thread, so fine as to be almost invisible, and it should come and attach itself to you. You knew, we suppose, that it came from God. Should you dare to put out your hand and thrust it away?" Then he added, "Such a thread *has* come from God to you this afternoon, and you can easily brush it away: but will you do so?"

Now what did this servant of Christ mean by the tender thread that had come down from God and attached itself to them, and which they were in danger of defiantly brushing away? It was

what the apostle spoke of when he said to the unbelieving Jews at Antioch: "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts xiii. 46.)

Mark this well, my reader: whatever is known of you on earth, you are known in heaven: either as one who has gladly welcomed the Gospel, and believed it for yourself; or as one who has been glad to brush away the thought of God's message from your mind, so that you might, without any interference, pursue the bent of your own will. How do you stand as to this?

In the following chapter (Acts xiv. 15) we find the apostle beseeching another company to "turn from these vanities unto the living God." Have *you* turned from the vain idols of earth—idols which can neither console you in the dark day nor satisfy you in the bright? Have you turned to the God who can fill your heart with food and gladness (v. 17); who satisfies, nay, more than satisfies—who floods the heart that comes near to Him with the light and joy of His own blessed presence? Of this we have tasted for ourselves, dear reader, and therefore can speak of it. And to you we would say with fervid earnestness, "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." (Psalm xxxiv. 8.) But you must taste it for *yourself*. We cannot taste it for you, nor do we pretend to. We have proved its sweetness for ourselves, and you must do the same. God has expressed His love in a sinful world; and, by the very act which declared His utter hatred to sin, has expressed His love perfectly. He has given His Son to be a sin-bearer; and now,

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through His precious blood, He is able to point you to the Risen One, and say, "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

Once more has this tender golden cord been stretched toward you, and it may be the last time it will ever thus reach you. What, then, are you going to do with it? Remember where it comes *from*. It comes from God. It touches the glory of Christ; it is brought to you by the Spirit of grace; and your salvation or damnation for eternity may be determined by the way you treat this very message. If in the past you have "turned to your own way," be now persuaded to turn to His. If you have turned from God, turn now to God. It is *Christ* you need. In Him alone can any heart find satisfaction. Only through His precious blood can a guilty conscience find rest.

If you still refuse to turn to God through Christ, both His Spirit and His servants will, sooner or later, turn from you to find elsewhere more fitting guests for the heavenly feast. He who said, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper," said also, "Go out quickly into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled."

"God's house is filling fast,
Yet there is room.
Some guest will be the last,
Yet there is room.
Yes; soon salvation's day
To you will pass away;
Then grace no more will say,
Yet there is room."

If you still turn to "your own way," we can only warn you that it will not be the last turn you will have to take. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God." Therefore we cry with the prophet, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" (Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.)

GEO. C.

"THAT DREADFUL DAY."

THE chaplain in a Scottish prison, while addressing the prisoners one day, repeated the following lines, by Sir Walter Scott:—

"That day of wrath! that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away!
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
Whom shall he trust that dreadful day?"

The Spirit of God graciously blessed the occasion to awaken one of the prisoners to anxiety concerning his soul. He was a young man, and seemed to be just setting out on a sinful career; but from this point his anxiety commenced, and continued to deepen, till he found rest by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace had triumphed. His wild career was ended, and for many years he has been a faithful servant of Christ.

Have you, dear reader, ever thought of the awful solemnity of having to meet God as a righteous Judge? "Dreadful," indeed, will be the day for you, if you meet Him as such—if as a sinner you have to stand before the great white throne. (See Rev. xx.)

Listen to the apostle John's description of that scene:—"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found

no place for them. And 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." (*vv. 11, 12.*) ". . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (*v. 15.*)

Could language portray anything more awe-inspiring—anything more fitted to arouse us to think seriously of the future? The whiteness of that throne tells that the judgment will be in unsparing righteousness and unsullied holiness. Nothing evil will escape. The heavens and the earth will have fled away from the face of Him who sits upon the throne; but it will be impossible for the sinner to flee. No, he must "give account of himself to God." (*Rom. xiv. 12.*) Not as one of a multitude, but singly and alone the sinner will have to stand before God and be judged. Awful prospect! Can you, my unsaved reader, bear the thought that such is assuredly before you? Does not the very contemplation of such a prospect utterly overwhelm you? Flee now, while yet you may—while yet mercy's door stands open wide to welcome you.

But perhaps the opening of the book of life will be the most agonizing part of the solemn proceedings of that day. Why does God open that book at the judgment of the great white throne? Does He not know, before ever it is opened, whose names are not in it? Yes, perfectly. But the opening of that book will bring home to the sinner, with appalling force, the guilt of having rejected eternal life as the gift of God in Christ Jesus. (*See Rom. vi. 23.*) No mind can conceive

the anguish of being damned to eternal woe, with the bitter remorse of having brought oneself to such a fate by rejecting eternal bliss.

Have you, dear reader, accepted God's gift of eternal life? In order to offer you that gift, He gave up His only begotten Son to death, and no guilt equals, in God's sight, the guilt of rejecting that gift. Remember that if you do so, God will remind you of it at the great white throne. It will be His last, His final word, as He pronounces your irrevocable doom.

H. D.

HERE, OR HEREAFTER.

IT has sometimes been remarked that the believer has all his hell here, and his heaven hereafter; while the unbeliever has all his heaven here, and his hell hereafter.

This may be, and no doubt is, in measure, true; but it is evident that the unbeliever has a very poor heaven here. If all he has is his portion in this life, is it worth calling "heaven"? From the moment of his existence he is always needy, and often suffering; he spends his strength in pursuing phantoms, and utters more sighs than songs. Although every year increases his afflictions, he does his best to live as long as he can; for he would fain forget death, fain flee from the grim pursuer which, sooner or later, he knows must inevitably overtake him. Much as his possessions may have been envied by his fellow-sinners in his lifetime, the only thing he has acquired on earth that accompanies him into eternity is a load of sins.

As to the believer, it is true, he is subject

to afflictions; but he passes through them under the influence of resurrection hopes, and therefore in a different spirit. He no longer expects to find happiness and satisfaction in a scene of ruin and death; but sets his mind on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. He appreciates the gravity of his former ruined state by the greatness of his ransom; and since it was the blood-shedding and death of the Son of God that alone could atone for and deliver him, he can have nothing to do with that lost estate from which he has, at so wondrous a cost, been set free.

Not living for self, but for Christ; not seeking his own profit, but his Master's; having no dwelling-place on earth, but a citizenship in heaven; he hastens on through easy or adverse circumstances, cheered by the present love of Christ, and rejoicing in the bright prospect of beholding and being with Him in His rightful glory.

There is darkness below, but light above; sorrow around, but joy yonder; loss here, but gain there; suffering now, reigning then; labour in the present, rest in the future—rest for ever.

He has nothing to fear, and no one to dread; God is for him, he will never be forgotten, never forsaken. He may be called away any moment by the Lord's shout in the air: and even death would but free the spirit from its clay tenement, that it might go to be with Christ, which is far better.

How miserably unhappy then is the present condition and life of even the richest, greatest, and most highly-esteemed unbeliever! How transcendently happy the lot of the poorest, meanest, and most despised believer in Jesus! Are you one of them?

L. J. M.

A FOOL FOR ETERNITY.

“Fools make a mock at sin.”—PROVERBS xiv. 9.

“THE ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God saith unto him, Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” (Luke xii. 16–21.)

There is a story in history which describes a scene between a king, on his death-bed, and his hired jester. The king had given this jester a wand, telling him to keep it until he found a greater fool than himself. When passing away, the king sent for his courtiers, as the custom was, to say farewell. When the jester appeared the king told him that he was going on a long journey, and had sent for him to say farewell. “Of course, your majesty has made preparation?” was the reply. The king shook his head. “Then,” said the jester, “I am under the necessity of returning this wand to your majesty!”

This man, the “fool” by vocation, was wiser than the monarch he was paid to amuse.

Of what avail was earthly grandeur to the dying monarch, or to that “certain rich man” in the parable?

At a crowded railway station in Australia, a most earnest appeal was made by one on his way to China to serve his Master. The train was detained longer than usual, which gave the opportunity to speak a word in season out of the carriage window. Some may have listened with attention and been blessed, but many scoffed, jeered, and mocked, calling the speaker "a fool." As the train moved on the preacher said, "It is better to be a fool, as you may think, for a few years here, than to be a FOOL FOR ETERNITY!"

Amongst those who scoffed at the young missionary there were, perhaps, comparatively few who had much of this world's goods, and yet to such the following words of scripture may well apply: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.)

Now we read: "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. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." (John iii. 16, 17.) And again: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

Surely such goodness on the part of God should lead to repentance. Therefore the Scripture

addresses you thus: "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. ii. 4.)

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 27, 28.) "But the fearful, and unbelieving, 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.)

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.)

E. F. M.

THIS IS PEACE!

TO be within "three minutes of eternity" is *seriously* near; but to reach that point unprepared is awfully solemn.

Mrs. W. N——, a cottager, was taken suddenly ill. The doctor was quickly on the spot, and promptly administered successful remedies. He then told her that if he had arrived later he would have been too late to help her; for he then considered her to be "*within three minutes of eternity.*" Mrs. N—— believed the statement, and it was used by the Spirit of God to awaken her to the fact that she was quite unprepared for such a fearfully solemn end.

While this exercise was going on, a Christian lady visited Mrs. N——, and found her awakened to a sense of her lost and guilty condition before God, and full of anxiety to know how she could be sure that her sins were forgiven, and herself ready to meet Him.

Repeating the doctor's words, she said in deep concern, "And if that is true, had he been three minutes late, where would my soul have been? For it is all dark before me, and I don't know the right way to heaven."

She was still in a very critical state of health, and unable to speak above a whisper; and her visitor felt how solemn the occasion was, and yet how blessed to bring before her, plainly and briefly, how God Himself had provided for the sinner's need in the gift of Jesus, whose blood cleanses from *all* sin; that He required her to *do* nothing, nor to *wait* for anything; but simply, then and there, to trust the precious blood as that which fully *satisfies God* about sin, and brings to the one who trusts it salvation and forgiveness.

She pressed the truth of Exodus xii. 13, "When *I* see the blood, I will pass over you"; urging the poor sufferer to rest her heart where God's righteousness rested, on the finished work of Christ.

At first, to this troubled soul, it seemed too good to be true, that "*such* a sinner" as she, could stand clear from all charge of guilt before a holy God. But as His Spirit let the light in upon her soul, she caught a glimpse of what His grace had wrought for her, utterly helpless and undone as she was; and as it thus dawned upon her, she whispered softly, "*This is peace! this is peace!*"

Her visitor, feeling that for the moment her strength would not admit of further conversation, left her, with the promise of calling the following day.

The sick one then related how that for a long time she had felt anxious to make sure of salvation, to make herself ready to meet God. But all her efforts had been in vain; for as yet she knew not that "they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God." Thus she drifted on from day to day toward a Christless eternity, until, through the grace which sought and found her, she was brought to the brink of the grave, *there* to realize in what solid peace consists.

Reader, *you* are drifting to eternity as surely as Mrs. N—— was. It is only a question of so many minutes even for you—and then, where will you land?

If still unsaved, you have *no ground* for hoping that it will be in heaven, whatever you may think about it. For the holy God against whom you have sinned is there; the Christ you have hitherto rejected is there; and the very sight of that bright glory would instantly wither up your soul with terror and hopeless despair. Then, we ask, whither are you drifting but to the abode of the lost, to reap the judgment of your sins from the hand of a righteous God? You have refused to accept His salvation *now*, offered through the One who met sin's judgment; and it is written, "He that believeth *not* the wrath of God *abideth on him.*"

This fact you will sooner or later wake up to; but oh, we press the inquiry, *When* and *where* is the waking-up to be?

Let it be *now*, ere mercy's day for ever closes.

HOW GREAT A PRICE!

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So shall endless joy and unruffled peace be yours,
in company with the One who is bringing the
“many sons to glory.” J. N.

HOW GREAT A PRICE!

(Adapted from the German by E. H. C.)

“**W**HAT is this estate valued at?” asked one gentleman of another, with whom he was travelling, as they passed a handsome country seat, with beautiful gardens and plantations.

“I do not know what it is valued at, but I know what it cost the late proprietor,” replied the other.

“How much?”

“*His soul.*”

Alas! one must say that of thousands and thousands, who sell their souls for the things of the world.

Is it needful to tell you where you may read this? Young man, that which your heart is taken up with may seem a precious treasure; but *is it worth your soul?*

Every ungodly friendship, every business, every pleasure—put them all together in one side of the scale, and your never-dying soul in the other, and weigh the worth of both before God; weigh them both for eternity.

THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST.

THE giving up of all things—of all earthly possessions, of father, mother, sister, brother—is easy, compared with giving up all our fancied righteousness—our own works. This is the last and most difficult thing that the Christian

has to do. We often fancy, and even say with our tongue, "None but Christ; I place my whole dependence upon Christ; I know I am nothing, can do nothing—He is my complete Saviour"; and yet all the time we are trusting to and looking for something in ourselves. There is nothing so insidious as self-righteousness.

* * * * *

In Christ we have redemption through His blood—the forgiveness of our sins. In Christ "all things are ours." Out of Christ we have nothing. Do you wish for pardon and peace? Go to Christ. In Him you will find all you want. Do you wish for light and wisdom? Do you wish to understand more the meaning of the word of God? Go to Christ. He will, by the Spirit, send you light and truth. Do you wish for growth in grace and in holiness, more faith to overcome sin within and the world around? Go, again and again, to Christ. Christ has for you all the gifts of faith, of strength, of grace, of holiness. Christ is ready to give you all things abundantly. To be far from Christ is to be far from light, from life, from heaven. To be far from Christ is to be near death, misery, hell. To be without Christ is to be without God, without hope in the world. If we have Christ, we have all; without Christ we have nothing. You can be happy without money, without liberty, without parents, and without friends, if Christ is yours. If you have not Christ, neither money, nor liberty, nor parents, nor friends, can make you happy. Christ with a chain is liberty; liberty without Christ is a chain. Christ without anything is riches; all things without Christ is poverty indeed. W. H. H.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.



SAVED!

“**T**HOU SHALT BE SAVED.” This is God’s declaration to the *guilty* sinner who believes; and I ask you, unsaved reader, is there nothing in it that interests you? Is it a light matter to be in your position? You have come into a sinful world, and you yourself are SINFUL; you are passing out of this world into another, and in the next world your destiny will be fixed for eternity. Now, if you are not *saved*, the eternity before you will be one of speechless woe, for it must be spent away from the presence of God in outer darkness. These things are awfully real, and your indifference to them will not alter their reality. But, oh! should you wake up to their reality when it is *too late*, how bitter will be your remorse.

A young woman who was dying said to her father, “Why did you not tell me there was such a place?” He said, “What place?” “Such a place as a lost world.” “Oh,” he said, “God is merciful; there is no such place as that.” “Ah! but,” she replied, “I know there is; I feel it now. My feet are slipping over the brink. Why did you not tell me?” Oh! what an awakening for Christless God-forgetters, when they are “*turned into hell*”! But you say,

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There will be a chance for us. Listen to God's truth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." (Revelation xxii. 11.) Nay, do not be deceived by any "larger hope" delusion. If you despise and reject, nay, if you merely neglect the matchless grace of God, proclaimed to you to-day from heaven, *how will you escape?* God could not prove more plainly than He has done His desire to bless you; and if you turn away, you will suffer eternally for your folly.

But He is saying to some to-day, "*Thou shalt be saved.*" But how? What are the terms on which such words can be addressed by God to *me*? Well, it is NOT if thou shalt pray, or try, or feel. It does not say, If thou wilt amend thy ways, and turn over a new leaf. Not one, nor all of these things can bring the salvation which you need, and without which your hapless soul will be damned. "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; *that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED.*" (Romans x. 8, 9.)

A mighty transaction has taken place upon this earth. Men had sold themselves into the slavery of Satan; but the Lord Jesus came, and on the cross He bought, with His own blood, every living person. Every man, woman, and child are His by right of purchase—they are His rightful property, though there are some who "*deny the Lord that bought them.*" These will bring upon themselves *swift destruction*; and yet they will have to own the claims of the Lord Jesus. Their

stiffened necks will bend, their stubborn knees will bow, and their tongues will confess Him as Lord. Are you amongst that number ?

"I will never bow my knee to a man," said a blasphemer to me, as I spoke of Christ to him. Vain boast, when God declares that every knee SHALL bow.

Now, every reader of this page either belongs to those who deny, or to those who confess the Lord that bought them.

Let me illustrate. It is a slave market; fifty slaves are to be sold by auction. Just as the sales commence a gentleman steps up and makes a bid for the whole company. His price is accepted, and they are knocked down to him. He steps up to one, and says, "You are my property." "Thank you, master," the man replies; "I am glad to know it." And, turning to his companions, he says, "Come on, our new master is good and kind; let us follow him at once. We have no need any longer to serve the old taskmaster." *That man confesses the one who bought him.* But another stands up, and says, "I won't own him; I mean to stay where I am. I prefer the old master to the new, and mean to serve him still." He *denies* the one that bought him. Now I want to ask, Which are you doing ?

A lady said to me, If only I could say I belonged to the Lord I should be happy. Then I said, Let me acquaint you with the fact that you do belong to Him. Will you own His rights ? Will you, my reader ?

But that is not all. Not only were we sold under sin, but our sins had put God in the place of a Judge, and incurred His righteous wrath; and before one sinner could be saved, that wrath

must all be borne, and that which provoked it put away; sins must be removed, or sinners must eternally be lost. Now listen to the glad tidings: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." He became the Lamb of God, and suffered for sin on the cross. Now the one who believes can say:—

"All my sins were laid upon Him,
Jesus bore them on the tree;
God, who knew them, laid them on Him,
And, believing, I am free."

But how do I know that they are put away? "*God has raised Him from the dead.*" "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; *ye are yet in your sins.*" (1 Corinthians xv. 17.) For if He be not raised, it proves that God was not satisfied with the work which He did; but, thank God, He is risen, raised by God Himself, so that the sins of the believer are gone. God is satisfied. I say I believe it heartily, and praise and bless God for it; and what is the result? Why, God says I am SAVED! Saved from my sins; from the wrath of God; from hell fire; from an eternity of woe; from the devil's power and his cruel slavery. SAVED for the everlasting glory; saved for the praise of God the Father's name, and for the joy of the Lord Jesus; saved to bask in the sunlight of God's love for ever, to dwell in the presence of the One who died for me. Saved now for His joy; to live, not unto myself, but unto Him; to suffer here awhile, if it be His pleasure, but to know the sweetness of His company all the way home; to learn, even now, something of the greatness of God's grace; to enjoy, by faith, the place of a son with the Father, and to look forward to that bright day when Christ will clasp

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to His bosom His blood-bought bride, and usher her into those mansions fair which He has prepared for her.

Reader, are you saved? If so, open your lips and confess Him to others. What! are you ashamed to do it? The Scripture saith, "Who-soever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed." No; those who have believed in this victorious Saviour, are not ashamed of Him. If He had not risen, they would have had cause to be ashamed; for it would have proved that He could not accomplish what He undertook. But He has risen triumphantly; He has vanquished the foe; He is master of the field, and, as Conqueror, He has been received up in glory. They delight to own and honour Him there; shall we be ashamed to do it here? Nay, let us, who believe, spread abroad His triumphs and confess His name.

J. T. M.

"RIGHT AWAY."

IT WAS quite a "bush" track. We should scarcely have found the place but for our guide. When we reached the house we wanted, it was seen to be one built by the early settlers. Logs and mud had been mainly used, though a little rough stonework had been fitted in here and there, as from time to time the wood, serving to hold things together, had given way.

The room we entered was small, but scrupulously clean, and there by the large open fireplace sat the woman we had come to see—"Blind Maggie."

She had not always been so; but, now at

middle age, hopeless blindness had come on. Yet she kept the place clean and neat. Having lived there many years, and knowing every nook and corner, she managed to do all that was necessary for the comfort of herself and the brother who lived with her.

She had had hard thoughts of God, and said hard things, scoffing things. But they had not brought her happiness—these things never do. And then when blindness came on, she got a bit harder; a bit more sceptical, and a bit more unhappy.

But the eye of God was on her there, in the old homestead, hidden away from all by-passers by the surrounding Australian “bush.” Every act, every thought, every wish, every bit of active rebellion, was noted by that omniscient eye.

So, my dear reader, is it with you. Although, like some of old, you may say, “The Lord seeth us not: the Lord hath forsaken the earth,” your *saying* so will not, as theirs did not, make it true. He sees. He knows. He remembers.

But He pities too; has *longings* also. Do you say, For whom? For sinners such as Blind Maggie, and such as you, my unsaved reader. And He acts; acts in long-suffering grace and *Godlike* love.

He so ordered the circumstances of some Christian friends that they had to stay awhile comparatively near to where Maggie lived; and thus the gospel of the grace of God, which before she had only heard of to reject—if not indeed to scoff at—fell again on her unwilling ears. And it made Maggie still more unhappy! Spite of all her hard thoughts, she felt *she* was in the wrong. Her “objections” did not

give rest. Her "opinions" were not quite good enough to go into eternity with. Her "hopes" somehow did not seem to be a secure enough bridge to carry her over, when the light of earth should fade, and the darkness of death close in upon her soul.

When at last I was asked to see her, I found her anxious about her soul: a convicted sinner. Have you got that far, my friend? Perhaps you never intend to; perhaps you are like the gentleman who proudly said to a preacher, "I have no quarrel with you; but I can do without Jesus." If so, take warning; for soon afterwards his foundations were found to be giving way. Vitality became low; it was getting dark; it was getting cold, and ere the last dread death-chill gripped his heart, he said, "Who will carry me over the river?"

You had better be anxious *now* than *then*; for in our pretty extensive experience, deathbed anxiety is comparatively rare, and generally very questionable.

But Maggie was truly anxious. We satisfied ourselves on that point, and having gone through some scriptures with her, said, "And now, Maggie, when do you want to be saved?"

"RIGHT AWAY," she replied, with her sightless orbs fixed steadily and her face turned eagerly towards us.

"And so you may be, Maggie," we said in effect; "for God has sent a plain message, telling you that you may have the very thing you want. You want forgiveness of sins: listen now. 'Be it known unto you therefore . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins'; and now, Maggie, let us see

who gets it: 'and by Him all that believe are justified'—justified from all things (Acts .xiii. 38, 39); that is even more than forgiveness, you see. Listen also to this: 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'" (Rom. x. 9, 10.)

The words fell in good ground; the light entered. The fact that "through this Man," a crucified and risen Christ, God can and does proclaim salvation for those who will appropriate it, was grasped by Maggie, and before we left that bush-home we could thank the Lord that salvation had come to that house.

Happiness reigns there now! The voice of singing, of prayer and praise, is heard there now; the name of Jesus, the Saviour, held dear. And why? Because He had been *appropriated*, and appropriated because needed.

This leads me to my finishing word, dear friend. Perhaps, like Blind Maggie, you desire to be saved, but you want it at some deferred hour in life's brief day. She wanted it "right away." You want it when you have served the devil as long as you can. Then, what is left of your life, like the rind of a squeezed-out orange, you think you will give to God, and call upon Him for mercy and salvation.

But perhaps you are not one who wilfully defers, on account of holding to the pleasures of sin a bit longer; but one who, though willing to be saved, thinks it is impossible to be saved "right away." If so, let me ask you to read

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once more, and to read carefully, the scriptures we have already quoted, with the following:—

“But He was wounded for *our* transgressions,
He was bruised for *our* iniquities :
The chastisement of *our* peace was upon Him ;
And with His stripes we ARE healed.”

(Isa. liii. 5.)

“He that believeth on the Son
hath everlasting life :
And he that believeth not the Son
shall not see life ;
But the wrath of God abideth on him.”

(John iii. 36.)

S.

THE GOSPEL: HAVE YOU BELIEVED IT?

READER, have you believed the gospel? I do not ask if you know all about it. Many have a mere *head* knowledge of the gospel; they may be able to teach, and even preach it, and yet be *unsaved*, and in *their* sins.

The Holy Ghost, through the apostle Paul in Romans i. 16, says: “The gospel . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that BELIEVETH.” Knowing *about* Christ in the gospel will never save your soul; it is the believing the gospel, and on Him who is the subject thereof. “But,” my reader may ask, “what am I to believe, in order to be saved?” Well, turn to your Bible, and read 1 Corinthians xv. 3, 4, where we find three things stated by the apostle Paul, which things he had himself received, and which he had preached to the Corinthians as the gospel by which, as he says, they WERE SAVED (*v.* 2.):—

1st. That Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.

2nd. That He was buried.

3rd. That He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.

But people often, when spoken to about the gospel, say, "We are not heathens; we all believe that Christ died for our sins." And yet when asked, "Are your sins, then, put away? are they forgiven?" will reply, as many have replied, "We cannot say that. No one knows, or can know that"—thus plainly showing that *they* have never yet believed the gospel, never really received the testimony of the Holy Ghost as to the value of the finished work of Christ. Let me, in all earnestness and affection, ask my anxious reader (for it is to help such I write) to consider the matter calmly in the presence of God. Knowing who Christ *was*, and *is*, how could you really *believe* that He took up the question of *your* sins, and the putting of them away, and yet have a single doubt in your mind as to His having done so? Does not this scripture most plainly say, "*Christ died for our sins*"? Do you believe that God laid *your* sins upon Him? that He bare *your* sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter ii. 24)? that, after being dead and buried, He *rose the third* day, according to the Scriptures? that He has gone on high, and sat down at the right hand of God in heaven? If so, how can you have a doubt about your sins being put away? Where are they? Once they were on you, but *God* has laid them upon Christ, as Aaron did the people's on the day of atonement. (See Leviticus xvi. 21-22.) He bare them in His own body on the tree; He

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was forsaken of God on account of them; and so fully did He there glorify God, that God raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory, in token of His acceptance of the work He had done.

Again I ask my reader, Where are the sins of the believer? Answer. *Where? Gone.* Yes, blessed be God, gone for ever; and, through that *perfect, finished work*, through the *blood-shedding* and death of the Son of God, they will never be found, or come up again. There is no uncertainty whatever about God's glad tidings concerning Him and His work. If there is, it is all on *our* side, not *His*.

Dear reader, *Have* you BELIEVED it? If not, why not? It is GOD's good news; and you may, therefore, rest your soul unwaveringly upon the truth of it. Thus believing, you will experience the truth of Romans v. 1: "Therefore being justified by *faith*, we HAVE PEACE with God *through* our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Once our sins on every side
Seemed to tower o'er us;
Christ has stemmed the angry tide,
Been through death before us."

R. L.

A THREE YEARS' MISTAKE.

ANY one who had seen George J—— diligently reading his Bible every day might easily have taken him for a sincere Christian. Yet, in reality, he was an entire stranger to "joy and peace in believing."

What, then, was the secret of all this diligence in Bible reading? We will try to explain.

An ex-officer of the English army (H. T.) had come to the town where G. J—— resided, and was announced to preach the gospel in the public hall. To this meeting our friend G. J—— was prevailed upon to go. In the course of the address one word, more than any other, fastened itself upon his mind. It was the word

“NOW.”

With solemn earnestness the preacher sought to press the importance of this word upon his hearers in connection with the gracious opportunity that was there and then held out to them: “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians vi. 2.)

It is certainly high time, thought G. J——, that *I* should make a start, if I would secure this priceless boon for myself. The verse says “NOW.” I cannot do better, therefore, than begin at once. But *how* shall I begin? Why, by doing good works, of course. And what better work can I do than read the Bible right through from the beginning?

To this he earnestly set himself, and many a spare hour was taken up by what he considered to be a meritorious task. Nor was he contented with going through the holy book once, nor even twice.

Three years had passed away, and for the third time he had started this “good work” when the same preacher was again announced to preach in the public hall. With some measure of self-satisfaction because of his past three years’ religious performances—for by this time he had been confirmed, had become a regular communicant, and a total abstainer—our friend went to the hall, and took his seat with the rest of the audience. But on

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this occasion there was, with the former preacher, another officer's son; and he it was who was the first to speak.

After opening his Bible, and announcing the scripture he wished to bring before his hearers, with more than ordinary sobriety in his manner, he read two verses with marked emphasis and great deliberation. These two verses proved to be enough to entirely upset our friend G. J——, as with one rude shock they seemed to completely overthrow all his religious notions, turning them upside down. Indeed, if *these* words were true, his endeavouring for three years to be good enough for God to save him was entirely beside the mark. These were the words: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh

NOT,

but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans iv. 4, 5.)

Was it any wonder, after three years of earnest effort to work out for himself a title for salvation, that he should feel utterly confounded as he listened to this clear declaration of God's revealed mind?

NOT

"TO HIM THAT WORKETH,"

but

"TO HIM THAT WORKETH NOT."

If he had been exhorted to work harder, and do better, he could well have understood it; but to hear that the blessing comes "*to him that worketh not*," and that God justifies the "*ungodly*," was more than he was prepared for.

And strange indeed was it that, in reading the Bible through again and again, he had never noticed it before!

Thank God, however, his eyes were open at last; and, better still, he had the wisdom given him to bow to the truth when he did see it. It was in this gracious way his soul was prepared for the Spirit's message through the next speaker—the one he had really gone to hear. This was the text: "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.)

On this blessed Sent One he did believe. He saw that the blessing did not depend on *his working*, but on *God's giving* and *Christ's suffering*; and gladly he received the welcome message.

The misapprehension of what God had connected with the little word "NOW" had given him three years of fruitless effort to *merit* salvation. The right apprehension of what God had connected with the other little word, "NOT," has since then given him many, many years of solid, settled peace.

George J——'s three years' mistake has been, with many, extended to a lifelong blunder. With many, alas! it is to be feared, the discovery of the fatal mistake comes all too late, leaving the soul burdened for eternity with the unbearable remorse that, with them, it had been as the scriptures had said, "Always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Reader, has such a blunder been yours? Give up at once, then, the thought of trusting such a faulty foundation, and turn to Christ. He only is able to save. Trust no other refuge. Seek no other merit.

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Never rest till you are able to say, in heart-broken sincerity and with joyous satisfaction,

“ I stand upon His merit,
I know no safer stand ;
Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
In Emanuel's land.”

“ 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.” (Ephesians ii. 8-9.)
GEO. C.

ENQUIRER'S CORNER.

WHY AM I NOT SATISFIED ?

I FEAR you lose sight of the fact that God has already revealed Himself by means of the personal mission of His beloved Son into this world, and, moreover, that *He has done so in connection* with what man is, as tested by God's own standard of holiness and righteousness. That is, I mean, He has not only fully declared what *He* is, but has done so by righteously meeting what *man* is. And all this He has done by the One who bore sin's judgment on the cross.

The work of God's beloved Son has so met *what man is*, that God has declared Himself satisfied as to His righteous judgment on man's badness ; and at the same time Christ has so declared *what God is*, that those who believe the testimony are fully assured as to God's grace and goodness toward them.

Now, dear friend, why are you not *satisfied* with God as revealed in Christ ? Why do you not rest in what *He* is ? Simply because, as I much fear, you are so much taken up with yourself that you

rob your soul of the comfort of knowing that all blessing flows from what He is to you in grace, and not from what you are before Him through your own merit.

What God *is*, He is to *you*, if you would but turn your heart to Him, and get the comfort of His love.

What the shining sun is, he is to every one not blind who turns his face in that direction. And what God is, He is to every one, without exception, that honestly turns to Him through Christ. But if we turn in upon ourselves, and try to judge of what God is by what we are, there is little wonder that our souls should get into darkness and distress, and be well-nigh overwhelmed with distracting doubts and fears.

May the Lord turn you entirely away from yourself to Him. There is nothing to disturb your soul in what *He* is—"God is love, and perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John iv. 18.)—and there is certainly nothing in what you are to give you a moment's real rest or solid comfort. Then why look there? Look to *Him*. All you want is certainly to be found in *Him*.

GEO. C.

FRAGMENT.—"Fancy Paul going to be brought out of heaven, after being there for eighteen hundred years, to be judged, to see if he were fit to be there! There is nothing so absurd as the thought of future judgment to settle my case. It is too late to judge if a man is fit for heaven when he is raised in the likeness of Christ."

J. N. D.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.

“I BELIEVE IN THE FORGIVENESS OF
SINS.”

(Substance of a conversation with a troubled one.)

“I WAS glad to see you at the preaching last night, Mr. G.,” said I to a man who was leaning over his garden gate, and watching my movements, as I went from house to house in a little village in the West of England. “I hope you got some blessing to your soul at the meeting,” I continued.

“Well, I like to go to such meetings.”

“Are you yet able to say, ‘My sins, which are many, are all forgiven’?”

“Oh, no! I cannot say that, and I don’t think anyone else can speak positively on that point.”

“What place do you attend on Sundays?” I enquired.

“I go across there,” said he, pointing to the parish church.

“Why, Mr. G., every Sunday in your life you repeat in that ancient Creed, ‘I believe in the forgiveness of sins.’”

“Yes, that is true.”

“Well,” I asked, “whose sins do you believe in the forgiveness of?”

He was silent for a moment, and then said

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thoughtfully, "I never looked at it like that, but I've never met the man yet who could speak with certainty on that question."

"You never have?"

"No."

"Well," said I, "you take a good look at me; you have seen him at last!" And he *did* look—literally *stared with surprise*.

He slowly shook his head and said, "Don't you think it very presumptuous, sir, to speak *so positively*?"

"Well, Mr. G.," I continued, "I can quite understand your looking at this question *seriously*, for to be deceived upon that point, would be disastrous in the extreme.

"I suppose you would admit, dear friend, that it would be a very desirable thing to know with assurance the forgiveness of sins?"

"Oh, yes; *I desire it myself*, and often pray earnestly for it."

"Now you say that you *believe in it, desire it, and pray earnestly for it*, and yet you do not know it. How is that?" I asked.

"I do not know, unless it is because I have not prayed earnestly enough, or else because I have not asked in the right way."

"Well, dear friend, if that was the principle upon which we got the forgiveness of sins, I know two or three verses in the Bible that would have to be altered." Again he looked surprised. I opened my Bible, and handed it to him, and said, "Will you read 1 John ii. 12, and mark carefully what it says, 'I write unto you, little children, *because your sins ARE forgiven you for His name's sake*'? Now notice, Mr. G., that here is a verse of Scripture addressed

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to the children of God, whose sins positively *ARE forgiven them*, not, as you would judge, *for their earnestness' sake*, not *because they have asked in the right way*, but for *His—Christ's—name's sake*. Again, let us read Acts x. 43, 'Through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.' Observe, it does *not* say, 'Through our prayers, whosoever asks earnestly enough shall receive the forgiveness of sins.' Our forgiveness or remission is based upon God's estimate of Christ's atoning work, and not upon our earnest prayers.

"Why did Christ die?"

Mr. G. "Oh! *He died for our sins*," the Bible says.

"Yes, that is true according to 1 Cor. xv. 3; but why should He need *to die* for our sins? Why would not His holy life, His perfect obedience, His prayers and His tears have atoned for our sins?"

"Well, sir, I must confess I have never thought of all this. It has never been put to me in this way before."

"Now what I am anxious about is that you should see that, before *remission of sins* can be received by us, *atonement for sin* must be made to, and be accepted by God.

"Sin is an offence against the holiness of God, and incurs the penalty of death and judgment. (Rom. vi. 23; Heb. ix. 27).

"Now the only thing that can dispose of the question of sin is that which will meet the demands of holiness and righteousness in respect of sin. Hence we read, '*without shedding of blood is no remission*' (Heb. ix. 22), because 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.' (Leviticus xvii. 11.)

“Now blood is the witness of death, and death is the penalty of sin.

“If, after the soldier’s ruthless spear had pierced Him, His eyes—then closed in death—had opened, and His hand, transfixed to the cross, had pointed to that stream of precious blood that flowed from His wounded side, He could truly have said, ‘This is *My blood . . . shed for many for the remission of sins.*’

“If our prayers, however earnest, or our repentance, however deep, could be accepted by God as a settlement of the question of our sins, then the overwhelming sorrow and death of Jesus were unnecessary, for we could have repented and prayed without His dying. But Christ, in speaking peace to those troubled hearts in Luke xxiv. 46, 47, said, ‘*It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name.*’ Paul, preaching to the Thessalonians, in Acts xvii., says, ‘*Christ must needs have suffered*’; and Peter tells us in 1 Peter iii. 18 the *reason and object* of that suffering. ‘*Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.*’

“How could He bring an unholy sinner into the presence of absolute holiness, without first removing every trace of sin that would be an offence to that holiness? So that, in order to fit us for the light and holiness of God’s presence, ‘the blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth us from all sin.*’

“ ‘Precious, precious blood that cleanseth
All who come to God;
This the sinner’s only title—
Jesus’ blood.’

“As a sinner, I am face to face with two

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stubborn, solemn facts, viz., *God cannot give up His holiness and wink at sin; and I cannot remove one single trace of the defilement of sin* that unfits me for the presence of His holiness. The question now arises, In view of these facts, *how then can I be brought to God?* (Job ix. 33.)

"The sweet story of the gospel brings a perfectly righteous solution of that difficulty. '*There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*' Sent by the God we had offended Jesus came, the Holy One of God, and on Calvary's cross took the place of the sinner; and being then and there made sin for us, God visited upon Him, without abatement, all the judgment due to sin and the sinner. There it was that He made full atonement to God for sin *by His own blood.*

"The question now is, Has that atonement, which Christ made, been accepted by God as a full settlement of the sin question?

"The resurrection and present glory of Christ are the most conclusive answer to that question.

"Referring to His death, by which He should glorify God about sin, Christ said, in John xiii. 32, 'If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him.'

"It is as though the blessed Lord had said, 'If I by My death glorify God in respect of sin, the way *you will know it is that God will glorify Me.*'

"Now that is exactly what has happened. (See 1 Peter i. 21.) '*God has raised Him from the dead, and given Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*' So that Christ's place in glory is the unerring witness that God *has* accepted the atonement of Christ, and more still, He has been glorified by it.

"Now, Mr. G., from that glory God sends this

wonderful message into a guilty world, '*Be it known unto you* therefore . . . *that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things.*' (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

"If God says, '*Be it known to you,*' it is *hardly presumption* to say it *may be known*; indeed, would it not be more like presumption to say, in the face of this scripture, IT CANNOT BE KNOWN?

"If you had a bit of information that you *wished no one to know about*, I can't imagine your paying the bellman to go round and publish it.

"To preach or publish it is the way to make it known. Now, according to Acts xiii. 38, God *preaches*—proclaims the forgiveness of sins. He is *delighted to make known* to a world of sinners that Christ's atoning death has furnished Him with a righteous ground upon which He can offer *full, free, and eternal forgiveness to all*.

"Now the question you may ask is, Who receives and is entitled to know this forgiveness?

"Again, Scripture is plain upon this point. Let us turn to Acts x. Let your eye rest on verse 43: '*Whosoever believeth in Him SHALL RECEIVE the forgiveness of sins.*' Look also at Acts xiii. 39: '*All that believe ARE justified—cleared—from all things.*' Now the point is not, Have you *prayed earnestly enough*, or *asked in the right way?* but, Have you *simply, really believed in Him, Mr. G.?*'

"Oh yes, sir, I do *fully trust* in Him!"

"Well, then, dear friend, if the confidence of your heart goes out simply to Him, listen to what God says about all such: '*THEY SHALL receive the forgiveness of sins.*' And if God says '*they shall,*' He does not mean us to understand that '*PERHAPS*

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they shall. Besides, He says in Acts xiii. 39, 'All that believe ARE *justified* from all things,' and that not by our prayers or earnestness, but '*by Him.*'"

"I see it all now, *thank God!* What a relief! I can *honestly* say I *do* believe in Him."

"Then let God say all the rest, Mr. G., and you believe what He says.

"The apostle Paul, writing to the Ephesian *believers*, could say, 'God HATH *for Christ's sake* forgiven you' (Ephesians iv. 32); and taking his place with them—though confessedly the chief of sinners—he could write, 'In whom *we have* redemption through His blood, *the forgiveness of sins*, according to the riches of His grace.'" (Eph. i. 7.)

Now, my dear unknown reader, let me put a very serious question to you. What about *your* sins? To *live in your sins* is bad enough, but to *die in your sins* is a thousand times worse. "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers xxxii. 23); but it will be a happy thing if it finds you out *at His feet*, with tears of contrition and repentance, as it did the woman of Luke vii. 38, for there is forgiveness with Him, that he may be feared. "He will abundantly pardon."

If you ignore and despise God's offered pardon now, your sin will find you out at the great white throne. *Nothing can then save you* from the burning lake to which your sins have exposed you. May the Lord trouble you about your sins now, if you have not already been; and if you are, may He graciously deign to use this little paper to show you how you may know that *your sins, which are many, may all be forgiven.*

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

ART. C.

REPENTANCE OR JUDGMENT—WHICH?

THERE is no subject in all Scripture so solemn as that of judgment. It is God's strange work. It is not what *His nature delights in*. "God is love." He delights in mercy. He never did and never will find pleasure in judging mankind.

Notwithstanding this, the Scriptures are as plain and decided as can be that God will bring every work into judgment, whether it be good or bad. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Even idle words, which often generate evil deeds, will be brought into judgment, with every secret purpose of the human heart. This is most solemn, and ought to make men pause and think.

Where is the man who, if tempted to commit a secret fraud, would not dread the thought of being apprehended by a detective, and dragged before judge and jury? He could not but shrink from the shame of publicity. Nor could he quarrel with the judge for inflicting upon his guilty head what he righteously deserved. Such a man, after that, could only show his honesty by confessing how richly he deserved the sentence imposed upon him.

What, then, will a man feel when the things are made manifest which for all the world he would not like his nearest relative to know?

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some they follow after." What a waking-up it will be for those who, though they are not *openly* profligate or profane, are

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nevertheless equally unclean in the sight of God; equally guilty, though their deeds have never come to light. Even the godly Psalmist had to say, "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." He also said, "Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance."

When the eye of a thrice-holy God searches every dark crevice of our hearts, how the best and most upright man is made to bow in contrition, and to say, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

But a person might reasonably ask, "If what you have said at the beginning of your paper be true, that 'God is love,' that He delights in mercy, and that judgment is His strange work, how is it that God is going to judge man, and consign to eternal misery those who have broken His laws and despised His mercy?"

We answer, The same Scriptures by which alone we can know anything of God's nature or character, testify plainly that "God is light"; that He is as *just* as He is merciful, as *holy* as He is loving.

The lack of understanding this has led some to think that God will wink at their sins. What a fatal mistake! nay, worse, what a gross libel on the righteous character of God! Only on the ground of the death and blood-shedding of His own Son can He forgive sin at all. But on that ground He can freely and righteously forgive the blackest sinner that ever trod the earth, who comes to Him in true penitence, confessing his guilt. Wink at sin! He never can.

What kind of government would it be that allowed every evil deed to escape punishment? Who would care to live under a government that allowed rapine and plunder to go unpunished? Yet the God of man's imagination is one who would allow His creatures to rebel against His authority, and insult Him to His face with impunity. Such a God is certainly not the God which the Bible presents to us.

How can we know anything of God's nature or character beyond what He has revealed to us? Who by searching can find out God? If it be accepted that God has revealed Himself, and that the Scriptures are the only written revelation of His mind, then we must stand or fall by them. Their voice must and ought to be conclusive. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is because there is no light in them*"; and the God of the Bible calls upon all men everywhere to repent, and plainly declares that, unless there is repentance, there will be judgment.

History furnishes ample evidence of God's judgment upon the unrepentant. We will take just one solitary item—one that, like an unbroken chain, has been stretched through past ages till it is present with us to-day; one that stares nineteenth-century gainsayers boldly in the face, defying all contradiction. We refer to the rejection of the Messiah by the Jews, and its subsequent consequences.

Instead of gladly accepting the gracious offer of a Deliverer, they cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Now although the thunder-bolts of the Almighty did not strike them instantly, yet there has been a judicial result to this wicked cry. Wit-

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ness the blood that was spilt in and around Jerusalem by the Roman armies shortly after. Witness the Jews scattered to the four corners of the earth to-day. Instead of being the head of the nations, they are without national glory; yet are they still the same people, with all the aspirations, all the ambition for national distinction, they ever had. Their scattering (and consequent sufferings) for the past 1800 years is a standing monument of God's righteous indignation for the rejection of their Messiah—God's Sent One. And has all this no voice to those who have been still more highly privileged? Then let not the past dealings of God be forgotten. Let the past rise up before you with all the solemnity it demands, and let it speak to you! If your privileges are great, so much the greater are your responsibilities. Those who know their Lord's will, and do it not, shall be beaten with *many* stripes.

Judgment is surely coming. Escape for your life. God lingers, and why but to save you? Your sins have often provoked and wearied Him. It may be you have insulted Him to His face, and blasphemed His holy name, yet He did not cut you down. Perhaps you have wondered at it, and defiantly used it to prove there was no God. The proud Altamont did the same; but hear his dying speech: "My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has ruined my wife—and is there another hell?" Turning his wild, despairing eyes to heaven, he exclaimed, "Oh, Thou blasphemed, but most indulgent Lord God, hell is a refuge if it hide me from Thy frown!" Soon afterwards he passed away to meet the One he had so wantonly blasphemed.

Beware, ye mockers! *God* will not be mocked. "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." "*God now commandeth all men* everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

Repentance in time, or judgment in eternity? Which? This is the all-important question—WHICH?

No wonder the convicted infidel said, "It is not death that troubles me; it is what is after death." "AFTER DEATH THE JUDGMENT."

Thank God, Christ has died. He "was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.)

If you, dear reader, take your place before God in repentance, confessing your guilt, like the dying thief, who said, "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds," I can point you to the dying thief's Saviour. I can tell you that you are one of the "many" whose sins Christ bore; that His death has, to God's eternal glory, cleared you of all judgment, and that you may now wait for His speedy return from heaven, not to judge you, but to take you to be with and like Himself for ever.

P. W.

FRAGMENT.—In its fullest sense true REPENTANCE is, when our sin is so thoroughly brought out that we are taking God's side of the question in judging ourselves, and in justifying Him. J. N. D.

"I CANNOT SEE IT."

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"I CANNOT SEE IT."

(Adapted from the German by E. H. C.)

IN a conversation on Christian subjects, an unconverted man of business replied to all that was advanced, "I cannot see it."

At last the friend who was speaking with him took a sheet of paper, and wrote upon it the word "God," and said, "Do you see that?"

"Yes."

Then he covered the word "God" with a piece of gold.

"Do you see it now?"

"No."

That was a plain sermon. It may be gold, it may be honour among men, or something else, that hinders the knowledge of God, and of His Son our Lord Jesus Christ. "How hard is it for them that *trust in riches* to enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark x. 24.) "How can ye believe, which *receive honour* one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"

REMORSE—DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS?

A GREAT American statesman lay dying. In his career he had sought earthly glory, and obtained it; but now, at the close of life's journey, there was little to look back upon with satisfaction. Turning to the doctor at his bedside, he said, "Remorse! Remorse! Remorse! Let me see the word; show it me in the dictionary." There not being one in the room, he said, "Write it,

then." The doctor wrote it on both sides of the card at his direction, and at his wish underlined it. He gazed upon it, and, turning to those around him, he said, "Remorse! *You* don't know what it means; you don't know what it means."

Reader, you may not yet know the meaning of that terrible word, Remorse; but let your Christless soul once pass the narrow boundary-line of time, and enter eternity, then would press upon your mind the full meaning of that terrible word, Remorse.

Golden opportunities trifled with and lost for ever, the gentle pleadings of the Saviour unheeded, and God's marvellous grace despised. All these things will press upon the mind of the one who has despised or even neglected God's great salvation. May He give you, my reader, wisdom to receive Christ now. J. W. H. N.

ENQUIRER'S CORNER.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL WHICH A MAN IS DAMNED FOR NOT BELIEVING?

THE gospel which you are commanded to believe, and which you will be damned for not believing, is "the gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. i. 1-4.)

In Christ God has *declared* His LOVE. In the gospel He *commends* it. (Rom. v. 8.)

What Christ *was*, God *is*; that is, God has been so fully declared in His blessed Son (John i. 18), that the refusal of Christ is the refusal of the God who has thus in grace and truth so fully laid bare His whole heart.

Every moral excellence in the blessed God was seen in the man Christ Jesus. Hence the *con-*

demnation. “*Light* is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John iii. 19.) It is the light of the revelation of *what God is* that has come in with the presence of the Beloved of the Father here below, leaving man without excuse. Nothing can more fully demonstrate the wickedness of the human heart than the refusal of Christ as the only-begotten Son declaring what God is, because that declaration shows that God is *for* man, notwithstanding all the evil that is in him. “He that believeth not shall be damned.”

When a soul has bowed to the righteous sentence of God against him as a sinner, when he has bowed to the authority of Jesus as His Lord, all the blessings of the gospel are his; and it is of these blessings, with the responsibilities attaching to them, that the epistles mainly speak. These epistles, be it remembered, are not written to unconverted people, but to those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

I could not say, “Christ died for your sins if you *believe* He did.” I don’t think that is the way the gospel is presented. But when a person has come before God in true self-judgment, with broken-hearted confession of his guilt—when he has believed the testimony of God revealed in grace through Christ—I could direct him to the Spirit’s testimony in the Scriptures as to all that righteously flows to him through the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See 1 Cor. xv. 1-4.)

Paul first directed the converted jailor to Christ Himself, and afterwards spake unto him “the *word* of the Lord.” It is Christ *Himself* that we need to direct anxious souls to, and when in true

repentance they have heartily bowed to God's Raised One as Lord, then it is our privilege to show them what are God's *blessings* in the gospel, as revealed by the Spirit in the Word for the acceptance and joy of faith, and to say, "All things are yours." First the Blessor, then the blessing; without the Blessor no blessing.

The refusal of God declared in grace will get its own reward. The judgment that falls upon the head of a gospel rejecter will fall heavily. His silence at the bar of judgment will eloquently declare the righteousness of his sentence, how well deserved his doom.

"He that is not subject to the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36, New Trans.)

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that *know not God*, and that *obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." (2 Thess. i. 7-9.)

"He that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." (Heb. xii. 25.)

GEO. C.

FRAGMENT.—What is the proper answer to grace? *Faith*. If a person shows you a kindness, *you accept it*. It is the only return you can tender. The grace of God shines out, bringing salvation, and it is the sinner's duty to accept it. The eunuch accepted it, and went on his way rejoicing. The joy of *faith* is responsive to the communication of *grace*.

J. G. B.

TIDINGS OF LIFE AND PEACE.

GOD'S ROLL-CALL.

WHEN the army "roll-call" is sounded, every man is expected to answer to his name.

If a soldier's name is called out and no response made to it, he is placed on the list of "absentees," and, at the duly-appointed time, must give an account of himself to his commanding officer.

It is his duty to yield implicit obedience to the rules and regulations of the regiment in which he serves.

Any act of disobedience or insubordination must be followed by its corresponding punishment.

For many centuries God's "call" has resounded loud and clear over this dying world. Above the strife of tongues, the clang of arms, the din of war, His call has reached the ear of the sons of men. With what result? Many have responded to it, and subscribed their names. Multitudes, on the other hand, have turned a deaf ear to the call. Are *you* amongst the latter number, my reader? If so, let me ask: Have you ever weighed the solemn consequences?

But what do we mean by God's "roll-call"? To whom does it apply? It includes all; shuts

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out none. All that are enrolled, as of Adam's race, are called to come forth from their hiding-places and answer to their name. Hearken. "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." "For there is no difference: all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Acts xvii. 30, 31; Rom. iii. 22, 23.)

Prince and peer, high and low, rich and poor, great and small, learned and unlettered, refined and vulgar, the accomplished lady and the fallen woman of the slums, the high-born aristocrat and the bloated drunkard—God says of all, "There is no difference." He calls all men everywhere to repent, and each must honestly own the name of "sinner."

"But surely there *is* a great difference between that refined and highly-cultured lady and that dissolute woman on the street?"

God says, "There is *no difference*."

"But you will allow there is a great contrast between yonder noble and benevolent philanthropist and that convicted burglar? You would surely not place them on one common level?" God says, "There is *no difference*." "And is Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen to be classed alongside the humblest of her subjects?" God says, "There is *no difference*." Who are you, and who am I, to call in question that which God has so plainly and emphatically declared to be true? Society and education make a difference. Wealth, position, surroundings, training make a difference; but, when it becomes a question of the *soul's deep need*, all alike stand on one common platform before God: there is "*no difference*." Thankfully we note the restrictions which well-ordered laws and the polite usages of modern society have put upon many forms of gross evil. Still,

dear reader, whoever you may be, we solemnly warn you that you must bow to God's sweeping sentence, or be *lost for ever*. "But," says an anxious soul, "if I do answer to God's 'call' (and God knows how truly I feel those solemn words apply to me), how am I to escape the just *desert of my sins*? How could a *holy God* pardon a guilty, undeserving rebel like me? I know that He cannot slur over sin. It is clear enough to me that all must be alike guilty before God, for all are sinners. But how am I to receive blessing from Him, seeing He is holy and I an undeserving sinner? What can I possibly look for but righteous judgment at His hand?"

Thank God, dear friend, if this is the honest language of your soul, we have for you the sweetest news that ever reached a sinner's ear. Now that you have answered to your name of "sinner," let me quote a verse to you. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 24.) There is redemption in Christ Jesus. This is the gospel. It applies to every *confessed sinner*. Let it come home to your soul in all its emancipating power. This is God's triumphant answer to the oft-repeated question, "How can man be just with God? How can he be clean that is born of a woman?" (Job xxv.4.) God justifies freely because of what Christ has done. The Lord Jesus Christ, in answer to the heart of God (John iii. 16), said, "Lo, I come . . . to do Thy will, O God" (Heb. x.7); and on the cross of Calvary He bore the full weight of God's holy judgment against sin. No human tongue could express, no finite mind conceive, what it cost the Son of God to take that place of darkness and distance and abandonment.

Dear anxious one, burdened with a sense of your guilt and misery, it was for *you* the Saviour entered that terrible arena of death. For you He bore the relentless stroke of justice. He went into the darkness that you might have the light. He drained the bitter cup of judgment that an unmingled cup of joy might be put into your hand. You may well sing, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!" Is this the happy attitude of your soul, dear reader? Then let me tell you what God has made yours through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The moment a sinner answers to God's "roll-call," or, in other words, confesses himself to be a lost and guilty sinner in the presence of God, he writes his own death-sentence; he owns that God's verdict respecting him is true. And what then? Is that poor sinner left to perish in his sins as he might justly expect to do? Nay. This is just where the glorious gospel comes in in all its magnificence.

God says, in effect, to the poor trembling sinner, "Fear not, burdened one; all is well. I have nothing but the fullest blessing in store for you; your name is now to be transferred to a new 'muster-roll.' As a guilty child of Adam you are struck off the register, *never more* to be reckoned as of that stock. You are now introduced to *another Man*—the second Man—the Lord out of heaven. All your interests and possessions are vested in Him, the glorified Head of a new race."

It has been God's thought and purpose from all eternity to gather out from Adam's fallen race a company who shall be meet companions for His Son through the everlasting ages. Yes,

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dear reader, this is the way the God of Scripture speaks to every believing soul. If you are a true believer in Jesus, your "Adam history," as far as God is concerned, was closed at the cross of Christ, and He calls upon you now, in the faith of your soul, to *reckon it so* (Rom. vi. 11; viii. 3); so that, being free by the death of Christ, not only from your sins, but from the evil nature that committed them, you are at liberty to enter into the positive and present blessings into which the gospel introduces you.

Careless sinner, a brief word to you. Ere the sun of God's grace sets in midnight gloom over this Christ-hating world, we warn you not to despise God's solemn "roll-call." Listen to what God says of those who will not receive the truth: "For this cause God shall send them *strong delusion*, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 11-12.) Friend, can you afford to trample upon such plainly-solemn warnings? Already "delusion" seems to be settling down upon this guilty scene. Beware lest it enfold you in its terrible embrace. Respond to God's "roll-call." Make no delay. G. F. E.

WHY NOT?

"**T**HE experience I had those twenty hours or so after God opened my eyes to see that I was LOST, I would not pass through again—no, not for worlds!"

The above remark was made to the writer and a few other Christians by A—— C—— at the

tea-table, after relating the Lord's dealings with him at the time of his conversion.

A—— C—— was an easy-going young man. He thought of God, and death, and eternity very lightly. In fact, he hardly ever gave such realities a *serious* thought. Yet, with all this spiritual carelessness, he was remarkably steady and honest. He was naturally inoffensive and shy, and led an outwardly moral life. The only bit of what might be termed "religion" he had about him was the usual practice of Scotchmen generally, namely, going to the church of his forefathers on Sundays.

These, then, were A—— C——'s state of soul and manner of life when, one Sunday afternoon, he was attracted by a large crowd of people coming down the street of a large ship-building village on the Clyde. Some had serious faces, and looked as if they had come from a funeral, while groups of young men were joking and laughing. What could it all mean? He had not long to wait before his curiosity was gratified, for he soon learned, from some of the young men, that they had been at a revival meeting, and were quite full of joking and mockery at what they had seen and heard. All this put A—— C—— quite in a mood to go himself to the night meeting and see the fun, and accordingly he did go.

The hymn-singing, prayers, and sermon passed by with nothing in them to provoke the *amusement* he had anticipated. Neither had there been the least *serious* impression made upon his soul. A second meeting, however, was announced, and those ANXIOUS to be SAVED invited to remain. To this he decided to stay, and see what the preacher did to them.

He had often heard it said that, when Roman Catholics were dying, and the priest was sent for, he put a wafer, or something of the kind, on their lips, and that by this act they were made fit, according to the Roman Catholic religion, to pass into the "unseen world." (This was A—— C——'s idea of "Extreme Unction.") It now occurred to him that some such process might be gone through with those in the second meeting who were anxious to be saved. And as this practice among Roman Catholics had always been a subject of ridicule among his Protestant friends, he thought the *amusing* part of the revival, and that which had made the young men laugh so much in the afternoon, would be connected with this second meeting. He therefore remained.

To his great annoyance, however, he had not been long in the second meeting before the preacher set his eyes on him, and thinking he was an *anxious* soul, came up, placed his hand gently on his shoulder, and looking earnestly and affectionately into his face, said, "Are *you* anxious to be saved?" To the great surprise of the preacher, his question was answered with a contemptuous, decided "No." Then, with all the seriousness of a soul that views the sinner and his sins in the light of the judgment seat and the LAKE OF FIRE—he replied to his contemptuous "No" with the short, pointed, and most impressive question, "WHY NOT?"

The lips that had, only a minute before, so indignantly answered the first question, were now dumb and quivering. Why was this? It could not be the mere words of a man that could work such a sudden change. No, the voice of the "living God" was heard in that question, "WHY NOT?"

though human lips were His channel of communication.

It was with A—— C—— at that moment as it was with the Thessalonian idolaters, when Paul, a perfect stranger, first spoke to them. They heard and received the words from his lips, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the WORD OF GOD, which *effectually* worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thess. ii. 13.) In like manner did it work in the *heart* and *conscience* of A—— C——.

It was soon manifest to the Lord's servant that God's Spirit was dealing with him. This made him open his Bible, and read part of John iii. He sought to deepen the work in his soul by bringing before him the first part of the chapter, where the Lord pressed on Nicodemus the need of being "born again," before he could either *see* or *enter* the kingdom of God. (*vv.* 1-7.)

Deeper and deeper did the Spirit of God carry conviction to his soul, till he saw himself *utterly lost*, and only fit for hell! The 16th verse was now turned to, where God, in love, is seen *giving* "His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But, good as such news was, he could not take it in, and therefore had to leave the meeting in a state of deep agony of soul.

Words could not express how the "terrors of hell" took hold of him. Every sound he heard seemed to echo the voice of an angry God. When in his bedroom, the very noise made by his father drawing his big chair nearer the fire, in the kitchen below, made him tremble from head to foot. In fact, he could think of nothing but an angry God looking down upon him, and

threatening to consign him to the eternal hell he now felt his sins deserved. There was no sleep for him that night. No, he dare not allow his eyes to close, lest he should wake up in hell.

When he got to work next morning, the company and bustle of the ship-yard afforded no relief. The discordant sound of iron plates as they were moved about the yard, and the din of the riveters' hammers, had all to him the *roar of divine judgment* in them. He was afraid every moment that the earth would open her mouth and swallow him up. What a day of soul-agony it was! Oft, oft, did he vow that, if God would only spare him till night, he would do his very best to get saved before he left the meeting.

Having finished his day's work, he hurried home. Without thinking of food, he quickly washed and dressed himself, and set off without delay—not to the meeting, but to his minister's house. He thought he would be quite as well able to tell him how to get saved as the evangelist; besides, it wanted an hour or two to the meeting, and he might be DEAD and in HELL by that time.

Soon he was face to face with his minister, who kindly asked him his errand.

"I was at the revival meeting last night, and am very anxious about my soul, and I have come to see if you could tell me what I have to do." He was asked inside, and when seated, the minister asked if there were any particular parts of Scripture he would like explained.

"I would like you to explain the third chapter of John, please."

The chapter read, and an explanation given, the visitor was asked if he had got any help. But poor A—— C—— was as dark as ever. The

minister shook hands with him, and kindly asked him to come back any time that he had a difficulty, and he would be glad to try to help him.

As it was not yet time for the meeting, he took a walk up the hill, behind the minister's house; and, seating himself down among the heather, he got out his Bible, and opened it once more at the third chapter of John's Gospel, and read over and over again the 16th verse—that wonderful verse which God's Spirit has used to set thousands of anxious souls free. 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."

Little by little, as he pondered the truth, the darkness was dispelled. He saw that it was God's love to *the world* (of which he was part), that led Him to *give* His Son to die, and that by simply BELIEVING on Him, he "*should not perish, but HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.*"

Before he left his seat among the heather, his heart had been opened to let in the blessed sunshine of God's wonderful love, and his soul was filled with "joy and peace in believing." Like chaff before the wind, *all the terrors* of an angry God, which had just previously filled his heart, were now chased from it.

Down the hill he now came, with light step and happy heart. A joy only *known* to those who have had the awful load of guilt removed from their conscience in God's own exclusive way, was now his.

This narrative of God's dealings in grace with A—— C—— is related on purpose for you, dear reader. If you have already rested your soul on Christ alone for salvation, then you will KNOW

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the "joy and peace" that are found "in believing." (Rom. xv. 13.) But if yet unsaved, let me ask you the question the preacher asked, "Are you *anxious* to be saved?" And if not, "WHY NOT?" May the Spirit of God do with you as He did with him!

If you could only see yourself, as God now sees you, on the brink of an endless hell, you would no longer say, you *are not anxious*, but, like A—— C——, would never again let your eyes close in sleep, lest falling over the awful brink, you should wake up in hell, beyond help and hope for ever.

J. M.

WHO ARE THE TRULY WEALTHY?

GOD has spoken in His Word of two kinds of riches, viz., *true riches* (Luke xvi. 11), and *uncertain riches* (1 Timothy vi. 17). He has given many words of kindly warning in various parts of His Word as to the latter. He has spoken to us of their deceitfulness (Mark iv. 19); and warned us therefore against trusting them. (1 Tim. vi. 17.) He has told us of the unprofitableness of all such riches in the day of wrath. (Proverbs xi. 4.)

God has called these riches *uncertain* because they are not abiding—they "*certainly make themselves wings.*" (Proverbs xxiii. 5.) They soon pass to others. Changing circumstances or death at length snatch them from their possessors. They belong to a passing, fleeting world.

The true riches are just the contrast of all this; they are abiding, they are unsearchable (Eph. iii. 8), they are eternal. The One who

bestows them has, through His grace, preserved an inexhaustible store of these riches in His precious Word for the present comfort and joy of those who, through simple faith in *the precious blood of Christ*, have already become *heirs to the true riches*.

“Who gives us now as heavenly light,
What soon shall be our part.”

To those who are in any way anxious to obtain a portion so wealthy, He offers every encouragement, and says, “The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him.” (Rom. x. 12.)

It is the privilege of everyone who has been born of God to know that no circumstance whatever, neither life nor death, nor any other creature, can ever deprive him of, or separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) Without doubt what constitutes *the true riches*, is what He Himself is, and what He has. Who then can measure them?

Reader, you are affectionately asked to consider at what a tremendous cost these riches had to be secured, before you could know and enjoy the blessedness of being an heir to them.

The cost was nothing less than the bloodshedding and death of God's well-beloved Son on Calvary's cross. It was Christ who became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. (2 Cor. viii. 9.)

Will *you* be made rich, dear reader?

Those who, by simple faith through grace, rely upon God's Christ as their own personal Saviour, are the *truly* wealthy people. Will you help to swell the number?

All who take *the lost sinner's place* and receive,

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God's testimony concerning the atoning death and glorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, to them He gives the right or privilege to become the children of God. Such are, by adoption, received into the family of God, made heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Him whom God hath appointed heir of all things. (Rom. viii. 17; Heb. i. 2.) They have an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them in heaven. (1 Peter i. 4.)

Reader, if you have not as yet received this unspeakable gift (2 Cor. ix. 15), we beseech of you do so at once.

Trust the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter i. 19) and you will, with the apostle, be able to say, "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, *according to the riches of His grace.*" (Eph. i. 7.) S. B.

UP OR DOWN?

I WAS travelling by train, returning from business, wearied and tired, the other day. The train was crowded, as usual, with those returning home after the toils of the day. The train stopped at a suburban station, but I was too tired to take much interest in the crowd of business men as they streamed out of the station.

Nevertheless I never can see any great body of people in activity without thinking of the great drama of life, which each is playing—many but beginning; others on the point of closing the part they play on the great stage.

The drama is terribly real. All have their secrets, their joys, their sorrows; many, it is true

may take life indifferently, but the inevitable result is, with all, awfully real.

“Sowing the seed by the dawnlight fair,
Sowing the seed by the noonday glare,
Sowing the seed by the fading light,
Sowing the seed in the solemn night;
Oh! what shall the harvest be?
Oh! what shall the harvest be?”

As I sat in the train, with thoughts such as these, I was suddenly, almost painfully, interested in a question which forced itself upon my mind.

There, in front of me, were two passages, which the station authorities had erected to regulate the traffic. In bold letters, at the entrance of one, was marked the word

UP;

on the other the word

DOWN.

As I watched the stream of jaded business men passing out of the station, the question came home to me, Are they travelling UP or DOWN?

When they arrive at home they won't cease travelling. When they are in the comfortable arm-chair, with tired feet encased in cosy slippers, when they retire to rest for the night, they will not have ceased travelling. Moment by moment all are surely travelling to ETERNITY—the aged man, with tottering frame and trembling gait, and dim eye and scanty locks; the little laughing child, with wondering eyes, and dimpled cheek, and flaxen hair; the staid matron and the young maiden—each and all are passing on and on and on till the terminus of life's little highway is reached; and then, through the dark, gloomy

portals of the forbidding grave, conducted, whether they will or not, by the hand of death, they pass into ETERNITY, *vast, limitless, and unalterable.*

We would fain, if we could, stand and in trumpet tones ask the great crowd of never-dying souls, each with an immortal destiny :

WHITHER BOUND? *WHITHER BOUND?*

Are you travelling UP *or* DOWN?—*up* to yonder mansions of glory, or *down* to regions of eternal woe; *up* to the crown and the harp, or *down* to the worm and the fire; *up* to see the Saviour, whose love has won their hearts, and whose blood has cleansed away their sins, or *down* to the company of demons and the damned; *up* to the light of glory, or *down* to the darkness of despair?

A Christian I well knew lay dying, leaving behind a loving husband and three darling children. She was too far gone to speak. Husband's and wife's eyes were fixed on each other for the last time. Suddenly she turned her eyes upwards, and exclaimed in thrilling tones, as if the very glory beckoned her thence, and she longed to be gone :

“ Oh ! the glory of the grace
Shining in the Saviour's face ;
Telling sinners from above,
' God is light and God is love.' ”

Then she threw aside the poor, worn-out tenement of clay, and was in the presence of that glory—in the company of Jesus for ever.

Far otherwise was a case I heard of only last night. A mother and her daughter went to see some friends, and spent the time shuffling the card-pack till late at night. At last they started

for home. The mother stumbled, and complained of a stone catching her foot. Time and again she stumbled, and it was with growing difficulty the daughter got her mother nearly home. A stroke overcame the old woman, and at four o'clock in the morning she passed into eternity—an aged sinner, with the card-pack just fallen out of her trembling hand.

But we would turn from the great crowd to our one solitary reader, and ask, Are YOU travelling *up*, or travelling *down*?

You may laugh to-day, but you won't to-morrow; you may be indifferent to-day, but you won't to-morrow; you may be sceptical to-day, but you won't to-morrow. To-day is Time; to-morrow will be Eternity.

Remember, nothing but the precious blood of Jesus can cleanse away your guilty stains. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Trust the Saviour now, and your journey will be up, and *up*, and UP, till heaven is reached and glory gained, up, till your eyes rest upon the face of Him who, amid the darkness and desolation of the cross, died for you.

You may reform, and become a professor of religion; but this will only be to pick your steps on the clean side of the broad road. The journey will still be *down*, and DOWN, and DOWN.

Remember, nothing, *absolutely nothing* but the precious blood can cleanse away your guilt. *One* sin is enough to keep you out of heaven, enough to shut you up in hell.

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

A. J. P.