

TIDINGS
OF
LIGHT AND PEACE

EDITED BY GEO. C.

“WE DECLARE UNTO YOU GLAD TIDINGS.”—*Acts XIII. 32.*

A. S. ROUSE,
15 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

1907

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A New Year's Question : What is before <i>Me</i> ?	1
“ He always did his Best ! ”	5
The Fastened Nail	7
Turning from Man to God	10
“ My own Doing and Undoing ”	14
Facts worth looking at .	17
What Made the Difference ?	25
Love Irresistible	29
Arrested on the Road .	33
“ This Hill is Dangerous ”	37
When <i>God</i> has Acted “ <i>but</i> ” has no Place .	40
A Glorious Earthquake .	42
God's Visit to His Own World .	45
“ A Little Child ”	49
Do you feel bad enough ?	52
<i>What is the World Worth when you come to Die ?</i>	56
A Letter to a Seeker for Joy .	59
Does God give Me Liberty to Choose My own Way of Meeting ?	62
How the Light affected One of High Birth .	65
How the Answer Came at Last .	69
“ What More do You Want ? ”	74
A Word that Suits the Very Worst .	76
God's Will our Blessing .	77
Christ or Barabbas—Which ? .	81
An Auctioneer's Experience .	84
A Graveside Question .	88
Fruitless Speculation : Sober Contemplation .	89
Saving Faith, Don't Mistake It .	91
Forgiven in the Nick of Time .	97
What it Means .	100
Satisfied .	103
“ No Man Cares for My Soul ” .	106
Satan Served till Grace is Tasted .	109

	PAGE
Mercy and Truth	110
“The Last Move”	113
An Anxious Soul in High Places	117
“To-day” and “To-morrow”	120
The Sinner’s Need, the Saviour’s Worth, and the World’s Hatred	123
The Yoke of Bondage and the Yoke of Liberty	124
Four Things which <i>must</i> Happen	129
The Blood that Speaks	133
Under New Management	137
The Gratified Deliverer	142
Smitten, but Saved	145
Gaining by Loss	149
The Double Knock	150
The Overwhelming Flood and the Superabundant Harvest	154
A Silent Witness	157
Only Prove Him	161
Alone with God !	165
“The End” of the “Hard Way”	168
Gratis	171
Overcoming Power	174
The Outstretched Hand of Present Opportunity	177
“Ye Must be Born Again”	181
Presumption and Full Assurance	188
Bertie’s Call	191
God’s Message and His Messenger	192
Fragments—28, 31, 44, 48, 55, 73, 87, 112, 141, 153, 170, 180	
POETRY—	
Charles Wesley’s Account of His Conversion	12
Up There	32
Light and Peace	79
Earth’s Deliverer	94
A Saved One’s Song	160

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

A NEW YEAR'S QUESTION: WHAT IS BEFORE *ME*?

INVOLUNTARILY this question forces itself upon every thoughtful person as the year 1906, which has passed so quickly, ends, and he is face to face with a new year with all its uncertainties and possibilities.

None can peer into the future and know what 1907 will bring nor where its end will find any one of us. Not even its second day is a certainty to the one who has reached the first, for God has said, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for *thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*"

Yet it is possible, in the light of the Gospel of the Grace of God, to have every fear removed as to the eternal future and to rest with complacency in the glorified Saviour, Who has secured it for every believer in Him.

A few weeks since a gentlemanly stranger entered a London restaurant and took his seat at a small table where the writer was sitting. The conversation turned upon railway accidents, in which he remarked quietly—

"I was in the Grantham disaster!"

In a moment we regarded him with unusual interest, knowing the terrible facts of that awful catastrophe. It happened on the night of September 19th, 1906. The Great Northern Scotch Express, dashing through Grantham Station at high speed, left the rails at the curve and was completely wrecked. The tender and four coaches

rolling down a steep embankment caught fire, and almost instantaneously twelve souls were in Eternity, while many other passengers were fearfully injured.

"I escaped with a severe shaking," he continued, "notwithstanding that I was in a compartment of the carriage which lodged on the very brink of the embankment."

"How wonderful was your escape! But are you able to recognize the good hand of God in your merciful deliverance?" we inquired.

There was a look of deep gratitude on his face as he replied unhesitatingly, "Indeed I am! for between the time that the train left Peterborough and the terrible moment of disaster I had committed myself to His care."

"Then you know God!" we exclaimed, with a thrill of joy at the thought that, though he little knew what was before him, he knew God, and that was the stay of his soul.

"I do!" was his hearty response; "and what has so greatly impressed me is that had I not known Him—had I been unprepared—I could not have given a moment's thought to Eternity when the shock came. I can recall my thoughts during the series of jerks which first indicated that the train had left the rails, but I am assured that there could have been no opportunity then of thinking of my soul."

"Doubtless, since your awful experience, as never before, the uncertainty and brevity of life have been impressed upon you."

"Yes, and that has been intensified this week in a remarkable way. The Railway Company's doctor saw me on Monday evening last, and arranged for an interview at ten o'clock the next

A NEW YEAR'S QUESTION.

3

morning. I presented myself at the time, but he failed to keep his appointment—*he had died in the night!*”

Now, dear reader, WHAT IS BEFORE YOU? As to time you cannot possibly answer. Scripture declares, “*Ye know not what shall be on the morrow, for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.*” But there is another to-morrow—an Eternal one. What of that?

Face the question now. You admit that DEATH is before you, for “It is appointed unto men once to die.” But that is not all—“after this the judgment.” “Death is a leap in the dark,” cries the sceptic. “A vast unfathomable mystery,” adds the agnostic. “The gateway into life,” sings the dying believer, for he can take up the triumphant words of the apostle, “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. v. 1).

Fain would the evil heart of man persuade him that there is nothing beyond death—nothing but eternal oblivion; but this neither God’s Word nor man’s own conscience will allow. Life with all its vicissitudes is too brief to leave our question unanswered; for either eternal bliss or eternal woe is before YOU.

On the authority of the Word of the Living God, we positively affirm that a Christian is entitled to rest in *absolute certainty* as to his eternal future. The work of Christ in the past has laid an immovable foundation by which the future of every believer in Him is secured. Consider the words of the Son of God—words which are possibly so familiar to you that their grandeur has been over-

looked—"He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death into life" (John v. 24). There is the positive statement, "*Hath everlasting life,*" and a negative one, "*Shall not come into condemnation*"; and both in regard to the Christian's future.

Will you not take the Son of God at His word and honour Him by trusting Him? It is an insult to Him to doubt either the certainty of His Word or the efficacy of His work.

God entrusted His beloved Son with the mighty work of redemption. He has proved Himself worthy of that trust by accomplishing the work to God's entire satisfaction, and by bringing infinite glory to God as a result. God has now exalted Him to the supreme place and is inviting YOU to trust Him too.

Christian! what is before YOU? From the hearts of the thousands of God's redeemed rises the glorious reply, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but WE KNOW that when He shall appear WE SHALL be like Him, for WE SHALL see Him as He is" (1 John III. 2).

Calmly ask yourself, dear unsaved reader, What is before *me*? This year may decide it, whether you do so or not. Be wise and look this matter in the face at once. The Lord is coming! That great event which Christians are so eagerly expecting, but which will involve the eternal ruin of every unbeliever, is at hand. He is coming for His own—waking or sleeping. Are you one of them? If not, you will do well to inquire seriously—What is before me? And never rest again without a satisfactory answer.

F. S. M.

“HE ALWAYS DID HIS BEST!”

5

“HE ALWAYS DID HIS BEST!”

AN EPITAPH.

THIS, as it stands, looks like an excellent record. But there are certain questions which must very naturally suggest themselves to a thoughtful mind in connexion with such a record. First, for whom was it claimed? Next, was it true? Lastly, granted the record was literally correct, what did his “best” amount to? The importance of the last consideration we would specially draw the reader’s attention to.

A few years since a very desperate character named Charles Peace was executed. He had crowned a long course of housebreaking and robbery with wilful murder. And yet there is even a sense in which you might put over that hardened felon’s grave the words in question, “*He always did his best!*”

After his final apprehension it was discovered that by various clever stratagems he *always did his best* to escape detection. For example, he took very respectable apartments in a certain town, and being fond of music and well able to play the violin, he soon gained friends, and made their evenings pleasant by his agreeable manners and musical performances. *But what did it amount to?* This hardly needs repeating. He did his best to appear to be what he was not.

But the reader may inquire, What about the epitaph at the head of this paper?

Well, the grave we speak of was in the private grounds of a sporting gentleman. But who occupied the grave?

Ah, not a human being at all! It was only a favourite *race-horse* that was buried there!

You exclaim, perhaps, "That makes all the difference."

And you are right. For, granted that the epitaph was true, what did it amount to? The mere sentiment of an interested party.

But to come a little nearer. Suppose that this year it should be found necessary to dig *your* grave. Suppose, further, that your kind friends should place "*He always did his best*" at the head of that fresh mound. What, in the eye of God, would such a statement amount to? Charles Peace did his best to be considered better than he well knew he was. But what was that to God? The favourite race-horse was considered by his master to have done "his best." But what was that to a holy God even if he had gained thousands of thousands for his owner? How vastly appearances change when the *whole* truth has been told! Fair words then are often made to look like barefaced hypocrisy.

Now, do suffer a plain word, my reader. You have to do with One Who knows the *whole truth* about your history. Before you again let *Him* hear you tell some inquirer after your soul's welfare that you have "*done your best*," had you not better inquire what the best of every natural man amounts to, and what *your* best in particular has been under *His* eye? *Done your best!* What has that best been worth? Is it that you have only done your best to escape the detection of your fellow-man? Done your best to be good enough to do without Christ? Done your best to put off to a more convenient season the bowing of your heart to Jesus as your Lord?

DONE YOUR BEST! do you say? Think of it. Would such words on your grave be anything less

THE FASTENED NAIL.

7

than ghastly mockery? What, then, are they on your *lips*? "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13).

A *leper's* best is only the defiling best of a diseased and loathsome creature. A *sinner's* best is only the best of an unarrested rebel. We are all on the same level naturally, and our only wisdom is to own before God our true state. Through Jesus God has full forgiveness and perfect cleansing to bestow on every repenting sinner, no matter even if he has done his worst and *always* done it.

Begin this year, then, not by fresh resolutions to be better, but by coming to the Lord Jesus Christ and proving the blessedness of putting your trust in Him. Then will it be your joy to speak, not of your doings, but of His Who, when knowing the worst about you, willingly laid down His life to express His heart of love and remove your load of sin. It is to *Him* we would have you come. Oh, come to Him NOW!

Then will your language be, living or dying—

The Saviour loved me, and He made me know it:
He won my confidence and bade me show it.

GEO. C.

 THE FASTENED NAIL.

THOMAS E—— was looked upon as an honest, straightforward kind of man by all who knew him, yet for all that he was ranked among those who "have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

He was the husband of a converted wife and the father of converted children, therefore many prayers had gone up to God on his behalf, prayers

too that were to be answered in His own time. Oh, the value of fervent, believing prayer. Let us, who know the Lord, pray on.

Many times God had spoken to him through the death of some who were near and dear to him, still he hardened his neck in pride and self-will. But God, Who is rich in mercy, was going to make him a monument of grace by laying him upon a bed of sickness from which he never recovered.

It was while lying there he experienced something of the words of Job. He was chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain (Job xxxiii. 19). Friend after friend entered his bedroom and "persuaded him concerning Jesus."

Facing the bed where he lay was a text written in bold black type: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

Many a time his attention was called to it as it hung upon the wall, until the words seemed to haunt him, and at last, unable to bear the penetrating power of such words any longer, he requested his son to take it down. But somehow or other the nail could not be got out and it had therefore to remain there still, that by its means the Spirit of God might do His own work in his precious soul. We shall see that if the word could not be *taken down*, it could be *taken in*. And this is what really took place.

One evening he lay there all alone. A servant of God who had often called in to see him, though getting little response, called again, still trusting

THE FASTENED NAIL.

9

the Lord would be pleased to open his eyes. Once more taking his seat by his side he pointedly asked him if it was well with his soul. To this he replied, "*Yes, it is well,*" and the calm look that lit up his countenance told of peace within.

How did it come about? he was asked. "Why, it was that text that did it!" said he. As he had drunk in the simplicity of the words, they had filled him with assurance. God says, "I have passed from death unto life," was his emphatic reply.

Space would not permit us to relate all that took place with this dear soul from the time that the Lord met him until He called him home to be with Himself—about six months. But the night he died will ever be remembered by those who gathered around his bed. It was an impressive sight. Fixing his eyes upon one who was present he said, "Pray to God for me!" But there was no time for prayer, only room for praise and thanksgiving to Him Who alone is worthy to be praised for His great salvation. As his strength had become weaker his faith had grown stronger, so that he was able to testify to those around him of God's saving grace.

His awakening seemed to be caused by the doctor's words. Reluctantly yet candidly, he had told him that he had a disease from which he could not possibly recover. Man's extremity was once more God's opportunity.

Many times it may be, my reader, you have heard the voice of God. It may have been "in a dream or a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed"; for "then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw

man from his purpose, and hide pride from man" (Job xxxiii. 15-17). God works thus with man that He may be "gracious unto him," and says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a Ransom" (Job xxxiii.).

What better news could fall upon the ears of sinful men, than that God has found a Ransom in the person of His beloved Son? He Who came forth from His presence to accomplish redemption's work cried with a loud voice, "It is finished." God is now eternally satisfied with that atoning work. He has raised Him from the dead and acclaimed Him worthy to ascend the throne. Well might we sing, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!"

Soon will He come from those courts on high and claim every blood-washed sinner. Then those who are left behind will bewail throughout a lost eternity that they let their last opportunity slip by.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." — E. J. E.

TURNING FROM MAN TO GOD.

THE business of the day was over, and the city of Melbourne had quietly settled to its rest, when the cry of "*Fire! Fire!*" rang out through the night, arousing the people, and making them rush hurriedly in the direction of its sound. A large drapery store was seen to be all alight with flames, and every effort was speedily made, firstly to arouse and rescue the many sleeping inmates, and secondly to extinguish the blaze.

They thought they had accomplished the

former, but all attempts towards the latter were in vain, for the light goods with which the building was stocked burnt so readily that it was soon apparent nothing could be saved.

Suddenly the crowd below, eagerly watching the grand but awful spectacle, was horrified to behold a young man appear upon the roof and mutely beseech help.

Poor fellow! he must have been sleeping all too soundly, and when at last he awoke there was no way of escape *down* except through a raging mass of smoke and flame. So he made his way *up*, only, alas! to find it equally closed there. How terrible was his position! Many hearts to pity! No hand to save!

And the crowd below, in spite of that peculiarly "help-one-another" sentiment that animates colonists, could only watch the solitary fire-lit figure in helpless despair.

Presently the poor fellow seemed to realize and accept the inevitable, and turning from his fellow-creatures to his Creator they saw him quietly bend his knees and clasp his hands in prayer, as maybe he had so often done before in the old country beside his mother's knee.

Pathetic and touching in the extreme was this last glimpse to the straining eyes of the mortal crowd below. Surely it was glorifying to the divine Watcher above, "Whose eyes behold, Whose eyelids try, the children of men" (Psalm XI. 4).

What a solemn instance is this of the awful suddenness with which death sometimes comes! Should it not be a warning to be ready—prepared with God's preparation—namely, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ?

If trusting in Him, death comes as a friend

to usher us into His presence. But if not, it is an inexorable, ever-threatening foe that may claim us at any moment.

God warns you, in the midst of the chances and uncertainties of this life, to put your unreserved confidence in His Son, that on account of His sacrifice your sins may be forgiven, and you be saved and blest.

Then, having Him to turn to—in life or in death, in sickness or in health, in sorrow or joy, in poverty or wealth—there is always rest and gladness.

L. J. M.

CHARLES WESLEY'S ACCOUNT OF HIS CONVERSION.

GOD of my life, how good, how wise,
Thy judgments to my soul have been !
They were but mercies in disguise—
Weaning my heart from paths of sin :
How different now Thy ways appear—
Most merciful when most severe !

Since first the maze of life I trod,
Hast Thou not hedged about my way—
My worldly vain designs withstood,
And robb'd my passions of their prey—
Withheld the fuel from the fire,
And cross'd my every fond desire ?

Trouble and loss, and grief, and pain,
Have crowded all my forty years ;
I never could my wish obtain,
And own at last, with joyful tears,
The man whom God delights to bless,
He never curses with success.

How oft didst Thou my soul withhold,
And baffle my pursuit of fame,
And mortify my lust of gold,
And blast me in my surest aim—

CHARLES WESLEY'S CONVERSION.

13

Withdraw my animal delight,
And starve my grovelling appetite ?

Thy goodness, obstinate to save,
Hath all my airy schemes o'erthrown—
My will Thou wouldst not let me have :
With blushing thankfulness I own
I envied oft the swine their meat,
But could not gain the husks to eat.

Thou wouldst not let Thy captive go,
Or leave me to my carnal will ;
Thy love forbade my rest below—
Thy patient love pursued me still,
And forced me from my sin to part,
And tore the idol from my heart.

Joy of mine eyes, and more beloved
(Forgive me, gracious God) than Thee ;
Thy sudden stroke far off removed,
And stopt my vile idolatry,
And drove me from the idol's shrine,
And cast me at the feet divine.

But can I now the loss lament,
Or murmur at Thy friendly blow ?
Thy friendly blow my soul hath rent,
From every *seeming* good below ;
Thrice happy loss ! which makes me see
My happiness is all in Thee.

How shall I bless Thy thwarting love,
So near in my temptation's hour !
It flew my ruin to remove—
It snatch'd me from my nature's power—
Broke off my grasp of creature-good,
And plunged me in th' atoning blood.

See then at last I all resign—
I yield me up Thy lawful prey :
Take this poor, long-sought soul of mine,
And bear me in Thine arms away,
Whence I may never more remove—
Secure in Thine eternal love.

C. W.

14 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

"MY OWN DOING AND UNDOING."

HOW much is heard to-day, in certain quarters, as to the beauty of Christ's earthly life! His character is extolled as that of the most perfect type of manhood. Admiration is expressed for His gentleness, His self-denying readiness to serve, His zeal for the blessing of men, His accessibility to sinners, His denunciations of hypocrisy, His wisdom in dealing with the various questions that were brought to Him, His unflinching determination to accomplish at all costs His divine mission.

All this is well. The blessed Saviour is every bit as good as, and infinitely better than His most devoted followers can express. But as His wonderful character is dwelt upon again and again in glowing terms, there yet remains in the soul a feeling, often indefinable and unexpressed, of deep unsatisfied need.

"*I am tired of beauty, and desperate about my own doing and undoing,*" writes one who feels the need of something further.

Yes, and it is not the exaltation of Christ upon the pinnacle of human perfection that will meet that need, though in His humanity He was always perfect.

What meets the desperate question of the sinner's doing and undoing is the *death* of Christ, with its wonderful and far-reaching results.

Take first the question of our DOING. What have we done? The answer may be given in one word: SINS. In thought, and word, and action we have sinned, and each sin cries aloud in the ear of a holy God for judgment.

Then as to our UNDOING. What is it that we have undone? This question can also be answered

“MY OWN DOING AND UNDOING.” 15

with a simple word: SELF. We have utterly and irretrievably undone and ruined ourselves, so that SELF can never be fit for God's presence, and can never be dealt with in any way by God but in righteous judgment.

Thank God, that in the death of Christ, one who feels desperate about his own doing and undoing may find a complete settlement of the difficulties that perplex him.

First of all, in the death of Christ a righteous foundation was laid for the forgiveness of sins. If free and full forgiveness is preached through a risen and glorified Saviour, it is all based upon the atoning work which He accomplished when He hung as the Sin-bearer on the Cross. Believing in Him, we can read *substitution* as we turn in thought to Calvary. He “bare our sins in His own body on the tree”; He “died for our sins” (1 Peter II. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 3). Our *doing*, evil as it has been, has been perfectly atoned for by our Saviour and Substitute. God has declared, in the most unmistakable way, His acceptance of that atoning work as all-sufficient, by raising the One Who did it, from the dead. And if *He* is so satisfied as to the end of our doings, by that work which wipes them all from His sight for ever, *may not we too be satisfied?*

There yet remains the question of SELF to be considered—undone, ruined self. God in no wise undertakes to reconstitute SELF naturally. But in the death of Christ He has effected the complete removal of “self” from before Him. He reckons that death as ours. All that “self” is morally, as a ruined, corrupt, and hopelessly reprobate thing, has been judged, condemned, and put out of court in the death of Christ.

What does, this, then involve? The annihilation or non-existence of the being? No. For God has so wondrously wrought that we—you and I—may be before Him for blessing altogether apart from that evil “self.” We cannot be before Him on the ground that “self” is restored or improved, but we *can* be before Him on the ground that “self” has been judged and judicially removed in the death of His Son, and that our acceptance lies in another direction altogether, even in Christ.

Christ in glory is not only the *measure* of our acceptance. He is that; in Him we are brought to God in all the fragrance and perfection that is His. But He *is* our acceptance. We have no footing, no means of approach, no place in God’s presence, but in Him.

Sharers of His risen life, we can *be* there, dwell there, abide there, even now. The power of all this for us lies in the Holy Spirit, by Whom we appropriate and enjoy the wonderful place in God’s favour that He has given us in Christ.

Marvellous answer to our “doing and undoing!” All our doings put away for ever, and all that is wretched and undone put away as well, and a scene of unclouded joy opened to us, where every blessing is ours in Christ! How shall we ever be able to praise, as we should, the love, the wisdom, the righteousness, the power that lies behind it all?

Reader, do you know anything of this, or does what we say sound as the jargon of an unknown and strange language in your ears? Consider it; get down low before God and learn in His presence His own way of blessing through and in Christ.

H. P. B.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

FACTS WORTH LOOKING AT.

“**R**EMORSE is the most painful sentiment that can embitter the human bosom,” said one who had felt its deadly sting.

“Don’t talk to me of pain, woman,” said a dying man to his nurse, who sought to alleviate his sufferings. “It is *the mind*, woman, the mind.” Remorse was doing its dreadful work: *conscience* was calling up *the past*.

CONSCIENCE.

Take this fact first. Most will admit that man has a conscience—an internal monitor that does duty as a detective. When we do wrong either against God or our neighbour it condemns us. The most wicked, the basest of men have confessed to feeling its condemning power. Truly it makes a strong man the veriest coward. It made Felix tremble on his throne as Paul reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and JUDGMENT TO COME.

Where, let us inquire, did conscience come from? If the Creator has not endowed us with a conscience, how can we account for it? Is it not an evidence that though man the sinner has revolted against God’s authority, God has still a hold upon him? Yes, man is a *responsible* creature.

Even professed infidels have confessed to have felt its awful lash to be worse than the sting of scorpions. Lord Byron has written—

The mind that broods o’er guilty woes
Is like a scorpion girt by fire.

VOL. XIX. No. 2.

Through life, when all was smooth sailing, they fought against it, and even denied that it was any evidence of man's responsibility; yet when the cold hand of death assailed them, the stoutest heart has quailed and shivered with horror or been seized with blank despair.

Men may philosophize and spin theories to try to get rid of "*the Fall*," but let them first settle where conscience came from.

SIN.

Here is another fact. "Fools make a mock at sin," but it is a stern reality notwithstanding; it is one of the most terrible of facts. Its withering, cursing blight is seen everywhere. The amount of evil and sorrow in its train can scarcely be exaggerated.

Why do we require policemen to protect us? *Sin* is the answer. Why do we bolt and bar our doors at night to keep out the thief? Because of *sin*. Why are we so careful that our children should not read the vile and pernicious literature abroad to-day? *Sin* is the secret. Why are there jails to lock in the profligate and the assassin? Why have we workhouses to hide poverty from our eyes, asylums to confine the lunatic, and graveyards to hide the corruption of our own flesh? It is all through that one word, *sin*. Sin is in every man's breast, and because of this the seeds of death are there. Death is the result of sin. *Lust is sin in the bud. Sin is lust in full-blown flower.*

Man or woman, I challenge you as an honest person to say that at times you have not been guilty of thoughts, if not acts, that have well-nigh horrified you, and which you would not

like your nearest friend to know! Where did those abominable thoughts come from if sin does not exist? Admit the truth that, but for the influence of Christianity in these countries and the restraints of the laws of society, we should be quite as bad as the heathen.

Notwithstanding the effects of Christianity and the barriers that delicacy have thrown around us, look at what appears in the daily papers. *And what of that which goes on underneath the surface which never comes to light?* "But He that formed the eye, *shall He not see?*" "There is no creature that is not made manifest in His sight." "All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do."

Take another fact—

IMMORTALITY.

Man is immortal. That is, he has got an intelligent spirit which is *deathless.* *He must exist for ever.* Some men may deny it, as they may deny anything if they have boldness enough for it. But denial is no proof. Man being an intelligent creature, in that sense he is above the beasts. At times immortality asserts itself in every man's breast.

Why do men dread death if man is not immortal? If he dies like a beast and has no further responsibility, why should he at any time be concerned about his future state?

Whence this secret dread and inward horror of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul back on herself and startles at destruction?

"And am I born to die?
To lay this body down?
And must my trembling spirit fly
Into a world unknown?"

Some have said that it is only the young and the weak that manifest all this concern about the future; that is, when people grow up to manhood they are able to shake it off. Why then have the most learned men and the greatest minds that this world has ever produced been so concerned at death's approach?

Hear what the great master painter and sculptor, Michael Angelo, said before he died—

“And how remorseful thoughts the past upbraid,
And fear of twofold death my soul alarms.”

Take another fact—

GOD'S JUSTICE.

If the existence of God be admitted, of which there can hardly be any honest denial, we cannot conceive Him to be other than a God of unbending justice and unsullied holiness. The Scriptures give the fullest testimony to this. If God is holy He must hate sin. If He is just He must punish it.

God's law is not less exacting than British law, nor the laws of the Medes and Persians, which it was not permissible to change. When the dastardly outrage was committed in Ireland against Lord Cavendish every upright citizen was filled with horror and indignation. Their only desire was that the individual or individuals who perpetrated the brutal crime should be brought to justice. If British law allowed any outrage to escape it would not be just.

Will God be less exacting, think you? *Will He allow to go unpunished all the evil that has been done in the world against His righteous government? Will He allow the murder of His own Son to go unrequited?* Though He is long-suffering, the day of reckoning *will* come, and it is not

far off. He will manifest His justice in bringing every transgression to light and giving it its due reward. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad."

THE LOVE OF GOD.

Take yet another fact, namely, *the love of God*. "God is love." It is the nature of God to love. If so, *He will express it; He will devise means whereby His banished be not expelled from Him*. He will open a way whereby the sinner be brought back to Him righteously.

How could this be brought about consistently with His justice and holiness, and with man's condition as a sinner in God's sight? Had He acted in justice only, He would have swept the whole race to destruction! But where would His love have been seen?

Why should men quarrel with God's just dealings if in love He gave His Son to meet all that the justice of His throne demanded? If sin has come into the world and ruined man; and if God has shown His love to such an extent as to provide the way to meet it, so that rebel man—ruined and guilty—might be lifted into far higher blessedness than Adam lost, why should men quarrel with God?

The cross of Christ is the perfect reconciliation of God's justice and His love. There we see the perfect righteousness of God against sin and His deepest compassion for the sinner. There mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. *What justice demanded love has provided. Divine love has*

triumphed by meeting them, not by setting aside the demands of the throne. David sacrificed justice to affection in bringing back Absalom; but God could not act thus.

PEACE IS MADE

by justice being upheld and vindicated. *It is in justice to God's beloved Son, the Vindicator of His righteous claims, that He justifies those that believe.* None need perish since Christ has died. "He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." He died for the UNGODLY. "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God!"

God has been so honoured and all that He is so magnified by the work of Christ, that in perfect accord with strict justice He has come out to bless rebels. His death avails for the blackest, the vilest, the most polluted sinner, and therefore it avails for YOU.

The way is now so clear and open that all who come in the confession of their guilt will be received and welcomed into God's present and everlasting favour, and will thus realize the forgiveness of all their sins. Of all who come to Him through Christ, God has declared most emphatically that "their sins and iniquities He will remember no more."

Who but God could act thus?

Reader, discard the thought for ever that God is now asking payment from your hands for your past misspent life. He demands not the fulfilment of the holy law from you to make you righteous. This is the rock on which many split and make eternal shipwreck. None can be justified by works of any kind, but by faith alone in

God, Who gave His Son to do all the work.
 "NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST."
 "IT IS FINISHED."

However hard and diligently you try to work out a righteousness for yourself, you will not be satisfied. It will only prove to you, as it has proved to all before you who have come the same way, that you are absolutely without strength. *STRENGTHLESS is your state.* All your trying will not bring peace to your troubled conscience, nor give you the sense of God's favour. *The more sincere your desire to be good, the more you will prove the truth of the words,* "When I would do good evil is present with me. How to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. VII. 18, 21).

As the blessed God stripped Adam and his wife of the fig leaves they had sewed together and clothed the guilty pair with coats of skins of His own providing, so He offers to clothe you in a moral way. *You want to be consciously righteous to stand in the presence of His unsullied holiness.* He will in Christ make you that, if you believe in Him. "And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

The weakest, most trembling believer is viewed in all the perfections of Christ. Before God Christ is everything and we nothing. *It is not from what God thinks of ME that I derive peace or comfort, but what He thinks of Christ.* As, in the simplicity of a little child, I rest in God's satisfaction with and appreciation of Christ, my peace flows like a river and my joy is unbounded. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." "As He

is, so are we in this world." "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace **IN BELIEVING.**"

As well might the throne of God fall from the heavens, as well might the pillars of the universe be shaken, as well might you try to extinguish the light of the sun at midday with a rushlight, as that God's justice could fail to those who believe in His Son.

Why not believe God in spite of all that you are, and in face of all that the devil might put in your way to hinder you? Say like the noble-minded Paul when standing on the vessel that was to become a total wreck, with the captain, passengers, and providence seemingly against him: "I BELIEVE GOD THAT IT SHALL BE EVEN AS HE TOLD ME."

Hear what Dr. Chalmers said, who before his conversion to God had himself been a strict law-keeper: "I am now most thoroughly of opinion, and it is an opinion founded on experience, that on the system of **DO and LIVE** *no peace and even no true worthy obedience can ever be attained.* It is 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.'

"When this belief enters the heart, *joy and confidence enter along with it.* We look to God in a new light: we see Him as a Father; love enters the heart, and with a new principle of action and a new power we become new creatures in Christ Jesus." "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation: old things are passed away, and all things are become new."

"Go thou and work, the law commands,
But gives us neither feet nor hands.
The gospel tells of better things;
It bids us fly, but gives us wings."

P. W.

WHAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE?

I N visiting lately in the town of C——, I knocked at the door of a Mrs. J——. A woman put her head out a few doors off and said, "Mrs. J—— is away from home." Going to her I said, "You told me that, eight months ago, when I called on Mrs. J—— before, and I gave you a little book. Did you read it?"

"Yes."

"And did you like it?"

"Yes."

"Then you must be a believer?"

"Yes—and here are two more," she said, pointing to a couple of women inside her cottage.

I walked in and sat down. As I did so, one of the two said, "We were just talking about our Saviour when you came in."

"Oh," I replied, "talking about *your* Saviour, were you? Then you were talking about *my* Saviour too. So there are four of us who can claim Him as '*our* Saviour,' thank God."

This led to a very happy little conversation about Him; and I spoke to them of His coming again to take His own to be for ever with Him. (See 1 Thess. iv. 15–18; John xiv. 1–3. Note: "I will come again.") While we were speaking another neighbour looked in at the door, and seeing my Bible open in my hand she hastily withdrew. "What made her go so quickly?" I said. "I expect it was the sight of this," holding up my Bible.

"Yes," said the woman of the house, "that did it."

What made the difference? Here were four people happily occupied in speaking of Christ,

and listening to what the Bible says as to His coming again. But a fifth withdrew the moment she saw how we were occupied.

What made the difference?

It was really "a division because of Him."

Only to think that the One these women called "*our Saviour!*"—the One Whom God calls "My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased"—the One before Whom heaven's hosts adoring fall!—only to think that He should be the cause of such well-defined division! Yet so it is. "What think ye of Christ?" is the question which divides the whole of mankind into two distinct companies, two opposing hosts. Men either think well of Him as their Saviour, their Friend, their Lord, their All, or they think ill of Him. They either *take sides with GOD* about Him, or *take sides with the devil* against Him.

Which do *you* do, my reader? Upon the position you take up with regard to Christ hangs your eternal welfare, or otherwise—your happiness for time and eternity, or your misery *for eternity*.

When Jesus was on earth "there was a division among the people because of Him."

Now He is in heaven, having accomplished the work of redemption, and been raised and seated by God at His right hand in token of His complete satisfaction in that work, and with Him Who carried it out for His glory and our eternal salvation, there *is* a division among the people because of Him.

And when He comes again from heaven there will be a division among the people because of Him. Oh, such a terrible division, and a *final one* too! Every believer in Him who has died

will be raised. Every one who is alive at that moment will be changed. And both "caught up together . . . to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17).

But what about every unbeliever then living? Against all such the door will be shut. They will then earnestly seek admission when it is too late. Empty, Christless professors will plead their sacramental observances, and their outward association with Him. "But He shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Luke XIII. 25-28).

And what about all who have died unrepentant, unbelieving? They will be left in their graves until the thousand years of the glorious reign of Christ over the earth with His saints will be finished (see Rev. v. 10; xx. 4-6). Then they will be raised and brought before the great white throne, where He Who now pleads as Saviour will sit as Judge; and the wicked dead will be judged "according to their works." "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 11-15).

"During midnight's silent hour,
At your heart's shut door,
Stands a Stranger knocking, waiting—
He has knocked before.
Have you heard that sound of knocking,
Felt the weight of sin?
Ah, it is your Saviour calling—
'Open, let *Me* in!'

"Death's cold hand may soon arrest you,
Claim you as its prey,
And with terror you must enter
An untrodden way.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

Then with anguish you'll remember
 All His love and pain,
 Who has stood, and knocked, and waited—
 Waited, but in vain.

“ Ah, no tears, no prayers can save you,
 It is now too late ;
 And in vain *you* stand there knocking—
 Knocking at the gate.
 Calling at the gate of heaven—
 ‘ Open, let *me* in !’
 Proving now how death and torment
 Wages are of sin.

“ Yes, you'll call, but what an answer
 Strikes upon your ear :
 ‘ Sinful soul, I never knew you,
 You've no portion here.’
 Come then NOW, poor trembling sinner,
 Open now your heart,
 Jesus Christ in grace will enter,
 Never to depart !”—(S. H.)

W. G. B.

A Learner in God's School.—“ Wave after wave, trouble after trouble—no ceasing until we get into the haven. I do not wish you out of them, but to profit by them. You may depend upon this, that whatever it is which makes you pleased with yourself is not true grace, and whatever makes you displeased with yourself is not true grace unless it brings you humbly to Christ and makes you put more trust and confidence in Him. The good Lord teach you these things practically. I have learned them by long experience, though I know but little of them, yet I am getting on in the school of Christ, and hope soon to be on the *lowest* form, for there we learn most and fastest.” R.

LOVE IRRESISTIBLE.

THE history of God's ways with the men of His choice from the beginning has been a record of determined love in the midst of determined opposition, and one special charm in the story is found in the fact that the very opposition itself has been made to serve, and serve effectually, the ends of the love it opposed. Even in the instruments chosen for the direct accomplishment of these ends we see striking exhibitions of the same principle.

For example: It was Jacob's love to Joseph that was expressed in that "coat of many colours"; and it was the determined opposition of the rest of his sons that was eventually the means of placing Joseph where, through him, deliverance from famine might come to them as God's great mercy to the whole family.

Again. In the child Moses we see that the one who was himself the offspring of determined love is the one chosen of God to be the deliverer of His people. His mother's affection held him back from the hand of the destroyer to the very extremity of her power; and from that point God's determined love takes the matter into its own hands, and makes Pharaoh's obstinate defiance serve and further His own settled purpose in the complete deliverance of His people when the due time of past promises should be reached (Gen. xv. 13; Exod. xii. 41). "Even the self-same day it came to pass."

Well may the same Moses, the man of God, when before his death he blessed the children of Israel, say, "*Yea, He loved the people*" (Deut. xxxiii. 3).

But it is not until we come to the cross that we see the *full* triumph of all-conquering love over man's determined opposition. Both were clearly in evidence all through the blessed One's history here below. But it was the cross that crowned all. It was there that the direst opposition was seen to be only working out love's choicest, brightest ends. As another has strikingly expressed it: "*Good and evil in all their forms and extremes met there, for the triumph of good in once suffering the evil, and that good might have its full sway.*" The wicked hands that crucified and slew the sent One of the Father were only accomplishing that which the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts II. 23) had purposed from eternity.

"Love that no tongue can teach,
Love that no thought can reach,
No love like His.
God is its blessed source,
Death ne'er can stop its course,
Nothing can stay its force :
Matchless it is."

Then when the Holy Ghost came and had so filled Stephen that his face shone like an angel's, man's bitterest opposition only made it more manifest that the determined love in the one they were battering to death was only the unquenchable love of Jesus in one of His own. Love will serve to the end. Stephen's prayer for his murderers was quickly followed by a direct and most glorious answer in the conversion of their ringleader, Saul of Tarsus. The personal interference of the Head in Glory in bringing this about without any direct instrumentality was an additional witness of the same determined love. When "Behold, he prayeth,"

was true of Saul, the prayer of Stephen had its answer. Both were now praying to the same Lord. Love had triumphed.

If anything further was needed for the confirmation of the same blessed truth, the whole life and labour of the great apostle of the Gentiles would abundantly supply it. What desperate hostility his devoted love encountered, yet what determined purpose to serve in responsive love to Christ, even to being poured out in death for the objects of his affection (Phil. II. 17).

Love is triumphant—*must* be triumphant. Hear the language of one who was filled with it: "*We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Rom. VIII.).

GEO. C.

The Truth Confessed.—When a poor sinner can say to God: "The Lord Jesus Christ loved Thee with perfect love, but I—I have had no love to Thee whatsoever; and Thou hast ever found Thy delight in Christ Jesus, and I have found delight in every one and in everything except in Him!" it is an awful reality to which he confesses. But let him not keep back the confession; it is *truth*, and truth in the inward parts God will not turn away from. 'Tis a confession, too, which supposes self to be in ruins; God to be God, and the Father of an only-begotten Son, Who is a Saviour of the lost, and a Giver of eternal life and of the Spirit to those that come to God through Him.

G. V. W.

UP THERE.

WHAT lies beyond that canopy of blue,
 Where hang those restless, ever-changing clouds?
 What wondrous visions there are hid from view,
 As when earth's scenes are veiled by misty shrouds?

Somewhere up there is my eternal home,
 Where joy and peace for evermore shall reign;
 And though awhile o'er earth's dark waste I roam,
 That mansion fair I yet shall surely gain.

Here sin and pain and sorrow compass me,
 And tend to cast me down in sad despair;
Up there no pain nor sorrow e'er shall be,
 Nor sin shall mar that glorious world so fair.

Up there are loved ones in eternal rest—
 Their earthly toil and suffering past for aye;
 They stand in Christ's own glorious beauty dressed,
 And praise the Lamb through everlasting day.

Somewhere up there is God's eternal throne,
 Where my Redeemer intercedes for me;
 Up there the merits of His blood are shown—
 That blood which from my sins has set me free.

Up there He tarries till He comes again
 To catch His watching saints from earth away,
 And bring His sleeping ones from death's dark reign
 To realms of bliss and everlasting day.

Up there we'll sing, with loud and glad accord,
 The praise of Him Who washed us in His blood;
 Up there we'll cry, "Thou, Thou art worthy, Lord,
 Who hast redeemed our souls from sin to God."

J. C. J.

**"For our conversation is in heaven;
 from whence also we look for the Saviour,
 the Lord Jesus Christ."**

PHIL. III. 20.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

ARRESTED ON THE ROAD.

WHETHER you believe it or not, you belong to God. First of all, by creation. He made you. Second, by providential care. He has kept you in life up to this moment. The very air you breathe is His. The sun that shines upon you, the food you eat, belongs to Him. In the third place, He has purchased you by the blood of His own. When Jesus died He paid the purchase-price of the world. He bought the field for the sake of the treasure that was in it. That blessed *One*, to Whom belong the glories of creation, the goodness of providence, and the matchless love expressed in the price He paid to purchase you, lingers over you in all the grace of redemption. He has bought you to set you free.

Let me tell you how He set a fellow-sinner free. He was a dirty, ragged being, with care written in deep furrows on his brow; the very image of misery. That very morning his employers had dismissed him for intemperance. He was on his way to a drunkard's home, to a pining wife and starving children. He passed a schoolboy beating a dog unmercifully. Another boy, seeing him, said, "Don't do it; it's God's creature!" These words fell upon the poor drunkard's ear. It was a new thought to him. Surely if a *dog* was God's creature *he* was. "What! I, a drunkard, a burden to my own family, despised by society, ashamed to look my own children in the face because of the way I have wronged them—I, God's creature! Ah! I remember the days of

VOL. XIX. No. 3.

innocence. I remember when I knelt at my mother's knee and breathed those hallowed words she taught me, 'Our Father.' Now desolate, weighed down, despaired of by friends. Little did I then contemplate what I now am. Alas! I yielded to temptation. By gradual steps I descended Satan's ladder, and what a spectacle I am now! 'God's creature!' I might have been His child. What am I now?"

He looked up. The public-house stood right before him. He must pass it on his way home. Often he had sought to drown his remorse and silence his conscience there, and then staggered home to inflict new miseries on wife and children.

He stopped. There was an inward struggle. The Spirit of God had fastened that child's word about being "*God's creature*" on his conscience. He hurried by the door, entered his own house a sober man, a convicted man, a deeply penitent man.

His wife had often prayed for him. They were broken-hearted cries. Now the answer had come.

Ruin stared them in the face, her husband had lost his employment, nothing but starvation or the workhouse was before them, but all this was nothing to her. She would have faced that, and far more, for the joy of that moment.

Those tears of her husband, as they coursed down his cheeks, filled her heart with a joy which only those know who have prayed, watched, waited for the salvation of those dear to them.

What a sight for Heaven's joy! A poor drunkard pleading for mercy; a guilty sinner turning to a Saviour-God; one of "God's creatures" committing his soul to a faithful Creator.

Not many hours rolled by before prayer gave place to praise, and husband and wife rejoiced together that their eyes had seen God's salvation. They now wept for very joy. "God's creature" was now a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things had passed away and all things become new. Their night of sorrow had been turned into the light and joy of morning.

He had yielded to God's claims. He could now look up into the face of his Saviour and say, "Thou hast not only created me, preserved me, purchased me, but Thou hast redeemed me to God by Thy blood."

I wonder if you can say that? The blood that *purchased* you is the blood that *redeemed* you. Perhaps you say, I do not understand the difference. If I bought a slave in a country where men are sold as slaves, that slave would be my absolute property. If he ran away and refused to serve me he would still be my property. He is mine by purchase. In that way you belong to God. The purchase-price is the blood of Christ. You may refuse to own Him as your Master, you may try to escape from Him, but you are still "God's creature," you belong to Him.

Now suppose the slave-owner issues notices and has them placed in every conspicuous place: "All of my slaves who have run away shall have a free pardon and a full redemption granted to them on condition that they come and claim the pardon; they need bring nothing with them; it is a full, free, unconditional pardon."

Imagine a runaway slave reading that. One of two things will happen. He will either say, "I am quite content where I am, and I don't

believe a word my master says"; or else he will go straight off and claim the offered pardon. Now which course are you taking? You might be the biggest blackguard, the worst drunkard, or the most immoral man, yet if you respond to God's gracious invitation you shall swell the ranks of the redeemed. If you doubt my word you just try it for yourself. I came when I felt I was just ready to sink into hell. He remitted all my sins. He will remit yours. It is yours to confess your guilt; it is His to forgive. With the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is *plenteous redemption* (Ps. cxxx. 7). The precious blood was the infinite cost at which you were purchased; that same precious blood enables God to act as a Redeemer. In breaking off your chains He does so in virtue of the price paid, on the ground of which He can proclaim complete emancipation.

Do you reply, "Your way of putting it makes things so easy to the believer that it will lead people to do what they like"? So it will, in one sense. You are quite right. Some visitors noticed a young girl watch every movement of her master, anticipate every command. She never seemed tired of serving him. They inquired the reason. "I was a slave; my master purchased me and then gave me my redemption. I was free to do what I liked. I am finding my joy in serving the one who has redeemed me." Such in substance, if not in words, was her reply.

Only yield yourself wholly to Christ, the constraint of His love will produce its own results; what you will "like" is to please the One of Whom you can joyfully say, "He loved me and gave Himself for me."

H. N

“THIS HILL IS DANGEROUS.”

37

“THIS HILL IS DANGEROUS.”

WERE our eyes really open, and our senses really alert, many and varied lessons might be learnt as we pass along the street, pursue our daily work, or walk for recreation in the country lanes or wooded glades; lessons, not in natural history, geology, or botany, but lessons from God to the soul; voices that comfort the saint, help the disconsolate, or warn the godless.

In a recent cycle ride in the North of England, I was confronted by a long gradual rise of perhaps two miles in length, tiring from its length rather than from its steepness. The lovely country around, the tree-clad hill-slopes, the glittering streams, broken here and there into tiny waterfalls, intersecting the broad stretches of heath and bracken, amply rewarded the toil of mounting.

On arriving at the summit, the whole stretch of the down gradient was clearly seen—a long sinuous track, clear of obstacles, with a delightfully alluring landscape in front such as a cyclist delights to see, as it arouses the hope of an easy, rapid, and exhilarating run down for perhaps two or three miles, which is rightly regarded as one of the joys of this pastime.

But how quickly were all these alluring prospects doomed; for in clear, large red letters on a white ground stood forth a warning, “This hill is dangerous to cyclists.” What could a prudent man do after such a notice but dismount and proceed on foot? It might be very disheartening after a toilsome climb, and after the prospects of a glorious run down, to have to do so, but what else could be done? Nothing!

Still there are some who in such a case do

actually disregard the notice, trust to their skill to render them immune from accident, and proceed downhill.

In view of such persons defying the danger-board at the top, the authorities have placed a *second notice* lower down the hill to the same effect, viz. that it is dangerous to continue the down grade, even if the first notice had been passed unheeded.

Lower still on the same road a THIRD NOTICE has been placed, *commanding* cyclists (if there be any so foolhardy as to continue to ride) to dismount, as the danger is still greater. This is the last notice. And yet, after such repeated signals placed by those who know full well the terrible character of the road, some have been known to still go on—on *to death*.

Reader, you may not be a cyclist, but if not treading the upward way to glory, to that place where Christ is, if you are not bound for the realms of the blest, you are surely on a path that leads downward—to that place where the worm dieth not, nor the fire ever quenched. All may be lovely around. The atmosphere may be bracing, and filled with song. The prospect may, and no doubt is, fair and engaging.

Your business may be flourishing, and the hope of realizing a good fortune may be clear—but *it is a downward path!* Very early in your course upon it, attention was called to the unsuspected difficulties. Your Sunday-school teacher, your friends, some earnest preacher, or your parents have called your attention to the peril of this enticing down-grade. So easy, so smooth, so alluring, but highly "DANGEROUS." You have, however, gone on. No calamity has befallen you.

“THIS HILL IS DANGEROUS.”

39

You smiled at the board so often shown to you, and disregarded it. With the assurance that *you* will run no risks, on you go.

But, lo! *a second sort of notice* comes before you in the shape of an illness, an accident to your companion, or to yourself. Verily a voice from God! Will this stop your progress to the awful end? Alas! the pain of your body or weariness of your mind somewhat diverts your attention from eternal things. Your suffering is too acute. Still, you recover; the tension has gone, the relief is great, and with a glad rebound, feeling that all is right again, on, on, on you go down the same old road! Enjoyment of regained health holds the mind, and still the prospect pleases!

But now God speaks *the third time*. Stop! Dismount! Death has come into your family circle—your brother, or wife, or your father has been taken. Deep sorrow, lasting sorrow, sorrow that cannot be got rid of, takes possession of your soul and mind. This is a loud and imperative command to consider your latter end. IT IS THE LAST WARNING. Thrice has the danger-board been plainly put before you; and is the *last* one to be again thrust aside? Had it been *you*, and not your friend, what would have been your endless lot?

Who would exonerate the cyclist from blame if found at the foot of the hill with a broken neck after such repeated warnings? And what can you say, my dear reader, for not heeding the warnings that have been put up *by One Who knows the danger?*

The blessed God says: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”; and again,

“Turn ye, turn ye. Why will ye die?”; and again, “What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?”

Is it not high time to pay attention to these notices? Be as wise in eternal matters as you are in temporal ones!

“Stop, poor sinner! stop and think,
Before you further go.”

Listen to the voice of the Lord Jesus. Listen to the words of warning of the preacher. Listen to the many, many occurrences in daily life that tell you of the shortness and uncertainty of life, the nearness and seriousness of eternity.

S. S.

WHEN GOD HAS ACTED “BUT” HAS
NO PLACE.

TOWARD the close of a dry, cold day—the first day of this year 1907—I was returning tired to my house in K——, when I saw that I was gradually overtaking a little, burdened old woman, whose footsteps were still slower and more wearied than my own.

She might have been seventy, or even more, and was carrying a large, heavy basket on one arm, and this weight was apparently bending her to the earth, her face not being more than two or three feet from the ground.

When I came up to her I said, as distinctly as I could—

“Bowed together for eighteen years and could in no wise lift up herself.”

Without pausing she said quickly, “Poor soul! Was her though?”

WHEN GOD HAS ACTED "BUT" HAS NO PLACE. 41

Then she stood perfectly upright, stopped, and looking me for the first time full in the face, she said—

"If I had nothing to carry I could stand straight as you, and could look up!"

"It was the opportunity I wanted, and, *God-given*, could I not use it?"

My reply was—

"Surely *He* hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, Who bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

But no brightness illumined the old time-wrinkled face as she replied—

"Ah! I do know what ye mean, but—*but*—**BUT**——" and she stopped.

I waited. No further answer came; the poor old *body* slowly resumed its wonted position, the heavy *weight* was hugged still more tightly to it, and there was no *looking up*.

"**HE HAS DONE IT**; do you **KNOW** this?" I said. Still no reply; the *old* journey was still wearily, still slowly continued, and she left me.

Reader! three words to you and to me lie herein.

Nothing to carry—made straight—and looking up.

It may be that they were *meant* for us! God only knows, and whether they were of any use to her "the *day* will declare it."

To me they say—**LIVE** upon them yourself; **ACT** upon them yourself; and, thirdly, **GO YOURSELF AND TELL OTHERS CONTINUALLY ABOUT THEM**. For when God has acted "*but*" has no place.

H. C. A.

A GLORIOUS EARTHQUAKE.

MATT. XXVIII. 2.

A GREAT many people are thinking and speaking just now about the terrible earthquakes that have taken place within the last few months in various places, and Christians are wondering if they are those which the Lord Jesus foretold in Matthew xxiv. 7 and two other gospels; and if they are a presage of His near coming again and "the beginning of sorrows" spoken of in verse 8 of the same chapter. And though the truest and highest incentive for the believer who is expecting his absent Lord should be, and will be, affection for Him, there can be no doubt that God in His government is speaking loudly, and in a very unmistakable way, in these things, which may be the shadow of His coming "judgments in the earth," of which Isaiah writes (chap. xxvi. 9), when the sinner who has despised grace will have to learn "righteousness."

And it will indeed be an awful time for this world, and for the vast multitude *professing* Christ without life in Christ, when that *moment* comes of which Paul writes in 1 Corinthians xv., "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." That "moment" which will bring eternal joys with Christ to those who are "ready," and eternal misery to those who are not. Have you ever seriously thought of it, dear reader? How gracious of the blessed God to give you this solemn warning: not only "in a moment," but, lest you should feel led to think "I shall have one moment to repent," He adds "in the twinkling of an eye"—words which leave no thought of

A GLORIOUS EARTHQUAKE.

43

time at all. In "the twinkling of an eye" the door will be shut, and on which side of it will my reader be?

But the earthquake I am writing about took place some 2000 years ago, and told of *life* and not of death, of a risen Saviour and a life on the other side of death, because He had broken its power for ever in His glorious victory over it. There had been darkness over the whole earth for three hours; even the sun was darkened, and well might it be, for the Son of God was dying, and dying for sinners. But He could not be holden of death. He held in His own hands the power of life and death. He had said, "I lay down My life that I might take it again" (John x. 17). And when He had accomplished everything that had been written of Him, even to the drinking of the vinegar (John xix. 30), His words came true, as they must, and He bowed His head and yielded up His spirit to God, having uttered loudly those blessed words "It is finished"—words which tell not only of the sins of every believer put away for ever, but of the accomplishment of every purpose of God, even to the bringing in of "a new heaven and a new earth," where neither sin nor death will find a place, for God will *dwell* there.

And that great and glorious earthquake had already told that His grave was empty, and that the Son of God had come out of it in the power of an endless life, for death was for ever conquered. It was not for Him that the sepulchre was opened. The great stone that closed it had been rolled away by the angel that others might see that Jesus was not there; the answer to the question the angels asked of those who had

GOD'S VISIT TO HIS OWN WORLD.

“And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a Great Prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited His people.”—LUKE VII. 16.

IF God's visit to this world in the Person of His Son had not yet become an accomplished fact; if the Incarnation were still only a matter of promise; what endless speculations might arise as to how His actual presence would affect men. Would He be austere and repellent because of His righteous claim and mighty power to deal with sinful men according to divine justice? Would He fill men with fear and alarm at His holy presence? Would He cause them to fly before His face in solemn dread of the consequence of being near Him?

When they had strained their imagination to the utmost, who could have believed but that, when He came into the midst of sinners, it would be the very opposite of that which is recorded in the seventh chapter of the Gospel of Luke?

Think of a stranger to-day stopping a funeral procession on its way to the burial ground; then raising the dead to life and drying the tears of the chief mourner by giving her back her only son! When inquiry is made as to who this wonder-working stranger can be, with no human pretension, no outward show, nothing to arrest public notice or attract the natural eye, the truth has to be told in the words of the text just quoted—“*God hath visited His people*”—God, veiled in the lowly guise of His creature man, has come near him, not to bring judgment on his guilty head, but to serve his necessities and win his stubborn heart! Yet so it was, Luke VII.

“His hand no thunder bore,
 No terrors clothed His brow :
 No bolts to drive our guilty souls
 To fiercer flames below.”

But how much more extraordinary it all appears when it is remembered how death came into the world at all; that death was the penalty of *sin*, and that that penalty was pronounced by God Himself!

Does not such an incident go to show that it was in His heart, and within His power, to set aside the domain of death for His own pleasure and for man's eternal deliverance “from him who had the power of death, that is, the devil”? Indeed, so it was, as we know. But this could only be accomplished by Himself entering the domain of death, and then breaking its power by rising above it, and passing for ever beyond it.

But if the reader will look at the end of our chapter he will find the same heavenly Visitor, only in another order of circumstances. If in the person of Jesus God was here, He was here to prove that, no matter what man's station in life or what his moral state, he would find this gracious Visitor unchangeably approachable, always accessible.

To the legal, religious mind, perhaps you could hardly get a greater contrast than that which is presented in “Simon the Pharisee” and this “woman of the city.” Did Simon feel free to invite the heavenly Stranger to a meal at his house?—not less free was a sinful woman to come to His feet on that very spot; and the grace in Jesus refuses neither. Blessed Friend of sinful men!

But let us keep the verse before us and remember that in this “Great Prophet” (though

GOD'S VISIT TO HIS OWN WORLD. 47

Simon hardly thought Him even that) it was *God* Who was thus visiting His people. Not only was He manifesting His power over that which sin had brought in, that is, death, but *claiming His sovereign right to forgive the very sin that deserved the penalty.*

If sin had entered into the world, and death by sin, it should now be brought to light that a Sin-bearer had entered, and that through Him there was forgiveness, and more than forgiveness, there was life beyond death, yea, "life abundantly," "life everlasting." Hence the Spirit's record, for our comfort and joy (Rom. vi. 23), "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What think you, my reader, of such a Visitor? Have *you* nothing at stake in that visit? Listen. "He came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). If you have had nothing to say to *sin* you might possibly afford to have nothing to say to the *Saviour*. But is it so?

To those who really need Him, He is as approachable now as ever. Yea, if His surroundings had anything to say to it we should boldly say, *more* so; that is, more approachable in the place His Father has given Him than on the seat chosen for Him by Simon. Where He now is are found innumerable adoring witnesses of His joy over repentant sinners; but how many disdainful Pharisees amongst them? Not one! *Personally*, however, He is just the same. No change in Him, or ever will be.

One thing more we would have you bear in mind. Since the day that He was pronouncing forgiveness to the sinful woman in Simon's house He has been to Calvary's Cross, so that, through

His precious blood-shedding and death, full forgiveness might be preached to all—to *you*, therefore, my reader. How can you refuse to bow to Him in repentance? How dare you refuse the forgiveness proclaimed in His name?

Will you not approach Him to-day? The woman of the city, even had she missed her opportunity in the Pharisee's house, might have found Him elsewhere. But if *you* miss coming to Him while He now sits waiting on the Father's throne, you will certainly *miss Him as your Saviour for ever*; and He Himself is our authority for saying so! Were you not aware of this before? Then read Luke XIII. 25, and note carefully three things:—

The Master's act.

He rises up and shuts the door.

The cry of the excluded.

“Lord, Lord, open unto us.”

The Master's answer.

“I know you not—depart from Me.”

Unsaved reader, fall on your knees and thank Him on the spot that *it is not yet too late!* “*Seek ye the Lord while He may be found: call ye upon Him while He is near.*” His next visit to this world will be for judgment. “*In the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them*” (Ex. xxxii. 34).

GEO. C.

The Furnace.—“Till tried, we know not how little faith we have. Are we ready to say, I could have borne anything but this? Then let us remember that the greatest compliment God can pay us, is to heat the furnace to the utmost.”

“Our wants are fathomless, but our help is infinite. None but God can tell the uttermost our God can do.”

P.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

“A LITTLE CHILD.”

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

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

She looked up with a bright smile, and answered, “Yes; at least I know that Jesus died for me.”—“It is very blessed to know that,” said I; “but how can you be so very sure that the Son of God came down into the world and died on the cross for a little child like you?”—“God says He died for sinners, and I am a great sinner,” she said very solemnly.—“Yes, dear child, it is written in His blessed Word, ‘God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us’; and, again, ‘It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.’ He has shown you what a sinner you are, and now you see that you must believe what God has said. So your sins are all forgiven.”

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

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

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

“To save me,” was her prompt reply.

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

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

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

“On Him.”

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

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

“Think of where He is now,” I said.

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

“*Where, then, are your sins?*”

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

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

"A LITTLE CHILD."

51

Him. "Yes," I replied, "as God says again, 'when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high'" (Heb. i. 3).

After a little further talk with her, she was called away. On reaching her home, she ran to her mother, a good Christian woman, then unable to leave the house, and threw her arms around her neck, saying, "I shall go to be with Jesus too, mamma." She was startled, and wanted to know what it all meant.

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

The mother and child, now more dear to her than ever, rejoiced and praised the Lord together. Years have passed since then, and the risen Christ, at the right hand of God, has been the ground of a peace for her that never could be disturbed. How many a dear, troubled, anxious soul wants what that little child learned so simply and blessedly—that the knowledge of forgiveness comes from the eye being turned to Christ, and not from the feelings in our poor hearts.

The moment the eye rests in simple faith on Him, all is settled as to sin before God by His work on the cross; and the proof is that He has raised Him to His own right hand. If God is satisfied, surely we may well be, for have not all our sins been against Him? Besides, just as surely as Jesus said, when He was here upon earth, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke vii. 48), so the Holy Ghost conveys the same blessed assurance to the faith that believes God now,

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

Reader, let me earnestly ask you, Are your sins forgiven?
J. A. T.

DO YOU FEEL BAD ENOUGH?

"I DON'T feel good enough," said a woman in reply to the question, addressed to her at the bedside of her dying father, as to whether she had a good title to the eternal future. How deeply rooted *self-righteousness* is! She listened attentively whilst her interrogator sought to show her that it is no question of *our* goodness, but of *God's* goodness to those who are bad. And we are, in His sight, all by nature bad, irremediably bad. No doubt, as in the ruin of a building, there are many traces left in man which show the beauty which once characterized the structure. But sin has marred all the goodness originally bestowed by Him Who alone is good—God Himself. His solemn and unimpeachable verdict now upon all is, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. III. 12). How utterly vain, then, in the face of such sure testimony, to think of our own goodness before Him in any way whatever!

Do *you* wish to go right? Do *you* wish to escape the judgment of God and to dwell in happiness and blessedness with Him when you leave this world? Very probably you will reply in heart, "Of course we all wish that." Well, there is only one possible way, and that is not by

feeling or trying to feel good enough, which is wholly and solely your own righteousness, which God absolutely refuses; but by ceasing from self and your goodness and righteousness, and *by submitting to His*. And God's righteousness is set forth in another Man altogether, even our Lord Jesus Christ in the glory of God.

Of course you do not feel good enough. How can a bad thing feel good, an unrighteous person feel righteous, or a sinner feel holy? Was there ever anything more incongruous? God says we are bad, irremediably bad; and so long as you look at yourself, badness and nothing but badness will you find. Bow then to God's verdict about yourself: set to your seal that God is true. Learn that you are every whit as bad as God says that *all* are, and give up now, once and for ever, all your vain efforts to make bad good, or evil righteousness, or sin holiness. The question for you is, not do you feel good enough, but do you feel bad enough? Man's thoughts travel express speed to vindicate themselves, but at the very slowest pace to the only point where God and sinners can meet. It is only when we arrive at the point of the discovery of our utter badness, and our lips own it and cry with Isaiah "Woe is me, for I am undone!" that the grace of God waits upon us.

What do people who think they are good, or feel or try to feel they are good, want of a Saviour? None such has yet felt the need of Him. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour Whom God has provided, is for *sinner*s—sinners of every class and kind—not for Satan-deceived, self-deceived good people. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*" (1 Tim. i. 15). The

Son of Man came to *seek* and to *save* that which was *lost* (Luke XIX. 10).

The fact of a person saying "I do not feel good enough" is clear evidence that the feeling of badness is there, with the sense that only goodness will do for God. Precisely. Nothing else will. But how is that goodness to be obtained? By the heartfelt confession of our badness and the hearty acceptance of *Christ*. In Him, and in Him only, can any fallen sinner of Adam's race find goodness. God found goodness, perfect goodness, in Him. He, the good One, died on Calvary for God's glory, and for all of us, *the bad*. He bore the judgment of sin, He finished the work of redemption, He gave up His life, His blood was shed, which cleanseth us from all sin; He was buried in the grave, He rose triumphant from the dead, He is seated at God's right hand, and He is made of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption *unto us—unto all that believe*. Having glorified God, He is before Him in all His goodness. God delights in that blessed One. He has found the goodness He requires in Christ, and hence He is not seeking it in you.

Then why, on the verge of eternity, waste your precious life in vainly and blindly hunting for goodness in your own deceitful heart? So long as you are seeking to feel good, you are only disqualifying yourself for coming to Jesus. It is those who feel bad enough to deserve the eternal judgment of God that really come to Him. Having lost hope through our own badness, a ray of hope springs up in the heart when we begin to discover that God has found all He requires in Another, and offers Him to us.

Now, then, dear friend, what say you? Will you let self go *for Christ*? Here is your opportunity. It may be your last. A Saviour you need, a Saviour you must have; and a present, perfect Saviour He is, for every one that believeth.

Man is already lost; and hence if you live without Christ you will die without Him, and if you die without Him you will be raised without Him, and if you are raised without Him you will be judged without Him, and if you are judged without Him you will assuredly be condemned. "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16).

Will you, then, take God at His word? Will you own in the light of His holy presence that goodness you have none, and as a good-for-nothing bad one believe on His Son? His precious blood will cleanse you whiter than snow; and in Him, risen from the dead, goodness and righteousness will be yours before God for ever. Then the wondrous grace of God that brings the believing soul into this blessing will teach us henceforth to walk in goodness according to God (Eph. v. 8, 9; Titus II. 12).

E. H. C.

Not I, but Christ.—"Christ has become my one study, but I am a dull scholar. What I have already learned makes me count all but dross for Him. My vileness is most felt in His clear light. The more precious He grows, the more humbling views I get of myself. As Christ rises, self falls."

W. R.

WHAT IS THE WORLD WORTH WHEN YOU COME TO DIE?

AN aged Christian was dying. By her bedside stood one very dear to her. She was deeply concerned about his precious soul. She knew the world was his snare, so she pleaded, "Give up the world! What is the world worth when you come to die?"

Whether he heeded the message or not, I do not know; but little more than a year rolled away ere he had to leave the world. No lingering illness, no death-bed. One moment sitting on his chair reading, almost the next in eternity. On his tombstone is written, "*Died suddenly.*" What was the world worth when death claimed him? What will the world be worth when death claims *you*? Nearly everybody has a little world of his own. I do not know in what particular circle your world is; but whatever it is *you must leave it.*

Let us visit four people who are leaving their little world. One of them lived only a few miles from the aged Christian of whom we have spoken.

The first one is a woman who had lived for the world—death had come to rob her of her all. A servant of Christ went to visit her. The first words which fell on his ears were, "Lost, lost!" In vain he poured into her ear the good news of Jesus, the Saviour of the lost.

With a wild piercing cry, wrung from her terrified breast and alarmed conscience, she passed into eternity. Her last words were, "*Tell me, oh tell me! am I lost? Am I lost?*" What was the world worth when she came to die?

Another woman is dying. Listen to what she is saying, "The world is nothing, nothing," and she waved her hand as though to put every thought of it away from her. The advent of the King of Terrors had stripped it of all its false glare and glitter, she saw it in its true character, estimated it at its right worth—"Nothing, NOTHING."

Have you?

In the light of an endless eternity, and in the certainty that you are in a world you *must* leave, let me ask you to ponder my Lord's question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

We will now enter the sumptuous apartment of a man whose life has been spent in amassing wealth.

"Doctor," said he, "I will give you half of my hardly earned fortune if you can prolong my life!"

"Impossible. I could not do so if you gave me the whole."

The rich man died and was buried, and men applauded the skill and perseverance with which he had risen from poverty to affluence, forgetting that "when the tablet of human fame comes to be reviewed for God's approbation what a revolution there will be," for "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." But tell me what was his golden world worth when he came to die. He brought nothing into the world. He took nothing out. He went into the next world as poor as the poorest beggar.

Come with me to another death-bed. It is that of a man who estimated the world at its

right worth *before* he came to die. He had turned to the Saviour as a poor lost sinner, and had found in Christ enough for time and eternity. What is his dying testimony? "*One grain of faith in Christ is worth a mountain of gold.*"

We plead with you to follow his example. Faith in Christ will bring you pardon, peace, life everlasting and mansions in glory. It will give you what the world can never deprive you of. Even death itself will be but a door out of this world into a better. As you leave this world behind, a new and eternal world will burst on your enraptured vision. Joys unfading, pleasures unending, praises unceasing, wealth beyond tongue or pen to picture will be yours, for, joint-heir with Christ, you shall share all that scene of displayed glory on earth, and the wealth of affection in His Father's house on high.

Again we urge, "Give up the world," lest death finds you with the world's tendrils so closely entwined in your very being that you cannot give it up if you would. What solace will the gaming table, the dancing saloon, the theatre, or the house of the strange woman afford you as the beatings of your pulse get weaker, and the cold death sweat, with its clammy dampness, bedews your brow, and the doctor says, "I can do no more, he cannot live through the night"?

What an awful awakening it was to the rich man in Luke XVI.! One moment in hell sufficed to open his eyes to the worthlessness of the world he had left, and the horrors of the place he had reached. He no longer doubted an eternity of torment, or rested in the vain imaginings of a larger hope. Listen to Heaven's declaration. "Between us and you there is a

A LETTER TO A SEEKER FOR JOY. 59

great gulf fixed; so that they which *would* pass from hence to you *cannot*; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

What a pathetic message he sent to his five brothers! It may be briefly summed up in four words: *Do not come here*. The only message sent from hell is, *Warn my relatives not to come here*.

Be warned. Your little world will soon be gone. An eternal world begun. Your doom everlastingly fixed.

"There are no pardons in the tomb."

What is the world worth when you come to die?
H. N.

A LETTER TO A SEEKER FOR JOY.

DEAR FRIEND,—I feel so distinctly that the Spirit of God is especially appealing to you at this time, that matters of eternal importance are pressing themselves upon you, and that the Lord is seeking to draw you to Himself, that I cannot help being deeply concerned as to your welfare.

I have no doubt that you are familiar with the Scriptures, accepting them as God's Word, and that God's glorious plan of salvation on the ground of the finished work of Christ—and that alone—is not unknown to you.

At the same time, I fear that the great enemy of souls is doing his utmost to offer a strong counter-attraction, and if successful, he will deprive you of all true happiness for this life and of the eternal blessing of your soul.

Now I do not attempt to deny the tremendous attraction this world has, nor would I seek to condemn everything that you might mention as

naturally pleasant. On the contrary, I would remind you that it has ever been God's desire that His creature, man, should be happy; and I take it that happiness is exactly what you are seeking. I feel sure you have no intention of going in for what is wrong or positively sinful, but you are anxious to spend a happy life, and you are loath to give up what has already begun to afford you a kind of pleasure, although your conscience is not quite at rest as to it.

You will admit that two things are necessary in order for any one to be happy: (1) the cause of dissatisfaction, unrest, and dread of God must be removed; and (2) a spring of joy must be found which can fill the heart.

Now the death of Christ is that alone by which the first difficulty can be solved. Every believer in Him is entitled to know that God has been fully satisfied with the work of Christ when He "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." The simplest believer in Jesus is "justified from all things," and hence fear is removed.

The second necessity is met by the ONE Who has done the work becoming known, loved, and adored by those who have trusted Him, and thus He becomes the Spring of Eternal Happiness, incomparable and supreme.

Will you let me contrast for you the two great circles of interest which are within your reach?

The first is called "this present evil world," and is composed of people who, under the influence of Satan, are trying to be happy *without God*. Of them the Word of God says, "The god of this world is blinding the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the

A LETTER TO A SEEKER FOR JOY. 61

glory of Christ, Who is the Image of God, should shine in upon them." One of his many methods is to make the world as attractive as possible by a ceaseless whirl of ever-varying pleasures (!), and so keep people occupied, and to a certain extent pleased, away from God. It matters not whether there is any "harm" in the pleasure or not, if it is part of the devil's plan to keep souls away from Christ. The effect is fatal, and it may well be shunned.

There is a very simple test by which "the world" can be detected. Let any one *mention the name of Christ in sincerity* in any of the various circles of pleasure. The effect will betray the true character of the gathering. Invariably the speaker would quickly be told: "It is no place for that kind of thing here!" while the sneers and the cold shoulder confirm the truth: "Christ is not wanted; He has no place here!"

If Christ has no place, then "it is not of the Father, but is of the world," for Christ is the Son of the Father—His well-beloved; and the decree of God is, that "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

There is a further weighty consideration as to this world. It is a passing, changing scene, full of death. The best it can afford is only for this life, uncertain and brief as it is, and then for the worldling nothing but a lost eternity. "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" To spend an eternity of remorse at having been duped by Satan with a few paltry passing trifles, which even at the time do not afford real, true and pure joy.

But there is another side. There is a circle of pleasure which has the Lord Jesus Christ as its

centre; and its circumference encloses millions of people on the earth at the present moment who gladly testify that they had never known joy until they knew *Him*. He is their Saviour, their Friend, their Lord, their Hope, their Joy. He is the Son of God, God's Eternal Son, Who fills God's heart with delight, Who is presently going to fill the universe with joy, and Who to-day would fill your heart with overflowing happiness if you would bow to Him.

Dare you suggest that there is less joy, less true pleasure, less satisfaction found in the circle which has the Son of God controlling it than there is in a world which is under the control of Satan? God forbid the thought!

Will you not surrender unconditionally to Him? As a lost sinner, dissatisfied and without hope, fall at His feet, and He will so gladly receive you, welcome, bless you, and make you supremely happy in the knowledge of Himself. Then will you find yourself in that circle of pleasure where there is not only present enjoyment, but joy which all eternity will not exhaust.

Believe me to be,
Yours to serve for Christ's sake,

* * *

DOES GOD GIVE ME LIBERTY TO CHOOSE MY OWN WAY OF MEETING?

ONE of the first things which the renewed heart craves for is fellowship with God's people. He finds himself no longer at home in the world, and naturally seeks "his own company." But amidst all the names and divisions of disordered Christendom, a new-born soul may

well inquire, "Where shall I turn to be right?" My answer is, "To God, and to the word of His grace" (Acts xx. 32). Whoever is wrong, *God and His Word are right*. Get that well grounded in your soul, and cease from man, "whose breath is in his nostrils."

A few years ago two Christians, hitherto strangers to each other, were travelling together in a railway carriage, when, after some conversation about the Lord and His interests, one of them leaned forward and said, "*May I ask what denomination you belong to?*" "Well, that is a common enough question," replied the other, "but will you first say what you think is to guide me in my path as a Christian?"

He agreed at once that it was the Word of God alone that could with certainty direct him. "Then, if you will allow me," said his fellow-traveller, "I will answer *your* question by proposing another, viz., WHAT DENOMINATION DOES THE WORD OF GOD PUT ME INTO?" After some silent deliberation he said, "Why, none at all." "Then I can't belong to one at all," replied the other; "for if I did (upon your own showing), I should clearly be *in a position where the Word of God had not placed me.*"

"But," replied the first speaker, "does not the Word of God exhort us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, 'and so much the more' as we see the day approaching?" (Heb. x. 25).

"Yes, it does. But a Christian need not belong to a denomination to obey *that* word; for the Lord Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered together in *My name*, there am I in the midst of them'" (Matt. xviii. 20).

Now, dear reader, if you look at 2 John 6, you will find that he exhorts the elect lady, and those with her, thus: "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, *That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*"

Now John had seen the Lord in His wondrous life; had seen Him die upon the cross; was a witness of His resurrection; beheld Him taken up into heaven; and was present when, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost came down from an ascended Christ to baptize believers into one body, and thus form the Church. He had lived long enough to see evil come into the circle of the professing Church; but what is the remedy? Is it, "Begin afresh with a new and purer sect of a more improved constitution"? Listen to his reply by the Holy Ghost: "*This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*"

So that the Spirit of God makes it plain that He suffers no innovation of man to trespass upon the sacred principles of God's Word for the guidance of His people, whatever their exercises may be, or whatever the date of their history.

Now apply this principle to-day, and you must find yourself in one of two positions—either on God's ground of gathering the disciples *at the beginning*, or on some ground that man, in his fancied wisdom or mistaken zeal, has set up *since the beginning*. The all-embracing question which Jesus asked concerning the ministry and service of His Forerunner is a deeply important one; and its honest application will help us in rightly deciding every religious question to-day. "*Is it from heaven or of men?*"

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

HOW THE LIGHT AFFECTED ONE OF HIGH BIRTH.

WHEN the celebrated Scotch gentleman Mr. Brownlow North began to preach, he used to say to his audience, "I am not an authorized preacher, BUT A MAN WHO HAS BEEN TO THE EDGE OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT, AND I WANT TO WIN YOU BACK."

He moved in the highest circles of society. His life had been very fast and reckless, and until he was suddenly seized with the fear of death he appeared neither to fear God nor regard man.

Coming home one night from the card-table he was taken very unwell, and could not go to sleep. He thought his end had come. Death he dreaded. Judgment he was rightly in terror of. But

MEET GOD HE MUST.

Yet meet Him in his sins he dare not. Eternity, with all its solemn possibilities for weal or woe, stared him straight in the face. What a serious position to be in!

His past life had not been good. Sinner he was, and sinner he now felt himself to be. His sins came up before him, and in the man who, above many, seemed so utterly conscienceless, conscience now began to work with all its terrible force.

His sins rose up like a mountain before his eyes, and seemed like a terrible avalanche about

VOL. XIX. No. 5.

to fall in judgment upon him. He became most miserable. Remorse burned in his bosom—the very foretaste of hell itself. When conscience begins to work in earnest, how unsparing it is to its victim!

The Bible that he neglected and perhaps even hated, because it condemned his sinful life, was the only Book he thought of turning to. Novels he had read in abundance, but these all failed him in the hour of his deep distress and need.

As for prayer: Did he ever pray except at his mother's knee? Anyhow, never in real earnest until now. God's mercy he had hitherto spurned, but now he pleaded for mercy. Good works he had none to show—his only plaint, his only cry—

GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNÉR!

And was the cry of need refused? It might have been. He had no claim on God. All his life he had ignored God's just and reasonable claims on him. But how different God is from man! He is so merciful that He receives the most hopeless and abandoned of sinners, yet so just that He gave His own Son upon the cross that He might righteously do so. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25).

Out of the depths of misery and well-nigh of despair, Mr. North was heard. The mighty change in his after life proved what a miracle of mercy he was. His conversion to God and all such conversions are a standing proof of the existence of God. *Nothing but a power above nature could have changed such a man or altered such a course as his was.*

HOW THE LIGHT AFFECTED ONE OF HIGH BIRTH. 67

"GOD IS" was the burden of his preaching. He could speak from experience, and an ounce of experience is worth a ton of theory. It was no hypothesis, but a fact proven in his conscience and heart.

GOD IS. Solemn message! The existence and presence of God is a fact verified in the moral experience of tens of thousands. The knowledge of it strikes terror into most men if unrepentant when death comes to them.

It might be said of Mr. North as was said of Bunyan, the converted tinker and immortal dreamer, "He carried the same fire on his own conscience that he persuaded others to beware of."

An infidel had put upon the wall of his own house the words "God is nowhere." He asked his little daughter one day to read the words, if thereby he might instil the poison of infidelity into the child's mind. To his great surprise she read, unwittingly dividing the last word,

GOD IS NOW HERE.

Like a barbed arrow it fastened itself on his conscience and went down to his very soul. For days together, everywhere he went, he carried the sense of the awfulness of God's presence with him. No peace could be found until he turned to the God he had so wantonly belied and blasphemed and found pardon for all his sins. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: *though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*" Gilfillan said these were the greatest words ever written. Well might he sing—

"Who is a pardoning God like Thee,
Or who has grace so rich, so free?"

He found out what every one will find some day, that with God we all must have to do, either in grace or judgment. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" To hide is IMPOSSIBLE!

GOD IS EVERYWHERE.

His presence is like the sun, "nothing can be hidden from the heat thereof."

Mr. North was most unsparing in his denunciation of sin, and ever sought to warn his hearers, whether high or low, of the effects that follow its awful course! "Be sure your sin will find you out" was a statement he had strongly verified in his experience.

Though multitudes thronged to hear him and listened with entranced minds to the burning eloquence that came from his lips, yet he solemnly warned them of their danger if they neglected God's great salvation in Christ.

It is a great mistake to think that because Scripture speaks of judgment, and preachers urge their hearers with all earnestness to escape it, it is not love that prompts to this.

If a mother saw her child exposed to some danger unknown to the child, would not her love be shown in exposing the danger and warning her child to beware of it? If with entreaties and tears she sought to save her child, who would ever dream of blaming her?

GOD DELIGHTS IN MERCY.

His nature is love. As a consequence He must delight in mercy. Judgment is His strange work. But if men refuse mercy, judgment must be their everlasting portion.

HOW THE ANSWER CAME AT LAST. 69

In one sense *conscience* is a sort of *tribunal*. When it is active it ever calls men to account. It never cloaks sin unless it is hardened through its deceitfulness. It is a great mercy to fallen men to have such a faithful monitor. It is a keen detective when awakened.

Conscience has hindered many a man from going further into sin than his evil nature would have plunged him. We repeat, what a mercy to have a conscience, especially a sensitive, awakened one.

Next to saving a man's soul, the greatest favour God can show him is to awaken conscience. When conscience is convicted and the soul plunged into sorrow for the past, repentance toward God is the sure result.

Repentance toward God and forgiveness of sins go together. "And that repentance and forgiveness of sins be preached in His name" among all nations, said the risen Saviour in His last commission to those who were to go out to all men and make it known. P. W.

 HOW THE ANSWER CAME AT LAST.

PRAYER has to do with God, and with God directly. In a day, therefore, when God is being increasingly ignored, we may be sure that prayer is correspondingly ignored also.

On the other hand, we may be equally sure that in the very midst of this state of things the one who believes "*that God is,*" and who diligently seeks His face in prayer, will find Him the *Rewarder* of all such, even unto the darkest hour of that general apostasy which has been so

plainly predicted in Scripture. "*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, strongly to hold with them whose heart is perfect towards Him*" (2 Chron. xvi. 9, margin). "*They sought Him with their whole desire; and He was found of them*" (2 Chron. xv. 15).

We place the following short authentic story on record as an encouragement for all who seek His face thus, or desire to do so.

Three things we would place before the reader:—

1. *The person prayed for.* A hardened sinner, between thirty and forty, working in one of the South Wales coalpits. Until last New Year's Day he was a slave to strong drink, and terribly violent and quarrelsome when under its influence. Hence he was constantly in the hands of the police; and once arrested and tried for manslaughter.

2. *The person praying.* The one who constantly bore him on her heart in prayer was his aged Christian mother. Vile though his character, and desperate his behaviour, *she* loved him. More than once she devoted large sums—large for one in her circumstances—to the payment of legal defence for him in courts of justice.

To use her own words to the writer: "*Hundreds of times have I pleaded—'O God, stand right in front of James and stop him!'*" Let us now see

3. *How the prayer was answered.*

The wife of another collier, with a very large family of her own, was devoting the last hour of the year 1906 to special prayer for the blessing of those who are still strangers to any experimental knowledge of the love of Christ. Yet it was not so much *their* side that pressed upon her

HOW THE ANSWER CAME AT LAST. 71

spirit as *His*. Not so much what was needed by them, as what was due to Him. As the Spirit of God brought before her heart the sufferings and death of Jesus, and His desired end in it all, she felt more and more ashamed that *her* life and words had not spoken more powerfully for Him. This continued until she felt she could not get low enough in the dust before Him. But in that place of self-abasement she could and did express to Him her longings for His gracious help to make Him better known during the coming year.

It was, you will see, love for Christ and an ardent longing for the due appreciation of His suffering and death in the hearts of men that was moving her, rather than her love for souls and the meeting of *their* need. These cannot really be separated; but there must ever be a serious defect in the latter when it is not directly the result of the former.

But to proceed. While her longing soul was thus engaged a very peculiar thing transpired. A sort of picture of the Welsh Wesleyan Chapel came vividly before her closed eyes. She had not been thinking of it, and was not herself accustomed to attend there.

Next day a neighbour came in that did go there, and she named the circumstance to her. "Oh, then, you'll be coming to us, perhaps?" "I cannot say," she replied, "for I cannot yet see what purpose the *Lord* has in it!"

But that evening on her way to the prayer meeting held at her own chapel, she felt pressed to go to the Welsh Wesleyan Chapel. But it was rather extraordinary that when she had reached the little porch she could not possibly bring her mind to the thought of entering, and stood there

with her face toward the glass door for about ten minutes. Then heavy footsteps approached. A man entered the porch and passed her. He pushed open the door to enter, but almost immediately turned back again. As he did so, their eyes met. He recognized her, and addressed her by her maiden name. She recognized in him the man already referred to, and saw that he was the worse for drink. At once she pleaded with him for Christ's sake—His love, His suffering, His death, His present longings, and yet that the only response he had rendered for such kindness was the giving up of his whole life to the service of His great enemy. Then he told her how it was that he had come there just then. He was drinking with his comrades in a certain public-house when the thought of this same little chapel came suddenly into his mind. His mother had taken him there when a boy. He had just then ordered another pint, but he felt on having it brought to him that he dare not drink it, that he must go at once to this chapel.

This was, then, how they were brought together. She could not *go* in: he could not stay in! The happy result was the poor man's conversion and a consequent gracious revolution in his whole life.

Think, my reader, how remarkably God had answered that aged mother's oft-repeated cry, "*O God, stand right in front of James and stop him!*" Had He not in that public-house, and without any direct instrumentality, *stopped* him? Yes, and done it nearly as suddenly as He stopped Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus.

And further, had He not sent one of His willing messengers to stand face to face with her son

HOW THE ANSWER CAME AT LAST. 73

and speak of Jesus to him; and this as really as He took Philip into the desert to speak of Jesus to the Eunuch?

Blessed be His Name, spite of all that man is doing and saying to-day in daring disregard of the truth of God and the Spirit of Grace, the gracious work of God continues, and will continue till the house be filled. Men may spend their time in studying and discussing theological points. God goes on in soul-subduing power. Happy for all who in faith go on with Him! But *He* will go on, and He is the God of all encouragement.

“As a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, *that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men*” (Micah v. 7). GEO. C.

Where is Perfect Freedom found?—“A fallen creature—where shall he find liberty? Where shall he find a land, a life of perfect freedom? Is this earth a land of perfect freedom to the sinner? this earth with all the tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain which are its very atmosphere? The very thought is folly—the teaching it is deception. To such a one is the life of self-will and the pleasures of sin (which are but for a moment) a life of perfect freedom, leading as it does to death, and after that the judgment? They are better than hell-fire—better than that life which shall have its worm that dieth not, and its fire is not quenched; better, alas! to an unrenewed heart, than would be heaven (with no joys there but those of God and the Lamb) to it in its unrenewedness; but land of liberty, life of perfect freedom, must be looked for elsewhere, and where alone they can be found, stored up in rich provision for the very *chiefest of sinners.*”

G. V. W.

“WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT?”

“**M**INE was a remarkable conversion,” said an old Christian, ninety-one years of age, and all but blind, to one who was recently visiting him.

“How did it occur?”

“Well, I was working with others in Deptford Dockyard some sixty-two years ago, when one of my fellow-workmen, who was busy with some logs of wood, began to hum some lines of an old hymn. Seeing how happy he was, I told him how troubled I was in my soul. He sought to help me, saying, “The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, did He not?”

“Ah, yes, I know that,” I replied; “I’ve known it ever since I was a child, but I can’t get at it right.”

Finding he was really in earnest about his state, the other went off to one of his mates, who was also a Christian, and repeated to him what had occurred. Coming up to him, and seeing how troubled he was, the latter repeated the other’s words, that the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, to which he received a similar reply. But seeing his difficulty was not yet met, he added simply, “*What more do you want?*”

This was used of God to break the spell. In a moment the light flashed into P.’s soul. He saw that Christ had not only come to save sinners, but also that *he was one* whom He came to save; and *he knew that he was saved*. “Sixty-two years ago,” said the old man, and the poor, all but sightless face of ninety-one beamed with

“WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT?” 75

joy. “What more do you want?” What more, indeed?

What a reality *true* conversion is! There is much that is spurious around, but when God brings a soul out of darkness into light, it is a real and lasting work, an eternal one.

“What more do you want?” One would think that many want a great deal more, to judge by the way they go on. Human plans and devices to meet soul distress abound on all hands. The amount of religious machinery to put the fallen guilty sons of Adam right with God is extraordinary. God’s way is simple enough for a little child. His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, came into the world to save sinners. To this end He bore the judgment of sin on the cross, and died. God was glorified in Him, and raised Him from the dead. As a Saviour for all He is seated now in glory at His right hand. Can you, dear reader, say from the heart, like this poor old pilgrim of ninety-one: He came to save me, He is my Saviour? If not, “What more do you want?”

There are a thousand and one things to learn about the Saviour afterwards, for there is an inexhaustible store of spiritual treasure to be found in Him; but this one thing is all you need to escape all the consequences of the fall and of your guilt, and to be sure of heavenly glory with your Saviour when He returns.

Our old friend had not only believed on Him, but had followed Him. Joy filled his soul as he poured out thought after thought about the Lord, His love, His grace, His goodness. He was longing for the moment when he should see Him face to face, and rejoiced to speak of Him by the way. Reader, what do *you* want more?

E. H. C.

A WORD THAT SUITS THE VERY WORST.

A SHORT time since I was going by train to a gospel meeting.

I noticed in the same compartment a young gentleman looking very troubled. I spoke to him. After a little time, he said, "I am a sinner." I told him "God sent His Son to die for sinners." "But," said he, "I am a very great sinner." Said I, "*Whosoever* shall call upon the name of the Lord SHALL *be saved*." I could see he was in great agony of soul, so I said, repeated softly, those peace-giving words of Jesus, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Suddenly he exclaimed, "*He died for me!* HE DIED FOR ME!"

How many are like this young man. They think themselves too bad to come to Christ. It is one of Satan's delusions to keep souls from Christ. They forget God's "*Whosoever*"—and the Saviour's "*In no wise*."

Put not off the question of your soul's salvation any longer. "The Lord is coming," then all who are trusting Him will be caught up to be for ever with Him.

Will you be there?

"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Come to *Him*.

"If you linger till you're better
You will never come at all."

"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).
A. T.

GOD'S WILL OUR BLESSING.

A Letter to a sufferer, by the author of "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds."

I SEE the necessity of having, if possible, my principles at my fingers' ends, that I may apply them as occasions arise every hour. Certainly, if my ability was equal to my inclination, I would remove your tumour with a word or a touch; I would exempt you instantly and constantly from every inconvenience and pain; but you are in the hands of One Who could do all this and more, and Who loves you infinitely better than I can do, and yet He is pleased to permit you to suffer. What is the plain inference? Certainly, that at the present juncture, He to Whom all the combinations and consequences of events are present in one view, sees it better for you to have this tumour than to be without it; for I have no more idea of a tumour rising (or any other incidental trial befalling you) without a cause, without a need-be, without a designed advantage to result from it, than I have of a mountain or pyramid rising up of its own accord in the middle of Salisbury Plain. The promise is express, and literally true, that all things, universally and without exception, work together for good to them that love God.

I do not puzzle myself with second causes, while the first cause is at hand, which sufficiently accounts for every phenomenon in a believer's experience. Your constitution, your situation, your temper, your distemper, all that is either comfortable or painful in your lot, is of His appointment. The hairs of your head are all numbered: the same power which produced the

planet Jupiter is necessary to the production of a single hair, nor can one of them fall to the ground without His notice, any more than the stars can fall from their orbits. In providence, no less than in creation, He is *Maximus in minimis* (very great in trifling things). Therefore fear not; only believe. Our sea may sometimes be stormy, but we have an infallible Pilot, and shall infallibly gain our port

In particular cases, the Lord opens and shuts for them, breaks down walls of difficulty which obstruct their path, or hedges up their way with thorns, when they are in danger of going wrong, by the dispensations of His providence. They know that their concernments are in His hands; they are willing to follow whither and when He leads; but are afraid of going before Him. Therefore they are not impatient; because they believe, they will not make haste, but wait daily upon Him in prayer; especially when they find their hearts most engaged in any purpose or pursuit, they are most jealous of being deceived by appearances, and dare not move farther or faster than they can perceive His light shining upon their paths. I express at least their desire, if not their attainment. Thus they would be. And though there are seasons when faith languishes, and self too much prevails, this is their general disposition; and the Lord, Whom they serve, does not disappoint their expectations. He leads them by a right way, preserves them from a thousand snares, and satisfies them that He is and will be their guide even unto death.

If people are satisfied of a surgeon's skill and prudence, they will not only yield to be cut at his pleasure, without pretending to direct him

where, or how long he shall make the incision, but will thank and pay him for putting them to pain, because they believe it for their advantage. I wish I could be more like them in my concerns. My body, as I said, is, through mercy, free from considerable ailments, but I have a soul that requires surgeon's work continually; there is some tumour to be discussed or laid open, some dislocation to be reduced, some fracture to be healed, almost daily. It is my great mercy, that One Who is infallible in skill, Who exercises incessant care and boundless compassion towards all His patients, has undertaken my case: and, complicated as it is, I dare not doubt His making a perfect cure. Yet, alas! I too often discover such impatience, distrust, and complaining, when under His hand; am so apt to find fault with the instruments He is pleased to make use of, so ready to think the salutary wounds He makes unnecessary or too large; in a word, I show such a promptness to control, were I able, or to direct His operations, that, were not His patience beyond expression, He would before now have given me up. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. VIII. 29).

J. N.

LIGHT AND PEACE.

WHERE, in this world of pain,
 Sorrow and crying,
 Where shall the heart attain
 Rest from its sighing?
 Where shall the soul find joy,
 Sweet peace without alloy,
 Which nought can e'er destroy
 While years are flying?

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

O'er all the earth are found
 Hearts, sad and aching ;
 Sins, dark and great, abound,
 Wretchedness making ;
 Darkness and mist obscure
 Things that are good and pure ;
 Nought in the world seems sure
 E'en friends forsaking.

Come to lone Calvary,
 Where, all-forsaken,
 God's only Son we see
 With love unshaken
 Taking the sinner's place,
 Dying to meet our case ;
 He, in His wondrous grace,
 Our sin has taken.

Here, behold love divine,
 Deep and unbounded,
 Now, by an endless line
 Measured and sounded ;
 See here Sin's victim smart,
 Pierced by Wrath's awful dart ;
 See in Christ's open heart
 Love, love unbounded.

Here, precious blood was spilt
 From His side riven ;
 Here, may the sinner's guilt
 All be forgiven.
 Come, ye who long for rest,
 Come to His loving breast,
 Come, and be fully blest
 Here and in Heaven.

In Christ are rest and peace—
 All for the weary,
 Joys that will never cease—
 Joys for the dreary,
 Light for the darkened mind,
 Sight for the soul that's blind ;
 Blessings of every kind,
 Sunshine so cheery.

J C. J.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

CHRIST OR BARABBAS—WHICH?

IT was a solemn moment. The little hall was crowded with eager listeners, and the servant of God was conscious of the power of God enabling him to press upon his hearers the greatest of all questions, "Whom will ye . . . Barabbas, or Jesus Which is called Christ?" (Matt. xxvii. 17). The tremendous issues which were dependent upon the answer were pointed out, and then the speaker besought his hearers to answer that question in the fear of God there and then, while he paused for a few moments.

The meeting closed, and the hearers passed out. Among them was a woman about forty years of age, who had been under the sound of the Gospel probably for the first time. Her Christian relative, who had invited her to the preaching, realizing that she had been affected and doubtless convicted of sin that night, laid a kindly hand upon her and whispered in her ear, "Christ or Barabbas—which?" He felt the necessity of being urgent, for he knew that the dread disease consumption was doing its work, and that her time here was short.

There was a look of intense longing on her face as she replied sadly, "I do not know."

Perhaps you, dear reader, would have to reply in the same indefinite way if that burning question were put to you at this moment. You know perfectly well the only way of salvation is by

VOL. XIX. No. 6.

faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet you have never trusted your soul to Him.

You would refrain from joining in the cry, "Not this man, but Barabbas," yet you have never taken your stand on the side of the Son of God.

Let me beseech you to seriously consider your position, for you must inevitably be on His side or on the side of His foes. There was no indecision in Pilate's judgment-hall, for "then cried they *all* again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas." To-day many would remain in indecision, forgetting the words of the Lord Jesus, "He that is not with Me is against Me." How terribly sad to be one of those who are "against" Him!

If you have not been converted you are one with the world which chose Barabbas and refused Christ, God's Beloved Son.

But God was gracious to that poor soul, even as He is waiting to be gracious to you, dear undecided one; and the Spirit of God wrought with her until she was brought to that most wonderful event in the history of any soul—conversion. Complete surrender as a poor lost sinner in the sight of God, and simple childlike faith in the Saviour of sinners.

But as yet she had made no confession of her Saviour, and those around her wondered whether the decision had been made, for her end was fast approaching.

Then the moment of confession came. It was three o'clock on a bright May morning. The relative, who had pressed that question upon her after the Gospel preaching, had been hastily summoned to her bedside. As he entered she greeted him with the question that was still fresh

in the memory of both, "Christ or Barabbas—
which?" Then, as with God-given strength, she
sat up and sang, sweetly and clearly—

"My heart is fixed, eternal God,
Fixed on Thee,
And my immortal choice is made—
CHRIST FOR ME.
He is my Prophet, Priest, and King,
Who did for me salvation bring,
And while I live I mean to sing—
CHRIST FOR ME."

Three hours after that she passed happily into
the presence of her Lord, the One Who loved her
and gave Himself for her.

It would be a great matter for you, dear
undecided reader, if by the grace of God you were
brought to an immediate decision; for then not
only would your eternal future of blessing with
Christ be secured, but your present would be
secured for the glory of Christ and the testimony
of His worthy name.

Besides this, it is wise to take into considera-
tion that life, at its best, is a great uncertainty.
No one can count upon a deathbed on which
to settle the all-important matter of his soul's
salvation. To put it off is to trifle with God's
grace, and virtually amounts to the rejection of
His offer of mercy. Then, too, you may be called
into the presence of God without a moment's
warning. Well might the man of God pray, "So
teach us to number our days that we may apply
our hearts unto wisdom."

Moreover, it is the desire of the blessed God
that you should be brought to Himself NOW;

that every question between your soul and Himself may be for ever settled on the ground of the death of Christ, and that He may impute righteousness to you; for "it shall be imputed if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who 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 good news, the Gospel of the Grace of God has reached you, and the responsibility is yours. It is for you to answer to God the searching question, "Christ or Barabbas—which?" We would earnestly call upon you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the interest of your precious soul, to let your immediate response be—

"CHRIST FOR ME."

F. S. M.

AN AUCTIONEER'S EXPERIENCE.

AN auctioneer, commenting on the smallness of the bids he had been offered for some useful articles, made some piquant remarks. As far as our memory serves they were as follows:—

"I have often found, in my experience, greater difficulty in selling good articles at their right value than attractively got-up goods of inferior make. The genuine well-made article is almost given away, while the showy thing finds a ready buyer. I'll give you a case in point. At a recent sale I saw two pieces of furniture. One was made of solid mahogany, well finished, and would last for generations; but like most well-made goods it was plain in appearance. The

other was ornamented with fancy woodwork, turned out by machine, and unsubstantial. A judge of furniture would soon have decided on the merit of the mahogany one. Yet it only fetched three pounds, while the showy one realized twelve. "A good article," he summed up, "is generally plain but well made, well finished, and will last for years; while the inferior thing is showy, but soon wears out."

These words are worth considering, but in their application to a far more important matter than that of furniture, or any other thing of temporary value in this world. Many who attend auctions are not buyers, but mere curious, idle loiterers. But every inhabitant of this world is an actual buyer—all are making good bargains or bad in the light of eternity.

The welfare of our never-dying souls is staked on that which we believe, and this belief is likened in Scripture to buying. It includes possession of that which is believed. The wise man says, "Buy the *truth*, and sell it not" (Proverbs XXIII. 23). The truth comprehends God's testimony to man, both with regard to the declaration of Himself and man's condition (see 1 John I. 18, and Rom. III.).

The truth is plain, but it will abide for eternity. Truth is connected with Christ; He is the Truth in its full expression. He is its embodiment. None other than a Divine Person could adequately declare God, nor speak as God. God has plainly spoken in the Son (Heb. I.), and solved every question for faith. Only in Christ can a person learn the truth; only by subjection to Him can any one become possessed of salvation, peace, and eternal security. He is presented as the alone

Object for faith, and faith is the humblest principle on earth. Faith gives God His due place, and surrenders the heart and will to Him. In that sense, the soul by faith buys the truth. Faith cometh by hearing God's word (Rom. x. 17).

On the contrary, in the serpent's words to Eve there is the essence of all the varied theories contrary to truth, which the mind of man has foisted on the credulity of hearers of all ages.

Three statements he made:—

1. "Hath God said?" in effect, "God's word is *doubtful*."

2. "Ye shall not surely die"; in effect, "I boldly *deny* what God has said."

3. "For God doth know . . . your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil"; in effect, "I have knowledge superior to yours; I possess the knowledge which God has, and if you listen to me, you will have a clearer vision; you will rise higher in the scale of creation, and have knowledge which you do not now possess."

The offer was tempting; the fruit was pleasant to the eyes. Eve ventured on believing it; she "bought" the lie. What did she give for it? Her innocence, her life! (compare 2 Cor. v. 4). Life is only truly known in the enjoyed presence of God. The purchase involved disobedience; disregard of the claimed right of the beneficent Creator—His right to the subjection of His creature. The lie was dearly bought; soon that which ornamented it was found worse than tawdry; with the knowledge of its possession came the fact of its unsubstantiality. The word that God had said came to pass. Death passed

on them because they had sinned, and no knowledge could avert the sentence (see Rom. v.).

The knowledge of good was the good they had lost: the *knowledge* of the evil was accompanied by the *consequences* of the evil to which, without shelter, they nakedly stood exposed. What a sad bargain!

Man may be duped; God never. More than equal to the occasion, He spoke again in grace, in love. Yea, He has spoken in His Beloved Son, Whom it is of all importance to hear. Those who heed His word receive His gift, the gift of eternal life. "Come, buy wine and milk without money, without price," without merit of any kind. Happy they who hear His voice and become possessed of divine joys! The *lie* is received through hearing; the *truth* also is received through hearing.

Those who heed the lie give their soul for it, to their eternal loss. Those who hear the truth, and trust in Christ for salvation, receive all that is highest and best. *Higher* ideals, *larger* hopes, *broader* views are all inferior comparatives. EVERYTHING IN CHRIST IS SUPERLATIVE and ETERNAL. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

L. O. L.

Fragment.—"I am a bad accountant, but you are well acquainted with figures. Try what you can do in casting up this sum:

"What has God done for you?"

"When did His purpose of doing you good begin?"

"How many mercies have followed you all the days of your life?"

"And when will they stop?"

R.

A GRAVESIDE QUESTION.

WHAT inscription would you like putting on your tombstone? Perhaps you never thought of it. Then if unconverted let me advise you to do so now. It will not be wasted time; for how soon you may need one none can say.

You have seen many tombstone inscriptions, some true and some false, but the important question asked by King David at the grave of Saul's general might fittingly be asked at every graveside in the world, whether a marble monument is erected to the memory of the dead or no monument at all.

"*Died [Abner] as a fool dieth?*" Abner was tricked into destruction. David, the one against whom he had been fighting, was willing to honour and bless him. But Abner turned aside to listen to the words of Joab, who professed peaceable intentions, but plotted destruction. Thus lost Abner his life, and died the death of a fool.

Beware, my reader, of turning aside to listen to the voice of the enemy. He chants "Peace, peace," when there is no peace, and seeks to make you happy and contented, to go on without the peace that God gives to all that accept salvation through His Son.

Is this what the enemy has been doing? Then you are being drawn aside into the same snare as Abner of old, and sooner or later the sword of destruction will as certainly smite you as it pierced him. Then in eternity, if not in time, this inscription will be placed at the end of those dark and guilty pages of your life's history: "*Died as a fool dieth!*" What an end! Friend, this evil stands ahead of you, and if you would be

recognized in heaven as a "prudent man," open your eyes to see this evil and hide yourself, lest, like "the simple," you pass on and are punished (Prov. XXVII. 12).

Thank God, there is a hiding place where guilty sinners can repair, and find present salvation, solid peace, and eternal security. But this can be found alone in Christ the Lord. I read, "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest" (Isa. XXXII. 2). Thank God, then, for this, my reader, and flee for safety now to Jesus. Be assured His precious blood can cleanse. He will receive. God will pardon. He is satisfied with Jesus. In Him justification is proclaimed to all that believe (Acts XIII. 39). But beware of *dying as a fool dieth.*

J. T. M.

FRUITLESS SPECULATION: SOBER CONTEMPLATION.

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."—HEB. IX. 27.

THE world's forgetfulness of this text was strikingly illustrated by an incident that occurred at the annual Kansas State Fair of 1891.

At that time the C.R.I. and P. Railway Company had just completed a branch line running into the Indian Territory, and as an advertisement they had on exhibition at the fair, the upper portion of a human body, which had been found in a cave in the territory. The body was entire from the waist upward, and the skin and flesh had become hard and dry like a mummy.

Lying by the man's side was found a razor, with the date "1776" engraved on its rusted blade.

This strange exhibit attracted a large crowd, and many were the speculations as to who the unknown unfortunate was, and how he came by his death in the lonely cave.

Some thought he was a scout, who had been murdered by the Indians. Others, that he was an explorer, who had lost his way on the pathless plain, and had crept into the cave to die of starvation or disease.

While they were thus speculating and staring, a servant of Christ appeared on the scene, whose well-filled bag of tracts plainly indicated that he was there, not to see the sights, but on his Master's business. On noticing the crowd and the object which attracted them, he stepped quietly to the front, and in silent contemplation stood and surveyed the lump of lifeless clay. Then turning to the assemblage he remarked, loud enough to be heard by all, "Yes, here is what remains of his *body*, but his soul is either in heaven or in hell!" There was a moment's silence, and then a low sneer ran through the onlookers as most of them turned and walked away. Ah, how few of those careless worldlings thought, that day, of the soul of the unknown dead! They could stand and gaze and speculate, but not one thought as to his eternal destiny, or their own.

Reader, are *you* thoughtless as to these serious matters? Are you living in gay forgetfulness of eternity? Remember "*after* death the judgment," and that "judgment *eternal*" (Heb. VI.). Death is not the final END, nor the end of existence. It is the *beginning* of a new *state* of existence IN EARNEST. You have attended the funeral of some departed friend, and as you gazed for

SAVING FAITH, DON'T MISTAKE IT. 91

the last time upon the faded cheek and the folded arm the sobs would come and the tears well up. But stay! *This* is not the end. Death is not *all*, for it is written with the pen of eternal truth, "Once to die, *but after this* the judgment." Mark well that word "but."

Up! Rouse thyself, ere it be too late and thou awake in hell! Thy sins! See them, red like crimson, deep as the scarlet dye, innumerable as the sand upon the seashore! Canst thou meet God as thou art? Oh, look away, away to Jesus; He is the sinner's Friend, *thy* Friend. He is the sinner's Substitute, the sinner's Saviour. Wilt thou have Him? Wilt thou bow to Him *now*?

Take Him as thine own just now. "Look" *this moment*. Believe in Him and live for ever. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24, R.V.). C. K.

SAVING FAITH, DON'T MISTAKE IT.

REAL faith is a living, active principle in the soul of the Christian. It is the result of something real within—*very* real, and something equally real without. It is, we might say, the combined result of a sense of real danger, real need within, and the assurance of an unfailing resource without.

Everybody knows that to be in the midst of a city shaken by a mighty earthquake is a vastly different thing from hearing and believing even an accurate account of it five hundred miles away.

Such a thing has been known as persons sleeping all through a devastating shock, utterly insensible to any danger, though surrounded by hundreds injured or destroyed suddenly, and thousands more in dire alarm.

The genuine waking up of a soul to its true state and real peril is a different thing from hearing of and coldly discussing such things in others. We may be sure of this, that when once such an actual peril is truly realized the urgency of a way of escape has its own overpowering importance. It is all so livingly real to the one who by God's work in the soul experiences it, though only as a passing vapour to all who realize no personal need.

Take an illustration. A large hotel was on fire. It was a terrible conflagration, and the flames had made considerable headway before some of the inmates were aware of it. One of the survivors, driven back by the flames in the hall, rushed upstairs to his bedroom in an upper story, where an escape-rope for such an emergency was fixed. He seized it, and lowered himself through clouds of smoke down to the ground. He had, no doubt, often seen this rope before, but in that perilous moment he looked upon it in an entirely new light. "I am in terrible danger; I know it! This rope is my only way of escape, and it is there for the use of any one in like danger."

Talk about sudden conversion! Think of this man. The clutching of that rope and putting it to the test of his entire weight, as he swung out of the window trusting his life to it, was a picture to all beholders of saving faith, and the work of only a moment or two. There was no mere

SAVING FAITH, DON'T MISTAKE IT. 93

sentiment about it. It was all so awfully, so intensely real.

And when a conscience-smitten soul, feeling his sinful need, lets go every other reliance and lays hold of the God-provided, Love-given, sin-atonement Saviour, he is henceforward known in heaven as a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ; and all that in the mind of God belongs to every believer, belongs henceforth to him.

Have you, my reader, ever been seen by God in such a position? If not, in view of the swiftly-approaching end, we could not do less than warn you of your peril. God Himself awaken you! Perhaps you are already awakened, but not at rest. Then let me impress upon you that this short paper is not intended to occupy you with your faith, but with Him Who is the only resting place for the faith of a soul divinely awakened. God has only one answer to every cry of soul-distress. It is, LOOK TO JESUS. The man in the burning building had nothing but a swinging rope to hang his bodily safety upon; yet in his opinion it was good enough, and so he found it. The Spirit of God presents to you a Living Person, all-worthy of your confidence—

“’Tis Jesus, ’tis Jesus, the Saviour from above;
’Tis Jesus, ’tis Jesus, ’tis Jesus Whom we love.”

He is the sin-purging Provision of God, the Endurer of the judgment of God, the risen Son of God. He has been seated on the righteous throne of God, the Object of the delight of God; and in His very Name is found the Salvation of God. He is the subject of the testimony of God, and that testimony brought from heaven by the Holy Spirit of God. It is all of God in Christ.

If the man alluded to, when his peril was brought home to him, could trust his bodily safety on such a thing as a rope of hemp, every sinner whose true state is brought home to him by the Spirit of God will surely find himself able to trust his soul's safety upon such an unfailing Person as the One Whom God has exalted. He will rest on what *God* thinks of what Jesus is and what Jesus has done; done for what God knows the sinner is and what the sinner has done.

Could you, remembering what *you* are and what *God* is, go to Him and ask for more than His love has found for you in the Lord Jesus Christ? Impossible! GEO. C.

EARTH'S DELIVERER.

THE night of the world grew darker
 With ever-increasing gloom,
 And the nations rushed more madly
 To their awful, endless doom.

And ever throughout the ages
 Arose Earth's doleful cry,
 In an ever-increasing volume,
 To the throne of God Most High.

The cry of the fallen monarch,
 The shriek of the tortured slave
 Arose on the air together,
 To Him Who alone could save.

Yea, creation groaned and travailed
 Beneath man's weight of sin,
 And sighed for the Sabbath morning
 That should bring salvation in.

Yet, up in the courts of glory,
 Dwelt peace and love and light,
 Where angels of God thrice holy
 Paid homage day and night.

EARTH'S DELIVERER.

95

But, lo ! at Earth's darkest moment
 A solemn hush was felt
 'Midst the mighty throng of angels,
 While adoringly they knelt,

As Christ, the Heir of all things,
 His glory laid aside ;
 And left His home in Heaven,
 On sinful earth to 'bide.

Now, Earth, look up with gladness,
 Thy Morning Star appears ;
 He comes to chase thy sorrows,
 To banish all thy fears.

There, in the lowly manger,
 Thy only hope doth lie ;
 Then give Him a royal welcome,
 For He brings redemption nigh !

He had come, the long expected,
 But the proud world knew Him not ;
 And the best it had to give Him
 Was a malefactor's lot.

He came to His ancient people,
 Whom His grace had blessed before ;
 And *they* gave Him no admission,
 But turned Him from their door.

With a reed and a robe of purple,
 A cross and a crown of thorn,
 They sent the holy Saviour
 Away from the earth in scorn.

Well might angelic legions
 Weep at Earth's awful plight,
 As she plunged from the door of blessing
 More deep in eternal night.

And well might they gaze in wonder
 At the boundless tide of grace
 That flowed from the heart eternal
 To a doomed and cursèd race.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

For there, in that tragic moment,
 God's counsels were fulfilled ;
 And Earth might receive her blessing,
 Though the Prince of Life she killed.

'Twas there God's indignation
 Was measured out 'gainst sin ;
 And Calv'ry's night of sorrow
 The day of grace brought in.

There, Truth divine and Mercy
 In Christ were reconciled ;
 There, Justice, stern, and Pity
 Upon each other smiled.

Though clearly proven guilty
 Of the blood of God's dear Son,
 A pardon free is offered
 To every soul undone.

Go, now, ye Gospel heralds,
 Proclaim ye far and near,
 How Christ has died and risen,
 And love has cast out fear.

Tell how free grace now reigneth
 Where justice once held sway ;
 Tell how His blood most precious
 Can wash all sin away.

Tell how He's now exalted
 In majesty and power ;
 Tell how He lives to succour
 In dark temptation's hour.

This is God's glorious Gospel
 For sinners everywhere ;
 And all who trust in Jesus
 Its many blessings share.

Then let the wondrous tidings
 Resound o'er hill and plain—
 "Salvation, *free* and *present*,
 Through Him Who once was slain."

J. C. J.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

FORGIVEN IN THE NICK OF TIME.

GOD'S attitude towards the world is that of proclaiming forgiveness, though only the repentant want it, and only the repentant get it.

This was proved at the Cross, when His relentless creatures had pressed the thorns upon Christ's brow; when nails had been driven into His hands and feet, that had been so active in good to man. When He had been lifted up on that cross, when, in fact, the malignity of man's heart had been expressed towards the One Who had expressed God's love and tender compassion, *then* it was that Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 33-34). This prayer told out the heart of God towards man, and was in full harmony with His will, "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." Here also was man's heart disclosed, in its unrestrained capability—your heart and mine, dear reader. Out of it proceed "evil thoughts, murders, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. xv. 18, 19).

The death of Jesus conclusively proved the whole world guilty before God (Rom. iii. 10-19). It was man's final test. It is important to notice that it was to guilty Jerusalem that the first proclamation of God's forgiving grace was made, and that those who were convicted by it and repented were forgiven (Acts ii. 14-41).

VOL. XIX. No. 7.

It was never necessary on the part of God to make plain that there was no good in man. *He* knew what was in man, knew the awful extent of man's moral defection. But the least reflective person must admit that, in view of the Cross of God's beloved Son, any cure for our natural depravity is hopeless. He is lost. As an offender he needs forgiveness. If *you* are not awake to it, may God rouse you to a sense of its present importance.

Years ago hanging was more frequent than at present. Capital punishment was resorted to for offences now considered worthy only of a fine or imprisonment.

An official, in a government capacity, had locked up his desk and wended his way home. After he had retired to rest that night, a strange foreboding oppressed him. He could not sleep. He rose and dressed himself, and at last passed out into the street, and wandered about the park that was near his residence. Ultimately he found himself near his office. Letting himself in, he went to his desk, and unlocked it. A startling sight met his gaze. There, reclining in its official envelope, was the sealed pardon of a poor man whose execution was dated to take place on the following morning. It had not been despatched!

No time was to be lost. He immediately hastened to the nearest posting-house, and engaged a conveyance. There was no train or motor in those days to bring him to his destination; many a mile lay between him and the place of execution, and it meant change of horses, and the possible dangers of dark roads. But a life was in jeopardy, and in his hands the power of its de-

liverance. Again and again, with all the anxiety and concern of a matter of life or death, he urged the driver to keep up the speed.

The day dawned, and the distance was rapidly lessening. On and on the horses dashed. . . .

The crowd had gathered in the city; the scaffold had been erected; the poor hopeless man stood in miserable expectancy of his doom; the hangman only waited the striking of the hour. Just then, clattering hoofs were heard approaching and the crowd scattered as the panting horses arrived at the jail. Quickly stepping from the vehicle, the official cried in loud tones, "Stop! I have his pardon."

The man got his pardon just in the nick of time, and we may be sure that though there was delay in its reaching him, there was no delay in his accepting it.

Dear unpardoned reader, the proclamation of forgiveness is brought to you and for you. "*Now*" is the nick of time. Your case is as urgent as this poor man's was—more urgent. You stand on the brink of eternity. The longest life is compared in Scripture to a vapour (James II. 14). To you God sends by His messengers the proclamation of repentance and remission of sins. None less than God the Holy Ghost has descended from heaven to declare that "Through this man [Christ Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts XIII. 38), and that "*Now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. VI. 2). See also 1 Peter I. 12.

How gladly would you accept such grace, if you knew your awful state, your hopeless condition! Alas for you, and for ever, *if you senselessly think you do not need it!*

L. O. L.

WHAT IT MEANS.

“IT is a question what that means,” was the reply of a young German when spoken to about the Lord’s precious words on the cross, “It is finished.” “Exactly; it is. And the meaning is very simple. It refers to the work of redemption.” Yes, Christ, the blessed Son of God, undertook the work of redemption and accomplished it. He finished the work given Him to do.

Three great barriers stand between men and God—His infinite holiness, the power of Satan, and the question of sin. Where was there, and where is there one who can pass those barriers by his own effort or deed? Where indeed! Man being a sinner is utterly precluded from His presence on account of His infinite holiness. And Satan, who has duped man, mighty in power and subtle in device, bars the way. All man’s puny efforts to meet and overcome him are utterly vain. Moreover, sin, having entered, has so enslaved the sinner that all his efforts to extricate himself only serve to manifest that he is utterly without strength. They are, so to speak, three impassable barriers.

But what is impossible with man is possible with God. It is written, “All things are possible with Him” (Matt. XIX. 26). Man’s extremity was His opportunity. Hence, when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son. He sent Him as Saviour into the world. God had a hidden plan in His heart and mind, whereby, consistently with Himself and with the glory of His own great Name, man can pass the barriers. It was by *the sacrifice and death of His own Son*.

A body was prepared for Him, and the Son of

God walked in holy Manhood on earth beneath the eye of God. Satan and sin were powerless against the Holy One. John looked upon Him as He walked, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God"; and again, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John I. 29, 36). Through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. No priestly scrutiny could discover the very smallest blemish in Him. Offered on Calvary, the fruit of divine love, He was made sin, and the holy judgment of God fell upon Him. Having drunk that bitterest of cups to the last dark drop, He cried, "It is finished!" and yielding up His spirit, died. Buried, He rose the third day triumphant over the whole power of Satan and man. He passed all the barriers. The holiness of God was maintained; Jesus, the Holy One of God, met its every claim. Sin in all its heinousness was there. The sinless One took it upon Himself in perfect grace (Himself personally, completely free from and untouched by it), and bore its whole judgment. Satan, who had the power of death, arrayed all his forces against Him. Christ faced them all, went voluntarily into death, and (like Samson, who carried the gates of the beleaguered city to the mountain top) He rose superior to all, and sat down at the right hand of God, *a Saviour crowned with glory and honour for all.*

"*It is finished.*" The mighty work of redemption is accomplished. "I have glorified Thee upon the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John XVII. 4). It is all a question what this means. Would you, poor sinner, when you leave this world (and you may be called upon to leave it at any moment), enter

the glory of God? This is the only way. Every scheme and plan and effort of man is utterly useless. God's way is on the principle of faith in Another, Jesus, His Son, the only One Who could pass all the barriers. All the spoils of His mighty victory are offered free to us by faith in His blest Name.

If you, dear reader, and the rest of the world were to remain for ever in unbelief, it would not alter the blessed fact that God has been glorified in a Man, and that Man His Son. And infinitely more glorified than if sin had never entered the world. The whole question of sin has been gone into and settled at the Cross. The resurrection is the open witness to the complete annulling of Satan's power; and Christ, the accepted Man, seated at God's right hand, is presented as a present Saviour to whosoever believeth on Him. Thus only can you pass the barriers.

What then, troubled soul, are you waiting for? Christ said, "*It is finished.*" Would you add to the finished work? Why, every sin-stained addition of yours but takes from it. The whole glory and lustre of redemption are His. He fought the fight alone. Believe on Him, the One Who suffered, died, and rose. Believe on Him, Whose blood, shed on Calvary, will cleanse you whiter than snow. Believe now.

Do you still hesitate, trembling at the holiness of God, the power of Satan, and the working of sin? Well, *without Christ*, you will never make the millionth part of an inch progress. But if through grace you believe on Him, resting in childlike simplicity on His finished work, you will find holiness before God *in Him* (1 Cor. i. 30); you will find life beyond the power of Satan in

SATISFIED.

103

death *in Him* (Rom. VIII. 2); you will find yourself reconciled and at home in the presence of God, where sin has never been, *in Him* (2 Cor. v.).

“It is finished.” The great question is as to what it means. Thank God, it means what it says. What *you* could not even *begin* was *finished* by Christ. Believe on Him and all the blessed and eternal results of it will be yours in Him this day.

E. H. C.

SATISFIED.

SEARCH for satisfaction where you will, and, apart from Christ, you will be doomed to certain disappointment. Ask the popular politician, or the successful merchant, or the gay pleasure-seeker, or the decorated hero, and each will tell you that full, unhungering satisfaction has never yet been reached.

No. Christ, and *Christ only*, can satisfy the heart of any man.

Knowing this, it is the devil's constant aim to turn man's attention to some other object. And not only does he seek to divert the conscience-stricken sinner, the unestablished believer is the object of like attention. Nor is even the most advanced Christian beyond the reach of his mischievous wiles. He has, alas! no better chance of gaining his evil end than when he finds a dissatisfied Christian. Such a one is just ready to his hand, though all unsuspectingly, for he would not be *dissatisfied* unless he had already been diverted by some kind of counter-attraction—something short of Christ.

When the partridge or the corn-crake is rearing its young, it is a very common occurrence in

104 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

the country to witness the various wiles of a parent bird in seeking to divert the attention of any one who intrudes too near her nestlings. Heedless of her own safety, she will flutter close to your feet and tumble over and over in her flight like a disabled bird, easily caught, and all to decoy you from the spot. She would prefer anything to your finding what she does not want you to find—her cherished brood. Follow her, slowly or quickly as it may best please you, and the little deceiver's end is successfully gained.

So acts the Great Deceiver. He hates the very thought of Christ getting a pre-eminent place before the soul, and so he uses every effort to turn a troubled soul away from Him. And how many and how various are his devices! One soul will be set to find satisfaction in a *reformed life*; another to find it in some supposed *inward experience*. But the real truth is hidden, namely, that the right experiences, with any real transformation in life, are always dependent on the heart's occupation with the right object—Christ.

Then in the case of older believers he seeks to beguile by still more subtle means. For example, undue occupation with their success in service, or with the thoughts of their brethren's estimation, or of their non-estimation; or they may be sadly diverted, and this is all too common, by an enslaved and captivated loyalty to some prominent gift, as in Corinth. Indeed, to engage the heart with anything less than Christ is the enemy's constant aim.

But all who are diverted from Christ, either in this way or in any other way, are doomed to certain disappointment.

Let us remember that the Holy Spirit is here to honour Christ and to turn the heart to Him! The well of living water within "springs up to everlasting life"—springs up to Christ, the never-failing Fountain. It is then, and then only, that we "*thirst not*," and therefore to look for spiritual satisfaction anywhere else is folly.

But there is another side—the side of *divine* satisfaction when we appreciate what His love has wrought for us.

When some devoted mother has toiled hard and prepared a good meal for her family, and has spread her provision upon the table, what does she look for? *Appreciation*. What gives *her* satisfaction is that those for whom she prepared it are well satisfied; and the greater their appreciation, the deeper her own satisfaction.

Does not God, the Bestower of that unspeakable Gift, the Son of His bosom, expect us to be satisfied with the costly provision He has made? What less could He expect?

It is related of a certain British general, that as he lay dying on the field of battle after a victory that cost him his life, he said to some one near, "*I hope England will be satisfied!*"

Could the One Who satisfied and glorified God in dying for us, Who met our deadly foe and thoroughly vanquished him, expect anything less than that we should be satisfied both with the work He has done and the love that was the secret of His doing it?

Oh, that the heart of every reader could say with the writer, "ABUNDANTLY SATISFIED"!

GEO. C.

“NO MAN CARES FOR MY SOUL.”

NO one can read the sorrowful lament of the blessed Lord over the city of Jerusalem without feeling how deeply His affections were engaged with that great salvation He was the first to proclaim. “He beheld the city, and wept over it.” Let us challenge our hearts. Does our knowledge of the peril of souls move us to any concern for them?

A young man imbibed infidel principles. His sister was a devoted Christian and earnestly desired his salvation. She got a Christian friend to come and reason with her brother. Reason and arguments failed to move him. When he sought to argue with his sister she was silent. He stormed, spoke ill of her God, her Saviour, her Bible. Still she was silent. At length her distress at the awful condition of her brother opened the floodgates—she burst into tears. She had often spoken to him before. Now her heart was breaking over him. This proved too much for his infidelity. In speaking of it afterwards, he said, “I then saw myself a sinner and fled to Christ.” That young man lived to preach the Gospel he once despised, and under God he attributed his salvation to his sister’s deep concern for his soul’s salvation.

The serious question for each saved reader of this magazine is: “Are we concerned about the eternal welfare of souls?” nay more, “*Are we deeply concerned?*”

Let me relate another instance of how God met an infidel. He, too, was clever, and well versed in all their stock arguments. He had erected a battery that human reason could not overcome.

“NO MAN CARES FOR MY SOUL.” 107

He had entrenched himself in a fortress which he believed was impregnable. His Christian wife prayed on, lived Christ before him, adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things. A preacher of the Gospel, growing old in his Master's service, was deeply imbued with the love of souls. He had often prayed for and spoken to the infidel, but without result. One night he was so intensely anxious about him that he spent nearly the whole night in prayer. Next morning he mounted his horse, rode down to his house, went into the infidel's place of business, took him by the hand, and with profound emotion said, “*I am deeply concerned for your soul.*” Not another word could he get out, and mounting his horse rode home.

The infidel could not go on with his occupation. He went into the house and said to his wife, “Here is old Mr. —— come down to me to tell me he is *deeply concerned for my soul.*”

An hour afterwards that very man started for the house where the old preacher lived. What for, do you think? Why, just to say, “You came down to see me, to tell me that you were *deeply concerned for my soul.* I am now come to tell you that *I am deeply concerned for my own soul.*”

That man turned to the Saviour, became an earnest and devoted follower of Christ, humanly speaking, through the deep compassionate anxiety of another for his soul's welfare.

We may not be preachers, we may not even be able to speak to others, but we can pray for them—agonize, pity, and care for them.

Shall we who have had such grace shown to us, such compassion and goodness, not seek to share it with others? Shall it be said by any whom you know, “No man cares for my soul”?

Let me give you an instance of the effect of indifference and unconcern for the salvation of others. A young man sent for a preacher of the Gospel. He said, "Do you remember preaching some months since on the words, 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve'? You spoke of the value of the immortal soul, the uncertainty of life, and urged immediate decision. I resolved there and then, do what others might, I would serve God. A Christian man whom I knew was sitting by my side. I turned to him the moment the meeting was finished, to ask him to pray for me, to bring his Bible and teach me the way of salvation. To my surprise he was laughing and joking. Before I could recover my astonishment he made some ludicrous remark to me about the coat of an old man sitting before us. I was carried away by it, and from that moment all serious impressions departed and have never returned. I am now dying, my prison-house is hell for ever, and devils my companions. Would to God I had never seen J. W.! Tell him all this." What a message! uttered, as it was, with the fearful energy of despair.

Is it possible that you, my Christian reader, are utterly indifferent about the everlasting welfare of precious souls? Is the language of your heart, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Alas, when you come to render an account of your stewardship, if you have said, "God saved me, cared for me, watched over me, brought me safely to heaven, but I never cared for, watched over, or sought another one to share that home with me."

May the deep compassion of the heart of the blessed Lord so fill us that we may be "*greatly concerned for the souls of our fellow-men.*" H. N.

SATAN SERVED TILL GRACE IS TASTED. 109

SATAN SERVED TILL GRACE IS
TASTED.

“**H**OW industriously is Satan served! I was formerly one of his most active under-tempters. Not content with running the broad way myself, I was indefatigable in enticing others; and had my influence been equal to my wishes, I would have carried all the human race with me. And doubtless some have perished, to whose destruction I was greatly instrumental, by tempting them to sin, and by poisoning and hardening them with principles of infidelity; and yet I was spared. When I think of the most with whom I spent my unhappy days of ignorance, I am ready to say, ‘I only am escaped alive to tell thee.’ Surely I have not half the activity and zeal in the service of Him Who snatched me as a brand out of the burning as I had in the service of His enemy. Then the whole stream of my endeavours and affections went one way—the tide of a corrupt nature bore me along; now I have to strive and swim against it. The Lord cut me short of opportunities, and placed me where I could do but little mischief; but had my abilities and occasions been equal to my heart, I should have been a Voltaire and a Tiberius in one character, a monster of profaneness and licentiousness. ‘O to grace how great a debtor!’ A common drunkard or profligate is a petty sinner to what I was. I had the ambition of a Cæsar or an Alexander, and wanted to rank in wickedness among the foremost of the human race. When you have read this, praise the Lord for His mercy to the chief of sinners, and pray that I may have grace to be faithful.”

J. N.

MERCY AND TRUTH.

GOD'S first movement towards man after he had sinned was in mercy. Adam had not only departed from God, but he also sought to hide himself amongst the trees of the Garden of Eden. God called him out of his hiding-place to answer for what he had done, and after telling him of the consequences of his sin, He clothed him and his wife with coats of the skins of animals—a striking foreshadowing of the death of Jesus, by which believing sinners are clothed in divine righteousness (comp. Gen. III. 21 with Rom. III. 22). This was a great mercy for Adam. Underneath the *mercy* was the *truth* of substitution, and the Gospel is the testimony that this great work has been effected in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus to-day every person who obtains mercy is forgiven, and will not have to be judged for his sins, because he has already been judged in the Person of Christ on the tree (1 Peter II. 24).

Then mercy is also needed by God's people who are seeking to serve Him, because they are liable to make mistakes in the things of God. If they were held to their mistakes they would be set on one side, and others put to do the work, and the Holy Spirit would not teach or lead them into any more truth.

This testimony to mercy was frequently alluded to, both in the historical and in the prophetic parts of the Old Testament.

After Israel had broken the law by making the golden calf and worshipping it, Moses interceded with God for the people that He should not cut them off in judgment (see Exod. xxxii.

11-13); and in answer to his earnest entreaty, God said, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin" (Exod. XXXIV. 7).

Again, David obtained mercy when he had confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord"; and the answer was, "The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (2 Sam. XII. 13).

Later on in history, when David was driven from Jerusalem by his wicked son Absalom, Ittai the Gittite remained loyal to David and wished to accompany him in his flight, but David bade him return to his own country, and added, "*Mercy and truth be with thee.*" Mercy would preserve him from falling into the hands of the enemy, while truth would preserve him from being tempted to follow the false king Absalom.

If we look at prophecy as found in the Psalms, we read, "God shall send forth His mercy and truth" (Ps. LVII. 3). This will yet be realized when the godly remnant in Israel are sustained in *mercy* through the three and a half years of the great tribulation, during which they will resist the false pretensions of Antichrist through their knowledge of the *truth* (comp. Dan. XII. 3).

Again, "For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds" (Ps. LVII. 10). Mercy and truth will thus be established above every power of evil, so that nothing can hinder Messiah setting up the millennium.

Again, "O prepare mercy and truth which may preserve him" (Ps. LXI. 7). This will be the prayer of the remnant for their Messiah.

Again, "Mercy and truth are met together" (Ps. LXXXV. 10). This will be Israel's reflection as they learn the true meaning of the death of

Jesus and how He had been the substitute for His people.

Again, "Mercy and truth shall go before Thy face" (Ps. LXXXIX. 14). This refers to the kingdom being manifestly set up, and gives the principles of Messiah's reign.

Thus everything necessary for mercy and truth to be finally established on the earth has been accomplished, and believers of this dispensation are now getting the spiritual good of both mercy and truth, while Israel will come into it when the veil of unbelief is taken away.

A further connexion of mercy and truth was made by Solomon, the son of David, when he was king. Perhaps his admonition was immediately given to his son Rehoboam. "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man" (Prov. III. 3). Rehoboam did not heed this counsel, and lost the largest part of his kingdom. So in the present time, if believers do not heed these things, they lose the largest part of present enjoyment of their spiritual blessings. Rehoboam was king, but over a very small part of the kingdom left to him. So believers have large and various spiritual blessings, but the enjoyment of them depends on holding fast mercy and truth.

G. W. Gy.

God glorified.—"God does what He does because He is what He is; and in doing what He does He displays what He is; and in displaying what He is He glorifies Himself." W. J.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

“THE LAST MOVE.”

THERE has been exhibited lately, I am told, a remarkable picture entitled “The Last Move.” It represents a young man playing chess with the devil. The chessmen were so arranged that seemingly the only move the young man could make at that time would cause him to be checkmated by the devil. A famous chess-player went to see the picture, and after studying the problem for some time, had a chessboard brought to him, declaring, “I can save that fellow!” Placing the “men” in exactly the same positions as in the picture, he so played the game as to bring out the young man victorious and not Satan.

Now, what is Satan’s last move with man? It is to present the terror of death. Having enticed man to sin, he thought he was certain of closing up God’s favoured creature to death irrevocably. But he was mistaken, for through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ man has gained and Satan has lost. Christ’s victory is the believer’s victory, and Satan’s eternal defeat. “Thanks be unto God, Which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. xv. 57).

A VICTORIOUS RECORD.

A little over a century ago was written on the gravestone of an eminent man, and a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, this remarkable epitaph:

“HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.”

“*I have seen, I have confessed, I have repented,*

“*I have trusted, I have loved,*

“*I now rest, I shall rise, I shall reign.*”

VOL. XIX. No. 8.

114 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

Eight brief but pregnant sentences expressive of faith in the Saviour. Would *you*, my reader, share in this glorious victory achieved by our blessed Redeemer? Then I ask, Have you taken these eight steps of faith on this ladder of grace (like Jacob's ladder whose top reached to heaven) reaching down to where you are in your sins, and under Satan's power? Your last move on this ladder will bring you into the full results of Christ's glorious victory; yea, into an eternity of blessing.

My friend, it will be a wonderful moment in your soul's history when you can say, first and foremost, as written in this epitaph:

"I HAVE SEEN."

I have seen myself a helpless, hopeless sinner in the sight of God. But I have also seen Jesus as my own precious, personal Saviour, my mighty Deliverer from all the power of the enemy. But not less important is the second step:

"I HAVE CONFESSED."

David said, "I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (Ps. xxxii. 5). It was a wise man who said, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper" (or "shall not get out of the pit"). David tried hard to cover his, and tried harder still to get out of the pit he had dug; but not until he confessed did he obtain mercy (Prov. xxviii. 13).

"I HAVE REPENTED."

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Have *you*? You ask, What is it to repent? It is just to think of yourself and your sin as God thinks. To own in God's presence that your whole life Godward is a gigantic mistake. In a

word, it is to be brought to abhor yourself as Job did (Job XLII. 6). What the Apostle Paul preached to both Jew and Gentile was, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts XX. 21). Hence the fourth thing on that remarkable tombstone was:

"I HAVE TRUSTED."

"*Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him*" (Ps. II. 12). Are you one of this blessed company? "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" To trust a person you must know him. Therefore, says the Psalmist, "They that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee: for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee" (Ps. IX. 10). And the Apostle gave thanks to God for those who have faith in the Lord Jesus. May I give thanks for *your* faith in Christ?

But as faith works by love, our next sentence is:

"I HAVE LOVED."

"*We love Him because He first loved us.*" In answer to the Lord's question, "Lovest thou Me?" Peter said, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee" (John XXI. 16); and afterwards in writing his epistle, he could say to others, "Whom having not seen, ye love: in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter I. 8).

How fitting, then, that there should be written over this departed saint this peaceful, blessed sentence:

"I NOW REST."

In his life it was his to "*rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.*" He often listened to the Saviour's voice: "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." And he came to Him and found rest

116 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

of conscience and rest of heart also. Now as to his body lying in that tomb, it could be said of him, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours" (Rev. xiv. 13). O, sweet thought to rest in Jesus with this glorious assurance of victory over every foe, death and sin and the grave.

"I SHALL RISE."

"The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout. . . . And the dead in Christ shall rise first." Then those alive till then will never die at all; they shall be caught up to be for ever with the Lord in the Father's House (1 Thess. iv. 17; John xiv. 2, 3). What a complete triumph over death and the devil will this move be!

"He is coming, coming for us, soon we'll see His light
afar,
On the dark horizon rising, as the Bright and Morning
Star;
Cheering many a waking watcher, as the star whose
kindly ray
Heralds the approaching morning, just before the break
of day."

"I SHALL REIGN."

Christ "*must reign*," and every believer will reign with Him. All shall then and for ever share His glorious victory, won for them by His precious death and resurrection.

His resurrection and glory are the pledge, and proof, and pattern of our victory.

Again, then, dear reader, I ask, Will *you* share His glorious victory?

*"Jesus, Lord, we joy before Thee,
Sorrow's night is o'er;
Foes are vanquished, Thou art Victor,
Evermore."*

W. N.

AN ANXIOUS SOUL IN HIGH PLACES.

AGNES, Empress of Germany in the middle of the eleventh century, was a woman of spirit and talent, whose lot was cast in dark and troublous times. The feudal lords were unsubmitive, and it was very difficult for her to rule. Besides this, she had a troubled spirit and an uneasy conscience, and her unhappy state led her to go from place to place to offer alms and prayers, or to seek counsel of such as had a reputation for holiness. An extract from one of her letters to a certain convent may suffice as a description of her feelings: "Agnes, Empress and sinner, to the good father Albert, and the brothers assembled in the name of the Lord at Fratari, etc. My conscience terrifies me worse than any spectre. Therefore I fly through the places of the saints, seeking where I may hide myself from this terror: and I am not a little desirous to come to you, whose intercession I have found to be a certain relief."

It is evident from this that she was in an anxious state of soul; but, alas! like many more during the dark ages in which she lived, she had not (at any rate as yet) learnt how her anxiety could be truly and permanently relieved, much less the fulness of the great salvation which God in His grace has revealed in His blessed Word. She confessed herself a sinner, and from the tenor of what follows it seems to have been more than a mere form. Her conscience terrified her worse than a spectre, though her conduct, coupled with almsdeeds and prayers, seems to have been above the average of those in high estate in those very evil times. We trust that

she had indeed been awakened by the Spirit of God.

But where does she turn for relief? Where does she seek to hide herself, as she expressed it, from this terror? She vainly flies through the places of those who were esteemed to be saints—the nunneries or monasteries of the day. Her afflicted conscience found some little *relief*, she said, through the intercession of those whom she addressed at a place called Fratari; but to peace, at that time, she seems to have been a complete stranger.

As one reads the painful story of this poor afflicted soul running to many physicians, how one's spirit yearns for such! How gladly one would have pointed her in her distress to *Christ*, and *Christ alone, the only One* Who could possibly meet her need, and give her guilty conscience peace on the ground of His finished work. He is the true Hiding-place from every spectre and terror, real or false, that may afflict the troubled soul. Job in his distress said, "O that Thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that Thou wouldest keep me secret, until Thy wrath be past," etc. (Job XIV. 13). And he, after long and deep exercise, ended in discovering his utter vileness, with a stopped mouth, abhorring himself, repenting in dust and ashes, and being accepted of the Lord (XL. 3-5; XLII. 6, 9).

Later on, Agnes withdrew from her high position as Empress-Mother, and devoted herself to a religious life. And whilst several failed to help her through their own ignorance, a well-known abbot wrote a little book for her use, which, judging from some remains of his manuscript, was more likely to direct her in the way of

AN ANXIOUS SOUL IN HIGH PLACES. 119

peace. Let us hope that she may indeed have been assisted thereby to joy and lasting peace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Judging by what is recorded of her, there is surely good hope, when one thinks of God's great love in the gift of His Son, of His mercy and compassion towards the ignorant, and of His abundant promises to those who seek Him, that she will be found at that great day to have been amongst His redeemed and blest.

Dear reader, there is not the same excuse for you and me in these lands of printed Bibles and preached gospel, if we run hither and thither on the devil's false roads to allay our anxiety and our fears. Have you been awakened to a sense of your need? Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. Wherein is he to be accounted of? Vain indeed is his help. Hear the voice of God's dear Son bidding you come to Him. "*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matt. xi. 28).

If the monks at Fratari, when they received the letter of the Empress Agnes telling how she sought a hiding-place from the terror of her conscience, had only pointed her to the manuscript of the prophet Isaiah (xxxii. 2), she would have found that God had spoken of Christ thus: "A man shall be *an hiding-place* from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Yes, *Christ is the true and only hiding-place*, the true Rock of Ages. There the vilest sinner can take refuge, and be hidden in safety now and evermore. All the tempests of the holy judgment of God have passed over Him at Calvary. God hath made Him, the Holy One,

Him that knew no sin, to be made sin for us. And now the rivers of living water flow from Him, the living Source, to thirsty sinners far and wide. Maybe many of our readers have often sung—

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

We well understand the comfort even of this to a troubled heart.* But why, in the light of the abundant assurances in a thousand and one ways in the living Word of Him Who cannot lie, should you not sing with joy from the heart as many Christians have done—

“Rock of Ages, cleft for sin,
Grace hath hid me safe within”?

The sins of the feeblest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ *are forgiven for His Name's sake* (1 John II. 12). And he that believeth on the Son *hath life*, and his life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, he shall appear with Him in glory (Col. III. 3, 4). And meanwhile our souls have the comfort of the intercession of Christ on high, and of the Holy Spirit here below till He come, our once terrified consciences having been purged by the precious blood of Christ. E. H. C.

“TO-DAY” AND “TO-MORROW.”

GOD SPEAKS. Listen: it concerns you, and concerns you immediately.

“*To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart*” (Heb. IV. 7).

“*Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*” (Prov. XXVII. 1).

"TO-DAY" AND "TO-MORROW." 121

Who could possibly picture the real, the entire result of disregarding this double message? Upon *you* the urgent message is still pressed, while thousands of thousands are for ever beyond its reach. Will you not heed it instantly? The following may remind you of the necessity of this.

About nine o'clock one evening last May, in South Africa, about two miles from where the writer lives, M. M——, a strong, healthy young fellow of twenty-two years, was accompanying a merry party of friends on a hunting-trip. They were travelling by ox-wagon, of which M. M—— had charge.

The night was dark. Hearing another wagon approaching, M. M—— jumped off his own, no doubt with the intention of avoiding a collision; but as he did so the large back wheel of the passing vehicle caught him in the chest, and he was terribly crushed by both wagons. Being night-time, it was almost two hours before his friends could extricate his poor mangled body. True, they eventually managed to do it, but all too late. Death, no doubt, had been instantaneous.

If the truth had to be told, probably that young man was as really entangled in the web of pleasure-seeking *before* his accident as by the heavy wagon-wheels after. If so, death took him out of that web more quickly than his friends extricated his poor body.

His case we must leave, but what about the reader's? Does such a web hold *him*? Does he feel how unavailing are the efforts to deliver himself? Then there is only one thing for it. Cry to the *Lord*. Cry aloud. Cry at once. Cry in real earnest. You know as little what

awaits you as M. M—— and his merry party knew the time and spot where the fatal wheel would meet him. All too late his friends extricated him, but the Lord can deliver you instantly, and He is inviting you to accept His deliverance. "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14). To you probably He has spoken, and spoken more than once or twice; yet you have never heeded His warning, winning voice. Pause and consider before it is too late. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30). Think of these twice four words:

"GOD COMMENDETH HIS LOVE."

"GOD COMMANDS TO REPENT."

What does it mean? Why, just this. "God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11); and that in order to make known His love, and declare His attitude towards this poor world, "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. viii. 32).

Will you *to-day*, confessing your need of Him, accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the proof of this love, or will you wait until the wheels of time shall push you suddenly out of your web of pleasure into a to-morrow of endless remorse? **THINK!**

*"Life is earnest; when 'tis o'er,
Thou returnest never more:
Soon to meet Eternity,
Wilt thou never serious be?"*

H. H. T.

THE SINNER'S NEED, THE SAVIOUR'S WORTH, AND THE WORLD'S HATRED.

“IF a man professes to love the Lord Jesus, I am willing to believe him, if he does not give me proof to the contrary; but I am sure, at the same time, no one can love Him in the scriptural sense who does not know the need and the worth of a Saviour; in other words, who is not brought, as a ruined, helpless sinner, to live upon Him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. They who love Him thus will speak highly of Him, and acknowledge that He is their all in all. And they who thus love Him, and speak of Him, will get little thanks for their pains in such a world as this. ‘All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution’: the world that hated Him will hate them. And though it is possible, by His grace, to put to silence, in some measure, the ignorance of foolish men; and though His providence can protect His people, so that not a hair of their heads can be hurt, without His permission; yet the world will *show their teeth*, if they are not *suffered to bite*. The apostles were accounted babblers. We are no better than the apostles; nor have we reason to expect much better treatment, so far as we walk in their steps.

On the other hand, there is a sober, decent way of speaking of God, and goodness, and benevolence, and sobriety, which the world will bear well enough; nay, we may say a little about Jesus Christ, as ready to make up the deficiencies of our honest and good endeavours, and this will not displease them. But if we preach Him as the only foundation, lay open the horrid evils of the

124 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

human heart, tell our hearers that they are dead in trespasses and sins, and have no better ground of hope in themselves than the vilest malefactors, in order to exalt the glory of Jesus, as saving those who are saved wholly and freely for His own name's sake; if we tell the virtuous and decent, as well as the profligate, that unless they are born again, and made partakers of living faith, and count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, they cannot be saved; this the world cannot bear. We shall be called knaves or fools, uncharitable bigots, and twenty hard names.

If you have met with nothing like this, I wish it may lead you to suspect whether you have yet received the right key to the doctrines of Christ; for, depend upon it, the offence of the cross is not ceased.”

J. N.

THE YOKE OF BONDAGE AND THE YOKE OF LIBERTY.

Answer (in substance) to a letter from a young believer brought up in Dr. Barnardo's Orphanage, now living in Canada.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,
I am making haste to reply to your letter expressing a desire for a little help on the subject of "Liberty"; or, as you express it, "Who are slaves and who are free men?"

I think the epistles to the Galatians and the Romans show that *true* liberty is only enjoyed through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and the *grace* which marked His mission here below. "*Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*" (John I. 17).

THE YOKES OF BONDAGE AND OF LIBERTY. 125

It was "by the grace of God" He tasted death for every man (Heb. II. 9). By God's *grace* we mean that He is now dispensing blessing entirely on the ground of *His own* goodness, His own righteousness, and not on the ground of ours. That is, it is neither because of *proved* merit nor *promised* merit that the blessing becomes ours. This is clear enough when we see that it is the *repentant* soul that gets it; for genuine repentance is the honest acknowledgment that, instead of having goodness to boast of, we have only badness to confess.

Now let me say that I think you may, in your own history, find an illustration of the subject before us. When you were first received into the "Orphanage," I suppose it was neither for any accomplished good before you came nor for any promised good afterwards. Was it not purely on the ground of the kindness of your patron and his willing helpers that you were first brought into the sheltering "Home"? What your subsequent training effected in the way of outward transformation was another matter. The *influence* of the Home upon you and your freely given *title to enter it* were very different things; though doubtless both were bound up together in the mind of the founder.

The transforming influence of the Home was the *result* of your having a title. The result fitted you for coming out, not for going in. It was the *title*, therefore, that had the first place; and it is so with those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, only in a much higher way. A deep sense of our sinful need brings us to Christ, and our inward, moral transformation thenceforth commences. It is the result of our

finding an attraction and delight in Him Who found His attraction and delight in us, marvelous to say (Prov. VIII. 30, 31). But it will not be until we come *out* of heaven that the full, blessed result will be displayed (see Rev. XIX. 8, 11-16; Col. III. 3). It is in Christ Himself that we find our Grace-given title to go in; and faith stakes her all on what He is. But as it is only those who are born of the Spirit that find any real attraction in Christ, the transformation of which I have been speaking can only take place in the soul of the truly converted. Only such know anything of the grace and kindness of the blessed God *experimentally*.

But, it may be asked, How is a sinner brought to enjoy real liberty in the holy presence of God? Let me try to answer by asking another question. How did a boy taken into the Orphanage enjoy true liberty in the presence of his patron? Was it not in seeking to answer to his known wishes, and those wishes the outcome of kindness and compassion? In like manner every soul brought to God, and having a sincere desire to answer to His love, will ever have happy liberty of heart before Him. He will have full liberty to do for others what each in the Orphanage had liberty to do; that is, to show to his fellows a little of the *greater* loving-kindness shown to himself. Believers have like liberty; yea, liberty "to keep His commandments and love one another." To this liberty, the liberty of love, every believer is called. Happy liberty indeed!

If *slavery and selfishness* go together, and he who serves self serves a slave-master who is never satisfied, so *love and liberty* go together, and the service of love carries its own free delight with it.

THE YOKES OF BONDAGE AND OF LIBERTY. 127

In Galatians v. 13, the apostle says: "Ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh" (that is, do not turn it to the account of selfish licence), "but *by love serve one another.*" That is, serve them as the fruit of God's grace in *you*, and by a love which looks not for a merit in *them*. This is surely the way God has served us, and this the liberty we have been called to.

In Galatians vi. we see liberty and bondage contrasted. "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

But what was this "*yoke of bondage*"? It was the effect of the claim of *law* on those who did not know the power of *love*. There is a vast difference between "*Thou shalt love*" and "*God so loved.*"

Liberty is found in the enjoyment of love brought to us, and proved to us in the death of Jesus. It is not found in love demanded, but in love commended. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). This was the love which Christ came down from heaven to express. Instead of claiming man's goodness, He died for man's badness. Instead of claiming love from man as the law did, He proclaimed God's love to man; so that even a law-breaker in the presence of Jesus was made to feel its warmth and power (John viii. 10, 11). The knowledge of His Father's love made the full acceptance of His Father's will a *yoke of liberty*. "My yoke is easy," He said, and "My burden is light." And how tenderly He invited others to take the same yoke (Matt. xi. 29, 30).

At His first preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth He proclaims that He is anointed "to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bruised"; and then we read, "They *wondered* at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (Luke iv. 18-22). And no wonder. But there was more than gracious words, for the grace which He preached was most perfectly expressed in His own blessed Person.

My dear young friend, depend upon it, there is no deliverance from legal *bondage* except by LOVE, and that love known in the heart by the Spirit. Hence we read, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14).

Oh! what bondage of heart and mind would have been yours if, when you had become comfortably and happily settled in the "Home," you had been told that your own faultless behaviour was henceforth the only ground for remaining there! Would you not, under such conditions, always be feeling that some official eye was upon you, causing a slavish dread of once more being sent adrift into the world?

But it was far otherwise, as you well know. It was your kind benefactor's goodness, not yours, that brought you there; and his loving-kindness, not yours, that *kept* you there. The grateful remembrance of this kept your heart free to respond to his wishes and rejoice in his good pleasure.

May the still happier liberty resulting from the knowledge of grace as the only ground of blessing for destitute sinners be yours, through the power of His own "Free Spirit."

In the service of love, ever yours,

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

FOUR THINGS WHICH MUST HAPPEN.

IT is a common but erroneous saying, "We must all die." Scripture says, "We shall *not* all sleep," that is, not all die (1 Cor. xv. 51). Death *may* come to any of us; yea, this very night, my reader, thy soul may be required of thee. But *death* is not one of the four things which *must* happen to all, believers and unbelievers alike.

What, then, are they? I pray my reader's earnest and serious attention to them. God grant that this simple paper may be made the means of eternal blessing to him, by leading him to turn to Christ for salvation.

First certainty. "EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM" (Rev. i. 7).

Second. EVERY EAR SHALL HEAR HIM (Rev. xxii. 17; John v. 24, 25, 28; Matt. xxv. 34, 41; Luke xiii. 27; etc.).

Third. EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW AT HIS NAME (Phil. ii. 10).

Fourth. EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS THAT HE IS LORD (Phil. ii. 11).

Dear friend, as you value your immortal soul, mark well, I pray you, each of these things. God has said,

"EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM."

You cannot escape meeting the Lord Jesus Christ face to face, *eye to eye*. Say, How are you prepared for it? Will it be with gladness of heart that you greet Him? Will you hail Him as the

VOL. XIX. No. 9.

One who loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own blood? or will that sight fill you with unutterable anguish and despair? Are you happy at the thought of His appearing? Do I hear you say, "*I would like to be. I wish I were*"? I will tell you how you may be. *Look to Him now.* Do not wait to meet Him then *for the first time*, but let that meeting take place *now*. He is a Saviour now. His blood cleanseth from *all sin*. His word is, "*Look unto Me, and be ye saved.*" Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and whosoever looked to it lived, even so Christ has been lifted up on the cross, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life. He is *able* to save, *mighty* to save, *willing* to save. Then trust Him only. "*Look and live.*" But further,

EVERY EAR SHALL HEAR HIM.

"For the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." Do not wait to hear till you can turn away no longer. *If you do, the first words you hear Him utter will be, "Depart from Me."* But hearken to His voice *now*; for He is saying, "Come unto Me." "Let him that is athirst *come*. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life *freely*." He tells you, "All things are ready; come." He proclaims a full and free forgiveness through faith in His blood. Having done all the work, borne the sins, endured the judgment, gone down into death, all He asks of you is—*to believe*. He says, "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). Oh,

FOUR THINGS WHICH MUST HAPPEN. 131

then, hear Him now! God says, "Hear Him." Christ says, "They that hear (hear His voice in the present hour of grace) shall live."

But, thirdly,

EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW AT HIS NAME.

The name of Jesus—the once despised, rejected Jesus—has been exalted above every name. He is called "Jesus" because He saves "His people from their sins." Have you bowed to *that name*? Have you owned Him as *your Saviour*?

Perhaps you say, "I bow at the mention of His name every Sunday."

Yes, the Roman soldiers too, "*bowing their knees*," worshipped Him while they smote Him, and spat upon Him (Mark xv. 19). Is it merely in an outward way you reverence Him, while your heart is far from Him? *It will not do for God.* You must bow *in earnest*. Down, then, this moment on your knees, and confess yourself to God as a lost and ruined sinner, owning that you have no hope, no refuge, no Saviour but Jesus.

If you refuse to bow, refuse to own Jesus as Saviour *now*, by and by you *must* bow and own Jesus as judge. Own Him as *Saviour* now, and He will save you; own Him as Judge then, and *He will judge you*. Lastly,

EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS THAT HE
IS LORD.

Oh that I could by any means bring you to know that as surely as God has spoken all these words, they shall *every one* be accomplished! Oh that I could persuade you to confess Jesus as your Lord *now*! "If thou shalt confess with thy

mouth the Lord Jesus [Jesus as Lord], 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. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 9, 10, 13).

But once more. If you will not confess Him now, you *shall* confess Him at the judgment throne. He is Lord of all, and all shall yet acknowledge His Lordship to the glory of God the Father. Confess Him *now*, and receive His salvation; or *then*, and receive your damnation. And even as you depart into the unquenchable fire you will be forced to confess that yours is a righteous doom, and that He has the right to pronounce it, because when He offered you salvation freely you deliberately refused it.

One word more. *There are neither infidels, sceptics, nor rationalists in hell.* All there are thoroughly convinced of the truth. But, alas! *they believed when it was too late.* It is easy to believe when one sees. No thanks to you then. But the Lord Jesus says, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet *have believed*" (John xx. 29).

Oh, my reader, *by faith* see Him now, hear Him now, bow to Him now, confess Him now; and yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God until the day of glory comes. Then shall your eye see Him as He is, your ear shall hear that well-known voice of ineffable sweetness, your knee shall bow as you cast your crown at His feet, and your tongue shall join in the wondrous worship of heaven.

H. P. A. G.

THE BLOOD THAT SPEAKS.

MODERN theologians would drown its voice, but still it speaks. It proclaims many and varied virtues. By it God is glorified and the sinner saved. It is the *sole and only way* by which your sins and mine can be remitted. The life of Christ, apart from His death, avails nothing. It is perfect, the blessed example of what a man's life should be; but it is not by following His example, or walking in His footsteps, that our sins can be atoned for. The *blood* alone maketh an *atonement* for the soul. It is not the life-blood in the veins of a living man which atones, *the blood must be shed*, life must be given up in death; for without *shedding of blood* there is no remission (Heb. ix. 22).

THERE IS NO REMISSION APART FROM SHED BLOOD.

Do not be deceived; life spent in aiming at high ideals or in self-denying labours for your fellow-man will never work out your atonement. Scripture is clear, positive, and emphatic. The blood alone atones; nay more, it must be the blood of a spotless Victim. Christ is the only Man whose nature was absolutely spotless and without blemish. Christ, therefore, is the only One Who can take the guilty sinner's place. More than this, if He had only been a mere man, He must have sunk under the accumulated load of man's guilt. The grave would still retain Him. He is both God and Man, and the only Man of Whom it could be said, "All the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily." Being God, He could measure the claims of God. Being a perfect Man, He could take man's place

134 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

and satisfy those claims. To arrogate divinity for sinful man, or drag Christ down to mere humanity, is a satanic delusion.

Christ became Man *in order to die*, but He *never ceased to be God* in becoming Man. You had no *previous* existence. He had. You can only be what you are, a sinner away from God, subject to death. He was sinless, and need not have died. Let the new theology get rid of *death*, then we may listen to its teachings. So long as death exists, the all-important question is, What will be thy portion after death? When you come to pass into Eternity, "ethical teachings, higher ideals, elevated humanity," will avail you nothing. Shall I tell you what will? *The precious blood of Christ*. "The blood in its own solitary dignity." It is the only passport to Glory. The alone way into the presence of a holy God.

It not only has a message as to your future, but it speaks to you of present blessings. Is your conscience burdened with guilt? Turn to the blood—*the blood of Christ*, Who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God (Heb. ix. 14). That blood will relieve your burden.

Are you disturbed and unhappy, fearing the judgment to come? Trust in the blood! God says, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

Do you long for peace? Peace may be yours, but in one way only. It is by resting on the blood. He has "*made peace by the blood of His cross*" (Col. i. 20).

Would you be brought into nearness to God? The blood of Christ is God's way to bring you

nigh (Eph. ii.). You may enter with boldness into the Holiest, but only by a blood-sprinkled way, even the *blood of Jesus* (Heb. x. 19).

Do not delude yourself that your defiled life and unholy ways can be "evolved" into Godhead. The only way you can be cleansed is by blood. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." It is only by being washed from our sins in *His own blood* we shall ever be clear of them (Rev. i. 5).

The unvarying testimony of God's Word is that redemption, justification, propitiation, is *by blood*. The new theology teachers never can have pondered that touching scene in Gethsemane's garden, "Jesus was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me, nevertheless not My will but Thine be done. . . . Being in an agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke xxii. 41-44). What do those appealing words mean? Surely this: "If there *is any other way* by which sinful man can be reconciled to God, do not let me drink the cup of judgment."

Had it been possible that by working in the slums, or following noble ideas, or by self-denying labours, man's sins could be atoned for, we should never have had such a sequel to that prayer. The path of *God's will* led Christ to the death of the cross. There He drank the bitter cup. There was wrung from Him that agonizing cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He died because there was *no other possible way by which God could be glorified and*

136 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

the sinner saved. The soldier pierced His side; forthwith there came out blood and water.

That blood atones for the soul. On that atonement I rest. For over forty years it has given me a solid ground of peace. I listen to the voice of the blood. Its blessed messages afford me divine certainty. By the way of the new theology I never could be certain. Its teaching is only another form of the same delusion that leads the misguided Romanist, the unbelieving Jew, and the heathen Buddhist, to seek to work out a righteousness for themselves.

Instead of divinity being in fallen humanity, the devil and demons find a home there. Christ said to the religious teachers in His day, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John VIII. 44.). The Holy Ghost speaks of him as "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. II. 2).

Let me earnestly, urgently beseech you to turn away from these delusive teachings. Ponder these words,

"WITHOUT THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD THERE IS
NO REMISSION."

"In Heaven the blood for ever speaks in God's Omniscient ear." Let it speak also to you! Trust in that precious blood. It will wash you, cleanse you, sanctify you, justify you, and bring you nigh to God. It will afford you a solid ground of peace, and completely atone for your guilt apart from anything and everything else. We urge you to turn to Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that *speaketh better things* than that of Abel (Heb. XII. 24).
H. N.

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

REPLY TO A LETTER.

WITH pleasure I will (D.V.) try to answer your letter, but fear the attempt will prove very incomplete.

You say, "I cling to the world and cannot help it." Well, dear friend, *if* it is worth clinging to, and the present state of things is going to last, by all means continue to cling as tenaciously as you can—that is, *if* some particular provision has been made in your case whereby you can positively ensure that the things of this world you love *will* really last, and making you equally sure that you too will last to enjoy them, then go on; by all means go on, and in your heart say—

The world I love ; to it I'll cling,
I'll chat, and laugh, and dance, and sing ;
The world eclipses everything.

At the same time, dear friend, I would seriously draw your attention to the man spoken of in the twelfth of Luke, a very good, industrious farmer, intelligent and far-seeing. In fact, he appeared excellent in all his ways save one. But that *one* way was a fatal way, for he shut God out of his calculations to the loss of his never-dying soul. It is true he *meant* to have a "merry" time when his arrangements were completed, but before his merriment even began, the God he had shut out and would have nothing to say to, came unbidden upon the scene and had His say. He will *not* be shut out; He will *always* have the last word.

Your letter, from its honesty, gives me much encouragement. You say, "Mine is not a true

heart-service." Now, that is quite correct. But, then, you will never be saved on account of any "true heart-service of yours," but through the true heart-service of Christ which He rendered to God for the blessing of man, namely, His perfect work on Calvary, where He shed His life's blood so that we might be saved. You and I are the ones who have sinned. God is The One we have sinned against. Jesus Christ—blessed be His Holy Name!—did there a perfect work, which perfectly satisfied the Holy God we have sinned against. Therefore, what *has* satisfied Him surely *should* be enough to satisfy us. Praise Him! I am myself thus satisfied. I am able to say—

"Satisfied with Thee, Lord Jesus, I am blest,
Peace which passeth understanding on Thy breast,
No more doubting, no more trembling—oh, what rest!"

With regard to your question, "Can God so fill our lives that we desire nothing else?" this is an utter impossibility *until* we are "born again" and KNOW that our sins are all forgiven. It is then not only possible for our hearts to be so filled by Him that we want "nothing more," but *that* is our normal condition, and I much fear we are not always in our normal state.

I quite agree with you that "duty" is a "cold" word, and we may be certain of this, that those Christians who live nearest to the Lord do not thus live from a sense of duty, but are constrained by LOVE to do so. "We love Him because He first loved us." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear." "God is love" (1 John IV.). "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). If, therefore, you will only allow your heart, at this moment, *just as you are*, to bow to His love and accept what He says about the Person and work of His Beloved Son, you will be one of the "whosoever" who believe on Him to salvation and life everlasting. *True* happiness will then begin, and the result be as you say—a desire to "give pleasure to others." But surely that which suits our Lord *must* stand first—His interests *must be* paramount. And as "the King's business requireth haste," we must "preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season," and in this way seek to be used for His Glory in the salvation of souls.

If you notice, in the fifth of Mark there are three classes who prayed. *Two* of these prayers were answered, and *one* not.

"The devils *besought* Him, saying, Send us into the swine." "Forthwith *Jesus gave them leave.*"

The Gadarenes, after hearing about the wonderful work of the Blessed Lord, and after having seen the man out of whom He had cast a legion of devils, "clothed, and in his right mind," "They began to pray him to depart out of their coasts." That was an extremely fatal prayer, and seems to have been answered at once, for we read, Jesus passed over by ship unto the other side. And yet there are sinners of the Gadara type to be found in the present day. When God in His great love and grace is ready to work in their hearts and consciences by His Blessed Spirit, Satan comes upon the scene and presents something of this poor fleeting world to captivate the

heart, and his poor deluded dupes put off "just for a little while" the day of salvation, as Satan tells them. "Go Thy way *this* time, is their cry, and when I have a convenient season I will call for Thee." But very often, as it was in the case of Felix (Acts XXIII. 25-27), *that* "convenient season" NEVER comes. Immortal souls are eternally lost, and what do they get in exchange for their souls? Just a myth! a shadow! a bauble! a plaything! Poor exchange indeed! The devil certainly gets the best of that bargain.

But to return to the man who had been possessed with a legion of devils. He was now, as a young convert put it the other day, "*Under new management.*" "Therefore he prayed that he might be with Him." But the Blessed Lord, under Whose management he now was, "suffered him not." And why did not the loving Jesus suffer him to be with Him? Simply because He was about to heap such dignity upon his head that the highest angel in heaven would be exceedingly rejoiced to get. "Go," said He, "go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

How delighted his friends must have been when he got home to receive the one who had been as one really dead to them. "Night and day he had been in the mountains and in the tombs crying and cutting himself with stones." How truly pleased must he have been to go on the little errand his Lord had sent him, and to take the message He had given him. But not only to them did he go, for we read "that he departed and began to publish in Decapolis" (and that means "ten cities") "how great things

Jesus had done for him. And all men did marvel." Of course they did! They had much to marvel about, for they had never before seen it in this fashion.

The man *began* to publish the great things the Lord had done for him, but we are not told when he left off. Ten cities was a pretty good sized area to start with. And as he thus *began* to publish the great things Jesus had done for him, it is to be fervently hoped he so *continued* until his time came to be put inside one of the tombs he used to wail and wander amongst.

May God grant that none of His servants of the present day who have begun to publish the blessed news of their Saviour's love to ruined man will leave off telling such a sweet story this side their grave, or the coming of the Lord.

I sincerely hope and pray that before you put this letter aside you will accept Jesus as your Saviour, and thus come under "new management" for the rest of your life, happy for time and for eternity.

C. P. W. N.

"**After many days.**"—A letter you wrote to me when I was very young has never been forgotten by me, and the words you used have spread far and wide, and as they pointed out to me what salvation means, and what justification by faith in Christ brings to poor sinners, I have to thank God again and again for the sound teaching I got as a child—(and here let me encourage you in preaching the Gospel—that *children* DO listen and remember); and although isolated at times, I have been kept simply "looking to Jesus," who has been to me the "All-sufficient."—*Extract from a letter.*

THE GRATIFIED DELIVERER.

IF there is one chapter in the Old Testament that has more attraction for the conscience of an awakened sinner than another it is Isaiah LIII. It is there the blessed God, by His inspired prophet, dwells on the atoning sufferings of the sinless Substitute. It is there He tells us *why* He thus suffered; why He, Who had done no violence and in Whose mouth was no deceit, should take the place of those who had utterly disregarded *God's* way, and wilfully and defiantly followed their own. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him [that is, the chastisement by which our peace was effected]; and with His stripes we are healed" (v. 5). Notice how simply those twice three words tell the gracious story:

"HE WAS WOUNDED" : "WE ARE HEALED."

But in verse 11 there are two other significant words: "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be *satisfied*. . . He shall *justify* many; for He shall bear their iniquities."

On our side we have the word JUSTIFIED; on His the word SATISFIED as telling the result of His sufferings on the cross.

What a marvellous study in these few words!

"HEALED" AND "JUSTIFIED";

"WOUNDED" AND "SATISFIED."

He shall see the fruit of His sufferings and shall be *satisfied*. In other words, such the blessing flowing to the objects of His love from

His sorrow and suffering as sin-bearer, on their account, that He proclaims Himself as abundantly compensated for all He endured. Here is love indeed! Oh, my soul, consider! Who can tell us *all* that is involved in that word "*satisfied*"? Who can reckon up the full yield of that redemption harvest? He only, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, can answer.

But surely there is one thing we may safely say. The *first-fruit* of that untold travail is to be found in the responsive love of those for whom He suffered.

It was *after* "Calvary's depth of woe" that He said to Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" And our own answer to that thrice-repeated question forms part of His present satisfaction. How jealous this should make us over ourselves!

In South Wales, recently, a little boy of six or seven had strayed away from home. While playing near a deep pond, which was separated from the high road by a wall, he fell into it.

A cabman was driving past at the critical moment. Hearing the cry of distress, he jumped off his seat and looked over the wall. Seeing a child helplessly struggling in the water, he got over the wall to effect, if possible, a rescue.

His first thought was to *wade* into the pond, but finding the depth of the mud at the bottom he had to go out again. Nothing could at that moment be seen of the drowning boy. Had he already sunk for the *last* time? No. Once more he saw him rise to the surface and throw up his arms.

Instantly he dived after him, and caught hold of him; and with the assistance of two young

men, who came up at the time, got him safely out of the pond. He was in an unconscious state, but they resorted at once to artificial respiration, and happily succeeded.

Then the kind cabman proposed to drive the rescued boy home to his mother in his own cab. As he was placing him in the conveyance, the grateful child stretched out his arms, and, putting them endearingly round the cabman's neck, said, "I do love you!"

You ask, perhaps, was that all the recompense? Probably it was, save the *inward* satisfaction of having saved a boy's life at the peril of his own. But you may be sure that those embracing arms, only just before thrown upward with feelings of utter despair, and that little sentence full of grateful affection, and tenderly expressed by lips well-nigh sealed for ever, was a gratifying tribute to the heart of the kind cab-driver.

And shall not we, who owe our all for time and eternity to Jesus, devote our lips, our lives, our all to Him, Who for the love He bears to us will find eternal satisfaction in contemplating His own mighty sacrifice?

Is it possible that any reader of these pages has never yet had his heart touched by this great love? What hardness, what unbelief! And what shall the end be?

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Escape! Escape is impossible. But why sink in the depths of eternal despair? He waits to be gracious. He is able to save.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measures of man's mind;
And the Heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

SMITTEN, BUT SAVED.

WHEN the earthquake struck Kingston, Jamaica, in January last, a Christian man was busily engaged in his workshop off one of the narrow lanes. As the building began to rock violently, and he realized that this was no slight tremor, such as all there were accustomed to, but a mighty convulsion of nature, he shared in the common impulse to rush out of the building into the street.

Springing to his feet he made for the door, only to catch his foot in something and sprawl upon the floor. The convulsion was now at its height, and looking up he saw daylight between the rocking walls and the roof. This nerved him to fresh effort; he was struggling to his feet when a falling brick hit him full on the head, nearly stunning him, badly cutting him, and altogether frustrating his purposed escape.

But that brick was aimed by a divine hand!

Before he finally got to his feet the earthquake was over, and the building did not utterly collapse upon him. Gazing into the street, what a sight met his eyes! Walls had fallen down into the narrow lane in all directions. When the dust subsided, nothing could be seen save mounds of debris. The crash of a thousand buildings had died away into the silence of death.

VOL. XIX. No. 10.

Within the few square yards outside the door of that workshop six men were killed. He would have made a seventh had he but achieved his purpose. He did not do so, thanks to a brick, which was but the servant of an almighty God of love, who

. . . Everywhere hath sway,
And *all things serve His might.*

Smitten, but saved, fitly summarizes this eventful chapter in the life of our Jamaican friend; and not only so, those words equally describe an even more eventful chapter in the *spiritual* history of untold thousands.

Their *conversion* chapter, I mean.

Some of us, it is true, were converted quietly enough. Like Lydia, of whom we read in Acts XVI., our hearts "the Lord opened," so that we "attended unto" the things brought before us in the gospel, and thus we believed; others are more like the jailer of whom the same chapter speaks, and a blow of some sort has to be struck to frustrate their foolish purposes and gain their ear.

When a sinner's ear is opened, and the distant roar of impending judgment falls upon it, his impulse is to rush somewhere, to do something to escape the threatened disaster. One commences diligent church-going, with its attendant confirmation and sacrament-taking. Another flings aside pipe and novel, and makes for the prayer-meeting. A third goes in quite a different direction, rushing into the whirl of pleasure in its many forms, and there attempting to drown all serious thought. Yet another commences a course of reformation and attempted self-im-

provement, vainly hoping thus to reach safety and peace.

We know not, reader, whether you have been awakened to your need; nor, if you have, do we know whither you have turned for refuge. But we want to lovingly warn you that all these refuges to which *natural* impulse leads us to flee are misleading and dangerous. Works, efforts, prayers, reformations, and a thousand things of that sort, are no shelter at all from judgment, and by turning to them for forgiveness and shelter, you are but rushing right into disaster and death, and not fleeing from them, as you fondly imagine.

Then it is that God's mercy acts in its own matchless way. An unexpected slip, a stunning blow, and we are saved.

Some are hit by the "brick" of "*bereavement*." Death comes along. A loved one is torn from their embrace. There is an empty chair at the table, and an aching void in the heart. This "brick" has a marvellous way of knocking scepticism out of the heads and hearts of people who are fleeing to it for refuge.

Others are smitten by "*financial loss*." Business collapses, banks fail, and the once wealthy find themselves almost penniless. The friends of their prosperous days coldly forsake them, and they exchange the pleasures of affluence for the grinding days of poverty. This is the "brick" which, aimed from above, often reaches and *blesses* the pleasure-loving man of the world.

Then, too, "*sickness*" comes and smites many. Activity is stopped. The whirl of busy life gives place to the quietness of a bed of pain. This has worked good with thousands. Then, "He

148 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction" (Job xxxiii. 16). In quiet they learn the worthlessness of their own efforts, and where true peace can be found.

"*The approach of death*" is another brick. It hits very hard, and sometimes checks the career of men who have been terribly wilful and blinded.

Be, however, assured of this: the hand that smites is moved by a heart of infinite love. God does not desire to break you, but to bless you by bringing you down flat in the dust before Him.

To bring you down. That is it. Though in the surface details of conversion there is infinite variety, in its bed-rock principles it is always the same. "Make haste and come down" was the word of Jesus to Zaccheus (Luke xix. 5). It is equally His word to *you*.

I verily believe that each one who reads these lines has some time or other been smitten. Possibly you have misinterpreted it, looking upon it as a proof that God is hard and against you, instead of seeing that it was done in love and for your salvation, thereby proving that He is for you. Anyway, our question is, Did it bring you down? and if so, Are you saved?

If only you, a poor sinner, lie prostrate in the dust, you would get a view of the gospel not to be obtained anywhere else. You would see the grace of God, the work of Christ finished and accepted, and hear the unutterable witness of the Holy Ghost. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17).

Such words as these would become light and life to your soul.

"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).

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

"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

And then in after days you will look back, and with adoring gratitude bless the Hand that smote the blow that led to your eternal salvation.

F. B. H.

GAINING BY LOSS.

WHAT cannot *God* do? What will He *not do* when His heart is set upon blessing His people? It is a common thing with Him to bring spiritual good out of temporal evil. He can extract pleasure out of pain: yea, He can enrich by impoverishing, and turn losses into gains.

I gain most by what God takes from me, for I am an immense, yea, an eternal gainer, when He fills up with Himself the want of that which He takes away. Whatever brings me this blessing, I can welcome it. Welcome every cross which brings me nearer to Jesus, and makes me live in stricter fellowship with Him. Then I can say (and feel it, too), "Farewell, fine world! Farewell all thy fine things! Farewell for ever, when they would keep me one moment from the enjoyment of my greatest good, and from the love of my best and Eternal Friend." W. R.

THE DOUBLE KNOCK.

“God hath spoken once ; twice have I heard this ; that power belongeth unto God.”—PSALM LXII. 11.

IT was during the summer of 1859 (a year remarkable in the history of the Church for the drawing of many souls to Christ), that the writer, who was then but a youth, was invited one Sunday evening, by a servant of the Lord, to accompany him in a walk to a country hamlet on the banks of the river Wye, where he was going to preach the gospel to the people who lived in that neighbourhood.

It was a critical period in the history of the writer, though it is not likely that the preacher who invited him knew anything of the circumstances that made it so. Brought up by Christian parents, and when called to leave home committed by them to the care of Christian people, still his heart was far away from God, and was prompting him to rush into any sinful folly that came within his reach, though happily prevented, to a large extent, by the restraints that the providential goodness of God had placed around him ; he nevertheless had yielded to temptation, and was learning thus early that the way of transgressors is hard, and that as a man, or a youth, soweth, so shall he also reap. These troubles had somewhat subdued and chastened his spirit, and though as yet he was unaware of it, the good hand of a Saviour-God was doubtless dealing with his conscience, and preparing his heart, so that the goodly fruits of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus might appear. He was quite ready to accompany the preacher, though without any real thought or concern as to the gravity of the moment.

The conversation on the way must have been on ordinary topics, as the writer has no recollection of anything serious having been said to him, and in due course the place of meeting was reached. It chanced to be not a church or a chapel, but a plain building that was used during the week as a laundry, and lent by a gentleman living hard by for gospel preaching on Sunday evenings, in the desire that some of his neighbours might, as regards their souls, be washed, sanctified, and justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

After singing and prayer, the preacher's text was announced; it was Revelation III. 20: "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." The word was with power, at least to the soul of the writer; he was fully aware of his state as being without Christ, and yet this glorious One was knocking and seeking an entrance into his heart, bringing with Him, as He ever does, peace to the guilty conscience, and satisfaction to the heart. The preacher, in his discourse, pressed the fact of a present Saviour, and in Him a present salvation, and dwelt on the danger and sin of procrastination. Like many other young people brought up under Christian influence, and who in consequence are well acquainted with the letter of the gospel, the writer never contemplated being eternally lost, but thought that some time, not now, he would turn to the Lord. This evening, and under this preaching, he was deeply impressed with the folly of such a course. He was also made painfully sensible that to go on hearing the gospel and yet not to receive it, not to

bow to the Lord and Saviour of all, would so deaden the conscience and harden the heart, that at last he might listen to the good news as a tale that is told, and be entirely unaffected by it. How persistently, with a firm yet gentle hand, did the gracious Lord continue knocking at the door of the writer's heart that evening!

Nothing was said as to these things either by preacher or hearer as together they walked back to the town. What was passing in the soul of the writer was of too serious a nature to be spoken of at that stage to any human being, and probably the preacher was wise in not seeking to draw it from him.

During the ensuing week the writer was much occupied with his necessary duties, and though the exercises produced did not altogether pass away, to a large extent they subsided. Still, the Lord had caused His voice to be heard. He had laid His gracious hand upon the wanderer, and nothing could hinder the accomplishment of His will, and that was to bless.

The following Sunday the writer was invited to the house of some Christian friends to tea. They were aged, and were truly interested in his spiritual welfare, but nothing of importance was said, though, not going out themselves that evening, conversation was prolonged until after the usual hour for going to the gospel meeting, and the writer was late in reaching the hall.

The preacher was at the desk. Singing and prayer were over; and as the writer took his seat the text was read. Quite unexpected by him, the preacher was the same he had heard at the laundry the previous Sunday, and more remarkable still, the text was the same: "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."

This was, so to speak, the second knock, and though the text only was heard by the writer that night, it was enough; the Lord Himself now opened the door, and while the light of that Blessed One streamed in, conviction was deepened, faith sprang up, and confidence was there. The Lord had completely gained the day, not by a mere act of power, though divine power was there, but by the subduing influence of that grace in which He had drawn near to a poor wayward and wandering sinner. There was no ecstasy, no excitement, no desire to proclaim anything to others, though that followed in due time. There was exercise as to many things, though all under the eye of One Whose every touch produced confidence. Light through the word as to the value of the blood of Christ followed, with an enlarged spiritual apprehension of the glory of His person, and the satisfying fulness of His love. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

This grace continues until the present, and fills the heart with the blessed assurance that His love will never relax its hold, but that He will have His willing captive with and like Himself for ever.

F. W. G.

Where the Gospel Begins.—“The gospel begins at the close of God’s experience of man’s heart; and calls us from that in order that we should have joy and peace from the experience of what is in His heart.”

J. N. D.

THE OVERWHELMING FLOOD AND THE SUPERABUNDANT HARVEST.

IN the heart of Abyssinia, that mountainous region lying to the south of Egypt, and which contains so many glaciers and snow-clad summits, there rises one of the chief tributaries of the great river Nile. As summer advances the exceptional heat causes much of the snow to melt, with the result that the water in the river is raised to a great extent. As this goes on, the banks of the river further down, which are very high, begin to be unable to contain this extraordinary supply, so that by the early autumn in each year the waters gain the upper hand, swell over the ordinary confines, and flood the land on each side for many miles, all along the course.

Not only is there a supply of water, but the water itself is laden with a fine mud which serves to fertilize the land as well, so that when the waters have passed off to the sea, this thin coating is an invigorating agent in addition.

This is an annual occurrence, the time of the rise and fall being well known, so that any evil likely to follow the flood can be provided against. With what eager anticipation do the peasants regard the rise! how delighted they are when its coming is announced! A high Nile is to them the best of blessings, for a low Nile means a poor supply of water, and thousands of acres left for the sun to turn into a mere sandy stretch of waste. The flood means corn and cotton; it means the provision of the necessities of everyday life—it means life itself.

Imagine a stranger to this country standing by

THE SUPERABUNDANT HARVEST. 155

the river-side and looking down on it for the first time, ignorant of this remarkable phenomenon, and seeing day by day the increase in volume, in rapidity of flow, and in the height of the water. With what anxiety he would note its approach to the limits of the banks, and with what haste he would flee from it as it began to overflow and cover the land on every side! You say he should be instructed in the true condition of things, and assurance should be given that things were all happening for the prosperity and good of the land.

Indeed? You are, my reader, able to give advice in this case because you *know* the true significance of the rise of the Nile; but do you know the significance of the rise of the waters of the judgment of God till they overwhelmed His Holy Son? He Who, when in their depths, cried out, "The waters are come into My soul: I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow Me!" He Who went so low that the weeds of death were wrapped about His head—mark of the primal curse.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die," was not applicable to Him, as He had never sinned—nay, had always glorified and honoured His God every moment of His life. He had not sinned, therefore He need not die. The only one who had a *right* to live was the One Who voluntarily died, and in dying felt its pangs the more deeply. Even coming near to sin and its consequences caused Him to weep; but bearing it, and being made sin, was to Him the cause of suffering beyond all human conception. The waters indeed went in unto His soul.

Now why was all this? Was such condescension

really necessary? It was indeed! Nothing else could be devised by God Himself that would satisfy the claims of His nature and character, and it is certain that the sinner, shut up in righteous condemnation, could not satisfy them. Only One could do it—God's own Son, His beloved Son alone could do it. And this only by going under the overflow of wrath and judgment, yea, down to death itself. But having done it, having died, having met those claims, He has been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. The floods of judgment for every believer have passed in His death. A consequent golden harvest follows in His resurrection. Where sin once prevailed, blessings innumerable and immeasurable abound through grace. What an extraordinary change!

Are you unacquainted with the fact that on account of His going into the floods of God's judgment death need have no terror for you, but rather that, believing on Him Who died, a rich resurrection-harvest may be yours?

Now look again! The stream of Death threatens to overflow its banks in a way that personally concerns YOU. Nearer and nearer they rise. Answer to yourself and to God whether, when they touch your feet—when they actually reach you—you will welcome them as the bearers of your soul to the heavenly rest, to the presence of Him "Who passed through Death's dark raging flood to make your title sure." Answer to yourself and to God. Oh, if those cold waters were to reach you this moment, would they overwhelm your soul in judgment, and bear you away to the sea of Eternity—away from God, away from blessing, to return again no more? **FOR EVER LOST!**

Consider well. Death will either ENRICH you by giving you a knowledge of the love of God expressed in Christ, or OVERWHELM you for ever as a proud neglecter of God's so great salvation.

* * * * *

Egypt has no rains, no springs, no mines, no resources other than the river; all the crops depend upon the annual floods. And in the same way, those who have come in for blessing through the death of Christ, find that that alone which was the secret of their blessing at the beginning, is the alone secret of their refreshment and sustenance to the end. S. S.

A SILENT WITNESS.

WHO was it? "A woman in the city," a sinner of unenviable notoriety, her offences many (Luke VII. 36-50).

Her *name* is not mentioned, nor, for our profit, was it necessary. Strange to say, our comfort is bound up with her *character*, not with her name. And so with the repentant robber at Calvary. His *name* would have been no gain to us. Enough for us that our adorable Saviour was ready to make immediate use of his sinful history—a history crowned by insults thrown at Himself—and display before our wondering eyes, on that dark background, the glories of His matchless grace. Only think! He would not only take a "dying thief" to Paradise *graciously*, but at His own personal cost, through suffering, and bloodshedding, and death, He would do it *righteously*.

Who shall count the thousands who have been

158 TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

made to taste, for the first time, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, as expressed in that well-known verse—

“The dying thief rejoiced to see
That Saviour in his day ;
And by that blood, though vile as he,
My sins are washed away.”

The charm of the story is in the man's character, not his name.

And so with the record of this woman in Simon's house. Like a stream of heavenly comfort, the mention of the Saviour's grace to one of such a character has been flowing on and on for centuries past; and, blessed be God, to this day, for the healing of wounded consciences and broken hearts, it flows as freely and blesses as richly as ever.

That such a shame-branded sinner might fearlessly come to Jesus, and the vilest of the vile find a welcome at His feet, was the great truth that came into prominence that day in the Pharisee's house, and this in the presence of men who were so far deluded as to think that *any* child of Adam could stand before God on the ground of his own merit. But though Satan might induce one of them to cast contempt upon such grace, that grace would prove itself only the more determined to magnify itself. It would even include, in the undeserved blessing, the Pharisee himself when he came to the sense of *needing* it; when he could honestly confess himself to be no better than the woman he despised, a moral bankrupt, with “nothing to pay.”

As for the woman herself, she was not there to speak of herself or for herself. She gave no public address, and, as far as the record goes, not one

single word did she utter. Her silent tears spoke for her. But they spake of Him at Whose feet she was shedding them, and oh, how eloquently! Nor was her testimony confined to Simon's house. As long as there is a repentant sinner to listen, an offender that needs forgiveness, she will continue to speak. How little *she* thought of this! But Jesus knew how far-reaching her silent witness would be.

Has the reader any ear for such a story of grace? The feet of the Same blessed Saviour may still be reached; not now in the presence of disdainful Pharisees, but where there is joy, joy, joy—"joy over one sinner that repenteth."

Have you already come to Him? Then, remember, it is now your privilege to be a *witness* for Him and to *show* in your daily life, even if you could never utter a word, what great things the Lord hath done for you, in His deep compassion toward you. Let me close with a little figure:—

The dewdrop that shines in the sunlight's gleam
Had once its part in yon muddy stream ;
But the power that made it an orb of light
Designed it a place in the rainbow bright,
That other black drops in the world below
Might see what the Sun for *them* could do.

A loathsome drop in a pool of sin
Was I, when God's mighty love shone in ;
It drew me away from my sinful plight
To shine for Him here like the dewdrop bright.
And this His great end, that a creature like me
Should show forth His praise for Eternity.

GEO. C.

A SAVED ONE'S SONG.

“My soul shall make her boast in the Lord : the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.”—Ps. xxxiv. 2.

A SINNER once, of deepest dye,
Defiled without, within ;
Now, spotless in God's holy eye,
I'm cleansed from every sin.

Precious blood of Jesus,
The Son of God eternal !
Oh ! the blood of Jesus !
It cleanseth from all sin.

In doubt and dread, in fear and shame,
I dare not then draw near ;
But Jesus has declared God's name,
And cast out every fear.

Changeless love of Jesus !
The love of God in Jesus ;
Oh ! the love of Jesus !
It casts out every fear.

With foes and snares on every hand,
Apart from Him I fail ;
But in His strength I boldly stand,
Though hell and earth assail.

Mighty power of Jesus !
The risen-power of Jesus !
Oh ! the power of Jesus,
Almighty Lord of all !

Made fit for endless bliss on high,
Accepted *in Him* there,
Soon, in the twinkling of an eye,
We'll meet Him in the air.

Blessed Hope ! He's coming ;
Yea, surely, quickly coming ;
Joy of joys ! we're going
To meet Him in the air.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

ONLY PROVE HIM.

1. "COME AND SEE."

IF the report is insufficient, then "*Come and see*"; for, alas, people prefer sight to faith, and that which is tangible and visible to that which is spiritual. And yet how much of faith there is in our daily life! How much we take on credit and believe without any evidence whatever! We believe all kinds of reports, and act upon them, and repeat them, and never question them, and we may be quite right in doing so; but in divine things much less credibility is admitted. Strange we wish the evidence of sense ere we believe what God has spoken, and think that, having some such evidence, our faith will be justified!

The fact is, however, that the man who will not believe without seeing would not believe by seeing. There is something deeper than evidence in question. There is *will*.

A miracle never produced a saving faith, though it may have confirmed a faith already operative. A man might rise from the dead, and yet this would not persuade people.

Then is evidence not allowable?

May the senses have no place? They may.

"We have found . . . Jesus of Nazareth," said Philip to Nathanael.

"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" was the answer.

VOL. XIX. No. 11.

The point was wisely left unnoticed, but the challenge was quietly made that he should "come and see."

Granted that, and the challenger felt sure of his victory; nor was he wrong. Nathanael came, and saw, and heard, and at once confessed: "Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel."

There was a something in the Nazarene that evoked this true confession. There in lowly guise was the Son of God—there, without the insignia of royalty, stood the King of Israel!

By that sight the prejudices of Nathanael were all dissipated: his allegiance was won for ever.

And that which was true for him is true for any. It is absolutely impossible to have conscious dealing (albeit invisible and inaudible) with the living Lord on high, and not be the recipient of blessing.

If my reader has any question as to this, all I can say is: "Come and see!" Just go in simple, direct, childlike faith to Him Whose grace is unchanged, and I can certify that you shall in no wise be cast out. "For every one that asketh receiveth" (Luke xi. 10). "Every one" is surely ample enough for the greatest doubter, and to "ask" is the very least you can do!

2. "COME, SEE A MAN."

A Man, a wonderful Man has come! He has "told me all that ever I did," said the "woman of Samaria," and a black and guilty "all" it was. But this Man drew back the curtain of her life to her in such a way, so firmly, so tenderly, so unerringly, that she was constrained to ask, "Is not this the Christ?"

And, mark, there was not merely the unmasking of her life, there was also the discovery to her of God as a giver, and of living water, and with it, worship of the Father; for "salvation," He said, was "of the Jews."

Salvation, and such a full salvation as all this implied, was preached to her, and somehow applied in such a way as that she was, may I say reverently, charmed by the wonderful Preacher; so charmed that she could not conceal her delight. Leaving her water-pot, she went to the city and said to the men, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

True, He told her very much more than the "all things" that she ever had done. Clearly she had taken in very little about a giving God, or living water, or the worship of the Father; but she had learned herself, in the unerring light of One Whom she owned as the Christ.

Her invitation was accepted. Many came and heard for themselves, and thus got to know that He was "indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Nor could it have been otherwise, for "he that seeketh findeth" in a search where none can be disappointed.

"None shall seek that shall not find;
Mercy called whom Grace inclined,
Nor shall any willing heart
Hear the awful word 'Depart.'"

3. "COME, SEE THE PLACE WHERE THE LORD LAY."

If Nathanael came and saw the Son of God; and if the men of Samaria were invited to come and see the Christ, the women in Joseph's garden

were asked by angel voices to come and see the place where the Lord had lain. He lay there no longer. He Who had, at first, lain in a manger, lay at last in a tomb. But now He was risen, and the place where He had lain in death was vacant. His resurrection proved the completeness of His work.

The angels announced a risen Christ; and we know that the veritable body which had been in death was now raised therefrom. "A spirit," He said, "hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have." He gave many infallible proofs of the actuality of His corporeal presence after His resurrection, so that the voice of the sceptic should be silenced on that subject. Moreover, "this same Jesus," we read, "shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

He rose; He ascended; He is coming again. We have to do with a living Lord.

But there was a place where the Lord lay—the Lord, the Creator, the Redeemer, Whose precious blood-shedding wrought atonement for all who believe—the Son of God, the risen and glorified Man. This place these devoted women were bid to see, and to understand the victory over Death and Satan which He had gained. What a revelation and a solace! Some, then, have come and seen the Son of God and King of Israel; some came and saw the Christ; some saw the place where the Lord lay, and on their hearts was sealed the glory of His Person and the value of His work. These are the bases on which our blessing and God's glory rest immutable for ever.

J. W. S.

ALONE WITH GOD!

IT is always a wonderful moment of soul history, when for the first time there is the consciousness of being exposed to the all-searching eye of God. Then there is the involuntary cry, "O God! Thou hast searched me and known me."

Overtaken by a heavy thunderstorm recently, we ran to a field hovel and soon were in conversation with a shepherd who had also availed himself of its shelter.

"There is a great storm coming, shepherd," we said; and added, "it is an important matter to be sheltered from that."

"It is!" he replied seriously, "and, thank God, I am, for I could take you to the very place where it was settled."

Encouraged to recount his experience, he readily told us the story. "Before I came here," he began, "I had a Christian master, who often spoke to me of 'religion' (as I called it), but I did not appear to listen to him. I was a great sinner, and had little thought of God. One summer day, ten years ago, I was hoeing in the cornfield, and the wheat was long so that I was nearly hidden. I do not know why, but suddenly I looked around and discovered that no one was in sight. This was not unusual, but that day the thought came to me, 'If anything happened to me, I should fall here and they would not be able to find me.' I felt that I was alone with God! Then I flung off my cap, went down on my knees, and there and then I gave my heart to God and asked Him to help me to live for Him."

“But were you really convicted of sin?” we interposed.

“Yes! for I was a sinner if ever there was one, and I knew that nothing but the blood of Christ could cleanse me.

“As I rose from my knees,” he continued, “everything seemed changed to me, I was so happy. It seemed as though harvest day had come, for even the corn looked glorious, and I said to myself aloud, ‘If I had known that it was like this, I would have turned to God years ago.’

“I went home that evening and told my wife all that had happened in the field, and that same evening she was brought to the Lord too. That was ten years ago,” he repeated, “and my only regret is that I was not converted before.”

Such was the simple testimony of one whom God had, in the greatness of His grace and the plenitude of His mercy, brought to Himself. No powerful sermon was used to his conversion, no thrilling eloquence or touching song moved him, but the solemn reality of being alone with God. Then he found that the God against Whom he had sinned was the One to Whom he could turn as a Saviour-God, because of the precious blood of Christ.

Why should *you* not come into the blessing with the same simplicity? If you would get into the presence of God in the acknowledgment of your guilt, you would find that, under the shelter of that blood, God has not a charge to bring against you.

“And are you saved *for ever*?” we afterwards asked our friend.

“Oh, yes! if I hold on to Him,” was the unexpected reply.

“Did you not say that it was the blood of

Christ that saved you—and you would surely agree that His precious blood will never lose its value, even though you were to fail?” we suggested.

“It never would!” was his ready response.

“Then your blessing depends upon Christ—and Him alone. You have His own word for it: ‘My sheep . . . shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand’ (John x. 27, 28). Tell us, shepherd, does the security of one of your lambs depend upon the lamb holding on to you or upon your power and care for it?”

“On me, of course, or I should not be entrusted with it,” was the natural reply.

“Exactly: now apply the illustration. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd. He has the care of the sheep, and He has said, ‘This is the Father’s will . . . that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing’ (John vi. 39). In that sense we have been entrusted to Him by the Father, and surely we cannot doubt either His love or His power to keep us. To put it simply, it is not the question of your holding on to Christ, but of His holding you, and thus your eternal security depends on Him.

“Your joy, however, as a believer, *does* depend on your faithfulness and keeping in nearness to Him, and hence the great importance of following the Shepherd. ‘My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me.’ That is the path of true happiness.”

May you, dear reader, not only find SHELTER from the coming storm of judgment, SALVATION from your sins and all their consequences, but SECURITY in Him.

F. S. M.

“THE END” OF THE “HARD WAY.”

PROVERBS XIII. 15; XIV. 12.

HOW often does Satan bolster up his victims for years with prospective imaginary happiness, only to cast them aside like a sucked-out orange in the end! Even the flimsy *promise* of happiness is rudely torn from their grasp at last, and they are left a prey to remorse—“without God and without hope.” Can we wonder that the great deceiver should succeed in driving a despairing one to suicide?

My attention was arrested by the account of an inquiry into the death of a retired publican—aged sixty—who had shot himself. In his pocket was found a letter, which read as follows:—

“The money found on me will do to bury me where I fall. Good enough for a dog like me. Going mad with remorse for my guilty soul! I am mad! mad! mad!”

What agony of soul must have been his! No wonder at the verdict “of unsound mind.” Without God and without hope in this world, he was driven to seek “peace in oblivion.” Cruel delusion.

Remorse for “his guilty soul” had driven this poor man mad. His last testimony shows that after a long life, from which God had been excluded, he had at last been awakened to the fact that he was “guilty before God.” What a fearful awakening! Reader, take warning. Unsaved, world-loving, Christ-rejecting, remember that you are yourself equally “GUILTY BEFORE GOD,” equally under the power of Satan, and that, sooner or later you will awake to all that those

"THE END" OF THE "HARD WAY." 169

words really mean. If this does not take place in "time," it will in "eternity," all too late for your soul's blessing.

The "Judge of all the earth" will banish the wicked and unbelieving into outer darkness.

Awake now! View yourself in the search-light of God's Word. Read Romans III. Be honest with yourself. Look into your own heart, and you must surely confess that you are indeed "guilty before God." Do not wait until you come face to face with death. Do not tarry until remorse has got you in its fearful grip and you find yourself hopelessly too late. NOW, while your mind is sound; NOW, while you are in health, confess your state before the God of all grace. What glorious news there is for you! God is now proclaiming forgiveness. He is not even asking you to plead for it. He is sending *to you* a proclamation of forgiveness: "Be it known unto you . . . that through this Man [the glorified Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts XIII. 38).

It means this, repentant, believing reader. Your indebtedness to God has been met. The punishment merited by your sins fell on Jesus when He was "made sin." During those awful three hours of darkness at Calvary, when God hid His face from that Blessed One, the whole question was settled. Jesus suffered for you—the "just for the unjust." The Sinless One died for the sinful. He bowed His head beneath the judgment of a sin-hating God that you and I might be saved from it. Wondrous, blessed Deliverer! The writer can say from *his heart*, "My Lord and my Saviour." What about *you*, my reader?

God raised Jesus from the dead, and now through Him, in His name, God proclaims forgiveness to all. Will you not receive Him to-day? Will you not acknowledge your guilt to Him? He will not reproach you! No! Impossible; for He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Pour out your guilty soul before Him, and He will give you the conscious joy of God's forgiveness.

Delay is often fatal. Awakenings sometimes come too late. On that great Day of Judgment men will realize what it means to be overcome "with remorse for their guilty souls." May it not be so with you.

Jesus died that you might be spared that terror. He drained at Calvary the cup of judgment, that you and I might have a running-over cup of blessing. Turn to Him *now*. Trust Him *now*. He will fill your life with gladness, and you will go through the world with this song in your heart:—

"Conscience now no more condemns me,
For His own most precious blood
Once for all has washed and cleansed me,
Cleansed me in the eyes of God."

C. J. B.

The Love of God seen in the Judgment of Sin.—"Nothing gives such a sense of the horrible-ness of sin; nothing is such a testimony to the judgment of God against sin as seeing Christ under it; and yet nothing is such a testimony of the love of God to the poor sinner."

J. N. D.

GRATIS.

171

GRATIS.

JOHAN WICKLIFFE, who has often been styled the morning star of the Reformation, was born in a Yorkshire village in the year 1324. England was in great darkness at the time. Converted to God, he soon grew in His knowledge and enjoyed a much fuller apprehension of the precious fundamental truths of the gospel than the mass around him. Thousands were seeking to attain heaven through their own fleshly religiousness and good works, and the free grace of God was very little known. The doctrine of human merit oft fell on Wickliffe's ear, when he is reported to have been wont to give emphatic testimony by uttering the short prayer, "Heal us *gratis*, O Lord!"

Thank God for these precious words of His dear servant. A mine of blessing is wrapped up in that one word "*gratis*." Men are very slow in their apprehension of it. Self-righteousness is very deeply rooted in the human heart. To have my soul healed *gratis* makes nothing of me and my merit, and is very humiliating. But each one must come to it, who desires to have part in the blessing announced in the gospel.

GRATIS. Have you ever weighed what that signifies? Ponder over it now. You will never have a better opportunity. *Gratis* means free, for nothing. God in His great grace heals us freely. He demands nothing whatever on our part in the way of merit. And why? For the simple reason that the required payment for sin, if we may so put it, has been made long, long ago. Man often tried hard under law to meet

God's requirement, but only exposed himself and his own inability. Are you still so foolish as to think that you can do better? Dear friend, it is no question of what you can do, but what God has done. He has clearly shown that human merit, whatever form it may take, is utterly unavailing. But in due time in His great love He sent His Son. Having become Man, perfect, holy Man, He met and solved the whole question of sin. And God hath made Him, Who knew no sin, to be sin for us. The ransom price for sinners was His precious blood. It was shed on Calvary's cross. By it full payment was made. God has been glorified in His Son, and on the ground of His finished work heals sinners *gratis*.

These are His terms, the only ones. Men in their folly and blindness and self-conceit seek to make their own terms. God will have none of them. Would you dare to offer a bag of base coin for the discharge of a debt at the Bank of England? And what percentage of your doings do you think are without alloy? Has not God said that "in all your doings your sins do appear"? Do you not perceive that the moment you offer anything to God as the ground or part of the ground of your acceptance, you are denying the finished work of Christ, and making salvation of, or partly of, works, when God has said it is "*not of works, lest any man should boast*"? (Eph. ii. 9). Would you dare to make a boast of what you have done in the light of His holy presence? "Heal us gratis, O Lord," said Wickliffe. He, wise man, knew what God's terms were. And in a more simple way he could scarcely have expressed them. Are you so deceived, through the boasted progress and

surrounding infidelity of the twentieth century, as to be too proud to learn from God's dear servant of nearly six centuries ago? Well, if you are, you will find when it is too late that he is in the kingdom of God and you are shut out. You will lament your folly then. God heals "gratis," whatever any man may say, or think, or write. God offers salvation freely, not to every one that worketh, but to every one that *believeth* (Acts xvi. 31; Rom. iv. 5-8). You, poor sinner, may be healed gratis this day (Rom. v. 15-21).

But some reader may say, "You shut out works altogether."

Far be the thought.

But you say, "Salvation is gratis."

So it is. But that does not shut out good works. It certainly and scripturally shuts them out as the ground of it. But the free and abounding grace of God is the very best of teachers. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," etc. (Titus ii. 11-12). The finished work of Christ needs no addition of any works of ours, either before we believe on Him, or after, as a partial ground of our acceptance. But faith without works is dead (James ii. 17). Hence, if there be no works as the fruit of your faith, take earnest heed lest your faith is dead, and you are deceiving yourself.

The healing of the soul *gratis* is the precious truth. May God in His grace give many who may read these lines to apprehend it, that they be healed.

E. H. C.

OVERCOMING POWER.

THE entire history of man from his fall in Eden to the present moment is an undisputed witness of the fact that his greatest deliverances have been so unmistakably of God that they have left him nothing to glory in. Not an inch of ground have they left on which the foot of human pride could stand and make her selfish boast.

“Salvation is of the Lord,” said Jonah in the whale’s belly; and certainly his position there, and the way that led to it, left little for him to glory in.

The sons of Jacob owed their provision in the years of famine to the one whom they had hated and sold to slavery. But, as Joseph more than once reminded them, though he was personally the instrument, it was *God* Who had thus wrought for them, “to save their lives by a great deliverance” (Gen. XLV. 7). God so overruled their wickedness, that their sin against their brother became a stepping-stone to their own blessing. But what room did such grace leave them for self-glorying? None whatever.

Centuries after this the fixed time had arrived for the descendants of these very men to be delivered from their galling slavery under Pharaoh. “I have surely seen the affliction of My people. . . . I have heard their cry. . . . I know their sorrows, and am come down to deliver them” (Exod. III. 7, 8). On the selfsame day as God had promised, and without a single stroke of their own hand, He brought them forth triumphantly, and this when, to all human calculation, deliverance seemed furthest from their reach. Thus was nothing left for them but to say, *What hath God wrought!*

But not many days later this band of six hundred thousand and their families were face to face with another difficulty. The pursuing hosts of Pharaoh were close upon their heels, and in front the forbidding waters of the Red Sea. Now was the time to boast in their delivering power, if they had any! But in their extremity all they could do was to cry in the ears of Moses, the man of God. And what happened? God heard. God interfered. God delivered. In whom could they boast save in their Great Deliverer and His overpowering might?

But another foe had now to be faced. Amalek evidently took early advantage of their weakness and of their ignorance of warfare, and made onslaught upon them. These determined foes seemed to have everything in their favour, yet they were defeated. But the secret of victory was not in Israel's prowess. Those uplifted hands on the mountain-top connected their weakness with Divine Almightyness, and left them in the hour of triumph positively nothing to boast in save God Himself.

Once more. After forty years of wandering the thousands of Israel were taken over Jordan. Jericho and her king and his mighty men of valour had to be encountered. What can such novices at aggressive warfare do in front of those defiant walls? What indeed! But God has thoughts and plans of His own. *His* wisdom is never outwitted or baffled: His resources never beggared. Seven priests, each with a ram's-horn trumpet in his hand, are directed to compass the city once a day for six days and blow their trumpets. On the seventh day they were to do this seven times. How contemptible must

such means have appeared to the warriors in Jericho! What a display of weakness! Exactly; but that, no doubt, was the divine intention. What of weakness if *God's* mighty overcoming power is behind it, and at the appointed moment the walls of the city fall flat! But not a single stone in those high walls was dislodged or ever disturbed by Israel's power. *God* had acted. He won His own victory in His own way, and left no room for human boasting.

The story of the barley-cake in the Midianite soldier's dream in Gideon's days (Judges VII. 13), the story of the jaw-bone in the hand of the Nazarite, Samson, and of the smooth stone in the hand of the stripling shepherd, all declare the same truth. *God's* power is the great overcoming power, and man's weakness only makes room for it. "When I am weak, then am I strong."

It is the *crippled* Jacob that prevails! "The lame takes the prey." Happy, therefore, is every servant upon whose heart is written by the Spirit of the Lord, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." "I can do *all things* through Christ that gives me power."

"Contented, now, upon my thigh
I halt, till life's short journey end;
All helplessness, all weakness, I
On Thee alone for strength depend,
Nor have I power from Thee to move;
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

"Lame as I am, I take the prey;
Hell, earth and sin, with ease o'ercome;
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
And, as a bounding hart, fly home,
Through all Eternity to prove
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love."

GEO. C.

TIDINGS OF LIGHT AND PEACE.

THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND OF PRESENT OPPORTUNITY.

“**P**AST—future. What are they? Shadows! The past is a memory—the future a hope. The present is the only thing we have given us; it stands waiting with its hand outstretched. How many of us grasp it? We are all lost among the shadows!”

Such were the words that caught my eye on what some people call a “play-card” (placard), thus unintentionally perhaps stating its true character, viz. a card of the play. This one consisted of quotations from a play which was being acted in the place where I was staying, to show—I presume—its high moral tone. If so, it was the sugar with which the devil coats some of his poison-pills. For if he can only get people’s minds occupied with the *unreal*, he knows well enough he will close out from them what is *real* and of eternal importance to their precious souls.

“There is many a true word spoken in jest,” says the proverb. And there is many a true word used in a play which is in the main a fiction.

Let us consider the above words. They are doubtless true enough of the unconverted, pleasure-loving crowd. But, thank God, to the

Christian *the past*, though it be a memory, *is a reality*, and no shadow. *The future*, though it be a hope, *is a certainty*, and no shadowy one either.

But how true of the unconverted that "the present is the only thing we have given us; it stands waiting with its hand outstretched." Yes, God in His rich mercy, "Our SAVIOUR-GOD, Who will have all men to be saved," has given men this day of grace, this "day of salvation," has lengthened it out in "long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (1 Tim. II. 3, 4; 2 Peter III. 9). THE PRESENT, then, is given you, dear reader, that you may repent and believe the glad tidings of full and free salvation in a risen, glorified Saviour. For "behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. VI. 2). "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. III. 7, 8).

Will you then grasp the outstretched hand of this golden present in which, and in which alone, such priceless blessings are offered you?

"To-morrow too late may be."

"The road of 'by and by' leads to the town of 'never,'" says the Spanish proverb. How many procrastinators, blinded by the god of this world, have found it to be a true one, to their own eternal loss.

Hundreds of years ago a man was suddenly awakened out of his sleep by an earthquake. So terrified was he by what might result from the doors of the prison, of which he was governor, being thrown open by the earthquake, that he was about to commit suicide. Happily, however, he was stopped by the voice of one of

the prisoners, assuring him they were all there. Calling for a light he sprang in and, trembling, fell down before two of his prisoners, to whose sufferings he himself had added gratuitous cruelty. Bringing them out, he demanded of them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And was immediately told, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Grasping the outstretched hand of a present offer of salvation, and listening with all readiness of mind to "the word of the Lord," which was spoken to him by His servants, he believed there and then with rejoicing. Instead of destroying him, God saved him. Then he testified to the reality of his faith by submitting to be baptized, he and all his straightway, and by treating God's servants with every kindness (Acts xvi. 22-34).

To this man his guilty past was no shadow. To have peace with God as to it all was no shadow. To be in the enjoyment of His favour through Christ in the present was no shadow. And the glory of God, in the certain hope of which he could rejoice, was no shadow; nor was it a shadow to have the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given to him (see Rom. v. 1, 2, 5). Neither are they shadows to any believer "on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 24, 25). However it may be with the poor worldling, believers are not "lost among the shadows."

And how is it with you, dear reader? The "year of grace" 1907 is fast hastening to a close. You have reached its last month. Still

long-suffering mercy waits, and stretches forth its hand with forgiveness, justification, and salvation for you. Will you grasp it NOW? To paraphrase a well-known gospel hymn:—

Next year the sun may never rise
 Upon *thy* long-deluded sight;
This is the time, oh, then be wise,
 Why not to-day be saved, outright?

True for us, too, dear fellow-believer, that “the present is the only time given us,” in which to live and testify to, and work for Him Who *died* for us. Work “while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” Soon shall we hear His summoning shout to meet Him in the air. Soon we shall see His blessed face. Soon will He receive us to Himself, that where He is we may be also—with Him “in the Father’s house.” Soon those who amid reproach and shame have sought to do His pleasure and serve Him, will hear His “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” This may be the last year we shall have in which to serve Him here.

“Then let us always watch and pray,
 For time is hasting fast away,
 And Jesus’ coming nigh.”

W. G. B.

Utter Badness and Perfect Grace.—“What enabled Peter afterwards to strengthen his brethren? He discovered that there was utter badness in himself when he meant best, and that there is perfect grace in Christ even when he did worst.”

J. N. D.

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN."

"**Y**E *must* be born again." This word **MUST** leaves no loophole for escape. It insists upon a great moral necessity. The Lord was addressing a learned, religious leader when He used it. The great question as to how a man could see or enter the kingdom of God was His theme. He does not say "ye should" or "ye ought," but ye *must* be born again if you would either see or enter the kingdom. If necessary for such a man as Nicodemus, it must be so for you. The life you have is forfeited. It is absolutely unmendable. To enter God's kingdom you must have a new beginning. New birth is not baptism. Many religious leaders teach that it is because water is mentioned; but water refers to the Word of God, as you may see by looking at Ephesians v. 26. Baptism is a symbol of death, not life (Rom. vi. 3). New birth is the beginning of a new spiritual existence originated by the Holy Ghost. "That which is born of the *flesh* is *flesh*; that which is born of the *Spirit* is *spirit*" (John III. 6). Have you ever seriously faced the question, "Am I born again?" If not, may God graciously awaken you now.

An officer's daughter had been aroused to the necessity of the new birth in a most unexpected way. Some friends on the Continent had invited her to stay with them, and had arranged a private ball on Sunday evening in honour of her arrival. It is no unusual thing in some countries to attend a religious service in the forenoon and spend the rest of the day in pleasure. It so

happened that Miss M——'s dress did not quite fit, and one of the maids was desired to make the necessary alteration. Her mistress observed to Miss M——: "This silly girl thinks it wrong to have balls on Sundays, and looks upon us as very great sinners. Is it not so, Maria?"

Maria modestly replied, "Yes, I think it strange that persons professing to be Christians should go to balls and theatres at all."

This remark led to a lengthy conversation, in the course of which Maria pressed upon the ladies the claims of God and the necessity of regeneration, adding, "Except a man be BORN AGAIN *he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

"What do you mean," asked Miss M——, "by being born again?"

[We will reply for her. It is to have a sense of the need of Christ begotten in the soul by the Spirit of God, a need which nothing but His death can satisfy.]

At the appointed hour friends assembled and dancing began. Outwardly all was gaiety and pleasure, but one, at least, was sad at heart. The arrow of conviction had pierced the conscience of the guest for whom the ball had been arranged.

Some continental clergymen indulge in these Sunday amusements, and on this occasion three were present. As soon as Miss M—— saw them she resolved to seek an answer to a question which greatly troubled her. Presently a favourable opportunity occurred, and approaching a venerable man with silvery hair, she said:—

"Will you allow me to ask you a question?"

"Certainly, my child. I will answer it for you, too, if I can."

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

183

“Pray, sir, what is it to be born again?”

Astonished he replied, “This is not the place to speak on that subject. I will answer your question another time.”

“Sir,” she said, “you must tell me now!”

“Well,” said he, “if I must tell you I must. To be born again is to be reformed in life. When a person who has been very wicked amends his ways and forsakes the vices he formerly followed, then he may be said to be born again.”

She thanked her teacher, but found this was no satisfactory reply to her question; it increased rather than eased her sorrow.

Later in the evening Miss M—— embraced an opportunity of speaking to another minister, hoping her question would meet with a reply suited to her need. She again inquired: “What is it to be born again?”

For some time he tried to evade the question, but being pressed for a definite answer replied: “All who are baptized are born again, and have the life of God in their soul.”

This explanation she knew to be false. She had been baptized, and was convinced that it had not made her a true Christian, or begotten divine life in her soul. She knew it was vain for her to look back to the baptismal font for relief from the burden now weighing so heavily on her spirit.

Neither reformation nor baptism is new birth. It is the sovereign action of God, like the wind blowing where it listeth, and is accompanied by a loathing of self never before known (Ezek. xxxvi. 31). Its effect is like that of a brilliant ray of sunshine streaming through a crack into a long-closed room. It discovers defilement

hitherto unsuspected. Are you miserable, wretched, dejected because of your sinful state? Thank God, there is blessing in store for you. Soul misery and soul happiness are twin sisters.

There is another *must* in John III. The Son of Man *must* be lifted up, that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Miss M—— retired to her room that night, but not to rest. Sleep departed from her eyes. The mighty wind of the Spirit had blown on her dead heart and conscience and awakened the grand question, What *must I* do to be saved? Next morning she opened her Bible, not now as a duty, but to find a solution to the question which had raised such a storm in her soul. She read as she had never read before. She prayed and agonized for the answer to her question, "What is it to be born again?" After a week she left for home. There she again sought help from God's Word. The more she read the more guilty, and polluted, and sinful she saw herself to be. Distracted and wretched she turned to Christ Jesus as her only and all-sufficient Saviour. Like the stricken Israelites of old she found that in order to *live* she must *look*. The eye of her faith rested upon the uplifted Saviour. She looked and lived. Herein she found the great answer to her question.

New birth, *the Spirit's work in her*, had produced a deep, deep need. *Christ's work for her on the cross* had met that need!

Life, life eternal, she discovered, was a gift from God. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting

life." She turned in simple faith to an uplifted Saviour. The load was gone, the burden removed; her conscience was at rest, her heart filled with peace and joy. In Christ Jesus she had found all she sought, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. I. 30).

And you also will find these blessed things if you turn simply, wholly, and only to Christ.

Having got her heart filled and her conscience relieved, she determined to *live* for the *One Who had died* for her. But she was soon to be tested. A ball was arranged by the officers of the regiment to which her father belonged. The aristocracy of the capital were invited. "Of course you will be there," Colonel M—— said to his daughter. The words fell on her heart like a thunderbolt. Throwing herself into her father's arms, with tears she besought him to allow her to absent herself. "I will obey you in everything that is not sinful, like a dutiful, loving daughter; but, papa, my Bible and my conscience tell me it is not right to attend balls." With military sternness the old soldier replied, "You must go; I command you. You talk of the Bible, and by the Bible I order you. It says, 'Children, obey your parents in all things.' I read my Bible and am a good Lutheran. How is it that I am not troubled about these things?" "Papa," she answered, "the Bible says that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. We are corrupt by nature, and until we are born again we cannot have right thoughts and feelings."

All her reasoning and appeals were unavailing. Her father insisted on her going to the ball, and with a sorrowful heart she went. Once it had

been her greatest delight to mix in such scenes. Now she had found that a Christian's joys are of such a pure and elevated character that they had completely unfitted her for these so-called pleasures.

You also will find the same thing. A Christian wholly occupied with Christ is the happiest being in the world. He has joys outside this world and pleasures for evermore.

The ball over, Miss M—— gladly retired to her room. Not long afterwards she heard a knock at the door. On asking, "Who is there?" her father's voice replied, "I am here; do open the door. I am indeed a corrupt tree, and have never brought forth any good fruit!"

On opening the door the old man fell on her neck and asked her forgiveness for compelling her to go to the ball. He then added that the passage of Scripture she had quoted had so fastened itself on his conscience that he was convinced of his sinfulness and guilt before God, and felt his need of a Saviour, and begged her to pray with him. They knelt down together and earnestly pleaded for mercy.

For three days Colonel M—— shut himself up in his house pleading with the most intense earnestness for the salvation of his soul. Like another Saul of Tarsus, it could be said of him, "Behold, he prayeth." On the third day the scales fell from his eyes. He also looked away from self to Jesus, and found in the uplifted Son of Man a present, living Saviour. On that day he left his house a new man. Determined to show his colours, and seek to win others to that same blessed Saviour, he bought some tracts on his way to the barracks, and with his own hand dis-

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.” 187

tributed them among the soldiers of his regiment. Officers and men looked at one another in amazement. They could not make it out.

Again the wind had blown where it listed. The Spirit of God had used the water of the word to effect His mighty work. That same Spirit had directed the newly awakened sinner to a loving Saviour. He would fain do that with you, my reader. Are you awakened, anxious? If so, look straight to Jesus. In Him are life, peace, and joy.

The grace of God had not only brought salvation to Colonel M——, but it transformed his life. His home now was a scene of peace. Prayer and praise ascended to God. The Bible supplanted the novel. Worldly acquaintances were given up for the people of God.

This did not end the story of God's grace to that family. An only son had been abroad seeking satisfaction in travel. He returned home unsatisfied. The first thing that struck him was the marked change in his father and sister. Once more was the Saviour's figure exemplified, “The wind bloweth where it listeth.” He also learned that he must be born again. He too was saved through the atoning work of Christ, and henceforth devoted his life to preaching the necessity of the new birth, and the death and resurrection of Christ as the ground of eternal salvation.

Religious reader, you also must be born again. Reformation will not avail; baptism will not accomplish it. That which is born of the *Spirit* is spirit. “YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

H. N.

PRESUMPTION AND FULL ASSURANCE.

STRANGERS to full assurance may be divided into three classes :—

1. Those who rather despise than value it.
2. Those who would be glad to have it, but do not consider it possible.
3. Those who, believing it possible, have been disappointed in their efforts to reach it.

In the first class are found not only men of the world, openly godless and profane, but so-called "church members," unconverted and self-satisfied. The secret of their dislike is not hard to find. Satan is behind it. He hates the possibility of assurance. It makes too much of Christ and of the grace of God, and is too closely bound up with the real secret of holy living to serve the enemy's ends. He knows full well that to admit the possibility of one person possessing full assurance might seriously disturb his neighbour. Hence he craftily whispers into every willing heart, "Don't *you* be such a Pharisee as to say you know for certain! Only fanatics and hypocrites talk like that! Absolute knowledge is *impossible!*"

If one man may know,
Then why not another?
Say, "No one can know;
You're as good as your brother."

Consistently labour,
And hope for the best;
Be just to your neighbour,
And leave all the rest.

This dangerous counsel—the devil's gospel—has done much for his cause in this world, and possibly it was never more popular than to-day.

But it ignores two great facts: first, that

PRESUMPTION AND FULL ASSURANCE. 189

redemption has been accomplished; and second, that *God has spoken concerning it*.

Deny Christ's sacrificial death, ignore its necessity, claim the right and the ability to stand before God in your own righteousness, and Satan's gospel may suit you admirably.

But if Christ *has* died, and that death was a necessity for sinful men, it sweeps away with one stroke all hope in man's ability to meet his own case. On the other hand, if God *has* expressed His righteous satisfaction in the work of Christ; if He has plainly declared His love in sending Him to do it; if with unmistakable clearness He has pronounced the blessedness of those who believe on Him (and He has), who shall stand up in the presence of such witnesses and seek to set at naught the possibility of assurance? Such men, alas, are to be found! But as the Lord once said by Jeremiah the prophet to the lying leaders of a gainsaying people, "They *shall* know whose words shall stand, Mine or theirs" (Jer. XLIV. 28). The higher a man's position as a religious leader, the greater must be the condemnation of his unbelief (read Luke XII. 45-8; 2 Kings VII. 19).

But some honest reader may say, I think it is taking far too much upon oneself to speak with anything like definite certainty respecting such a momentous matter. It looks too much like proud presumption and vain conceit.

We reply, You would be perfectly right in your conclusion under certain conditions; while, under other conditions, the presumption would *not* be on the side of him who speaks with certainty, but on his who speaks with hesitation.

Take one or two illustrations from Scripture.

Previous to King Hezekiah's sickness, say in the days of his most buoyant feelings of health and vigour, no one could fail to call it audacious presumption had he said, "I am certain I shall live one year longer." Would it not rather have been far more becoming to say, "Surrounded by disease and beset with danger as I am, I cannot say for certain that I shall be alive another hour"?

But not so *after* his illness. It was no presumption then to say, "*I shall live fifteen years longer! I know it for certain. GOD HAS SPOKEN.*" Nay, it would have been the most daring presumption to fix anything less than that which God had fixed as the future term of his years on earth.

Once more. Take the case of the penitent thief (Luke XXIII.). If, when the soldiers first placed him on the gibbet, that hardened, dying robber had spoken of heaven as his certain destination, it would have been rightly pronounced as the most unwarrantable presumption. A little later on the same day he crowns his life of unbearable wickedness by casting insult upon the Son of God Who was hanging by his side. But here a marvellous change takes place. Full of self-condemnation, he turns to Jesus in simple confidence and gets the well-known gracious answer. Now he can tell you, without the smallest misgiving, that he is certain of being in Paradise that day, and you cannot, you dare not, call it presumption! To do so would be to offer to the suffering Saviour a grosser insult than that by which the malefactor himself taunted Him. The word had passed the holy lips of Jesus that it should be so, and who dare gainsay it? It is very evident that the penitent heart of that dying

BERTIE'S CALL.

191

robber had taken it in: he had not another question to ask on the subject.

Be careful, therefore, to learn the *foundation* of a man's assurance before you brand him with the charge of presumption. GEO. C.

 BERTIE'S CALL.

A WORD OF WARNING FOR THE YOUNG.

BERTIE lived in a small village a few miles from London. He was a bright little fellow about twelve years of age, always ready for a game, fearless, lighthearted, and merry. He often came to my house with others to hear the glad tidings, and seemed interested. On one occasion I felt led to press upon him the love of God in the gift of His dear Son. It seemed as if he were the only boy in the room. I remember pressing upon him the uncertainty of this life and the great importance of accepting God's way of salvation through faith in Jesus, and that God offers to all in the person and work of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. "My boy," I said, "if God were to call you this night, would you be ready to meet Him?" His eyes filled with tears as he frankly answered, "No." Then, as life is so uncertain, I pleaded with him to accept Jesus as his Saviour. I reminded him that he might never see another Sunday or hear my voice again.

He left my house that afternoon, and I never saw him again. I went away to Brighton, and the next Saturday poor Bertie was drowned in the river Thames while playing.

Dear young reader, whosoever you may be, take warning by this story of Bertie's sudden call. Who can tell whose turn may come next?

Then Jesus may come from heaven for those who trust in Him, any moment. Will you be one of those "caught up" to meet Him in the air, or one left behind for judgment?

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

God is just, and the Justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

W. W. W.

GOD'S MESSAGE AND HIS MESSENGER.

WHEN I was a child I used to be sent sometimes on messages. My mother, after giving me all her instructions, had a peculiar habit of saying to me at the last moment, "Now, Harry, WHOM are you going to, and what are you going to SAY?" It was my defect as to the last part of the question that she often had to correct in me; I was generally least prepared to answer this part to *her* satisfaction.

It often comes to me that if brethren, who desire to evangelize, would go through beforehand with God, what I had to go through as my mother's messenger, they would have people to go to and something to say, and they would *leave off* and go home, as I used to, *when they had said it*. We should then have less wearisome discourses, which, alas, sometimes fail to present *good news* at all.

Then my mother would finish up by saying to me, "And mind you tell them *who sent you!*"

What do you think of these three points, in my mother's training, for an evangelist?

1. "To whom are you going?"
2. "What are you going to SAY?"
3. "MIND YOU TELL THEM WHO SENT YOU."

H. C. A.