

WORDS



OF LIFE,

FOR

OLD AND YOUNG.

A Monthly Magazine

EDITED BY ALFRED H. BURTON.



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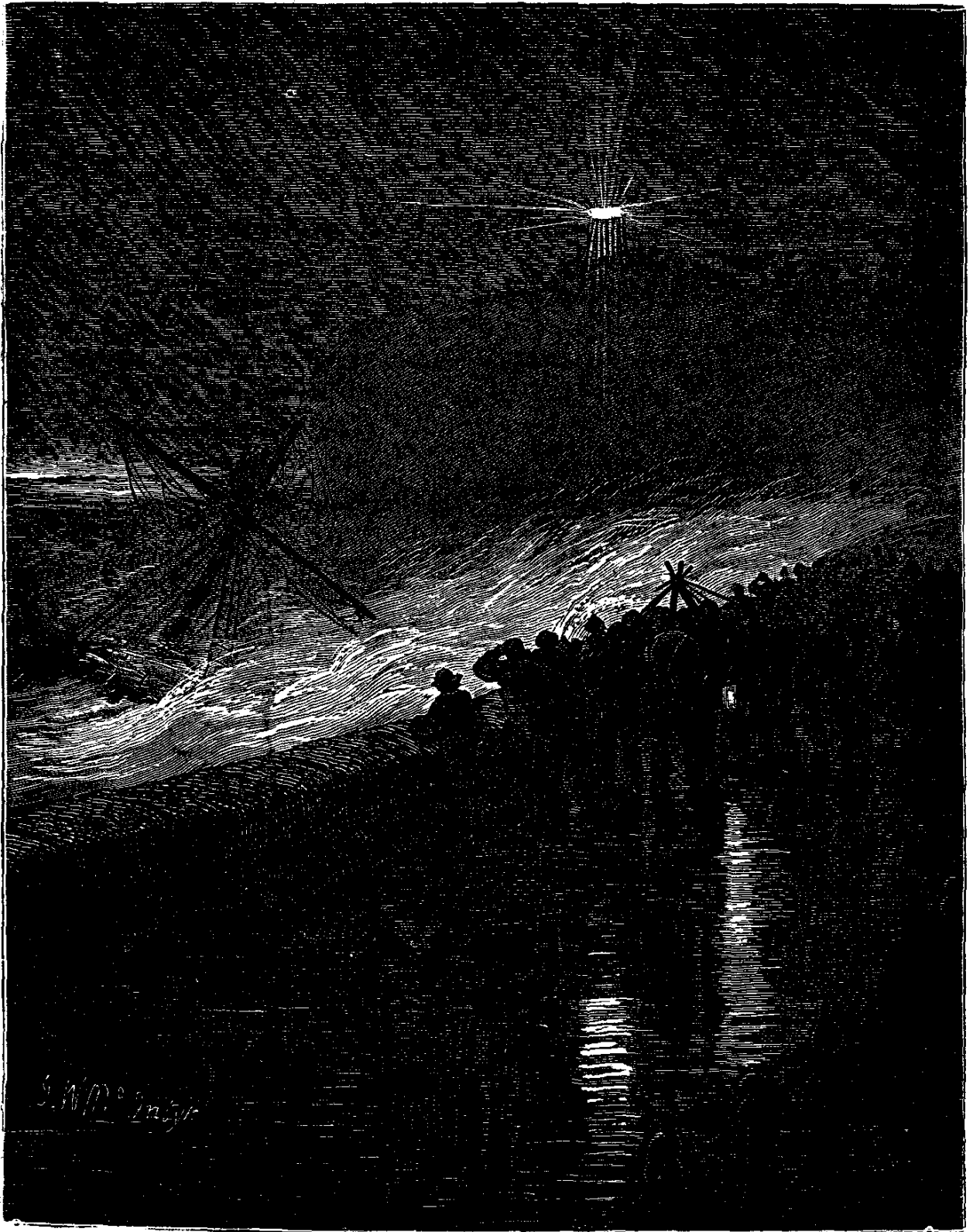
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A NIGHT OF DANGER.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XIII.

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life."
—PHIL. ii. 15, 16.

WHILE the light was spreading in Valladolid and its neighbourhood, Seville was left in darkness. You remember Rodrigo de Valero, and how he used to preach the gospel to all whom he met? One day, before he was put in prison, he met and spoke to Dr. Juan Gil. This man, who was commonly called by his Latin name, Egidius, had been educated at the University of Alcala, and being exceedingly learned in the writings of the old theologians, he had been chosen as preacher in the Cathedral of Seville. This was a very high appointment, and Egidius determined to make himself famous as a preacher. But though he made most learned sermons with long quotations from Scotus and Thomas Aquinas and other divines, somehow the people did not care to listen to him, and by degrees his con-

gregation grew less and less. Egidius was very much vexed: it had been his great ambition to be famous, and he had failed. He was disappointed and dissatisfied, and he wished he could get right away from Seville and find something better to do than the thankless work of preaching.

You remember that the Lord Jesus said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." I do not know whether Egidius had ever read those words, or if he had, whether he ever thought about them. His soul was very thirsty, and he thought that fame would satisfy it. But the One who, long ago, spoke those gracious words of invitation, knew well that a human soul is too large to be filled with anything that this earth can give. He was going to satisfy Egidius with the living water which He alone can give, and that was why He first let him find out what it was to be thirsty and dissatisfied with the things of earth.

One day Egidius met Rodrigo de Valero. Now, Rodrigo was only a layman with very little learning to boast of, he had never read one of the learned theological books which Egidius knew almost by heart. But he had read the New Testament, and

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that was enough for him. So when he saw that the preacher was unhappy and dissatisfied, he spoke to him about the Word of God. Egidius did not think that any book could do him much good, he had read a great many, and none of them made him happy; but as Rodrigo kept on entreating him to read the Holy Scriptures, at last he consented. And there he found what he wanted—he found pardon for his sins, and peace, and joy; he found full rest for his conscience, full satisfaction for his heart, he found Eternal Life, for he found Christ.

The people in the cathedral could not understand what had happened to their preacher; instead of long, dry sermons that only learned people could understand, he spoke now straight to the hearts of all, so that even the most ignorant could take in what he said. He spoke to them of their sins, arousing their consciences; he spoke to them of judgment to come, awakening their fears; and then he told them of Jesus, how He had loved them, even in their sins, and how He had given Himself for them that they might be saved from judgment and brought to God. So that the hearts of many were touched, and they believed to the saving of their souls. Then began a time of blessing in Seville, and Egidius, who had tried in vain to gain glory for himself, was used of God to bring glory to the name of Christ by turning souls to Him.

When God is carrying on a work in any place Satan always tries to stop it, and so it was in Seville. The Light was shining, and the prince of darkness tried to put it out.

The first thing was to shut Rodrigo de Valero up in prison; but that did not stop the spreading of the truth. Instead of the one, God raised up two men to help Egidius with his preaching. Their names were Dr. Vargas and Constantino Ponce de la Fuente. It seems that it was from Egidius that they had first heard the gospel, but it was God Himself who taught them by His Spirit to know its preciousness and its power, and together these three men preached it with simplicity and earnestness, but cautiously, so that the rage of the enemies of the truth might not be aroused.

However, the very fact that the truth was preached awoke the energy of the false teachers. In all the churches of Seville the priests zealously exhorted the people to keep to the old traditions, to do penances, to fast, to make long prayers, and to visit holy places, so that they might obtain the forgiveness of their sins, and above all, they urged them to give money to the church. But their preaching did not stop Egidius and his friends; and the more he was spoken against, the more people went to hear him. The very blackness of the darkness made them long more for the light.

In the evenings, when their public

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work was done, these servants of God used to meet secretly in some private house with those who had learned from them to know the love of God, and together they studied the Holy Scriptures, and encouraged each other in the faith. Those must have been happy evenings, and precious lessons were

thing better to rest upon than even the most gifted and holy teachers, so one by one He took them all three away. Dr. Vargas died, and in the year 1548 Constantino was sent by the Emperor to the Netherlands, to be chaplain to young prince, Philip. Not long afterwards, Egidius was chosen to be made



"Faithful unto Death."

learned out of the wonderful Book—lessons which, though they cost the lives of many who learned them, were well worth the cost.

But these quiet times did not last very long. God wished to teach His children in Seville that they had some-

a bishop. The Emperor Charles had a great affection for both Egidius and Constantino, as he had also for Augustin Cazalla; he always honoured learned men, and he seemed to like to hear the gospel preached, for he did many things, and heard them gladly. But

his heart was not touched; he patronized the servants of Christ, but Christ Himself had no place in his affections.

As soon as it was known that Egidius had been chosen by Charles to be Bishop of Tortosa, there was a great outcry among the churchmen. "It would never do to have such a man as that for a bishop," they cried. "He is a regular heretic, his teaching is quite different from the teaching of the church, and when Rodrigo de Valero was condemned by the Inquisition he dared to defend him." I do not know whether Egidius cared much about such a high position. Perhaps he may have thought that he could do more good as a bishop than as a preacher; but high places are always dangerous, and I dare say the truth would have suffered rather than gained, had he ever received the appointment. I doubt not that he thanks God now that He let him have a prison instead of a bishopric.

For the priests of Seville denounced Egidius to the Inquisition as a heretic, and he was called upon to answer for himself before its tribunal. At first he thought he would be able to prove that the doctrines which he had taught were the simple truths of God and not heresy, and a man named de Soto, whom he had always counted as a friend, promised to help him, and to shew the Inquisition that he was right. In spite of this promise, however, when the day for the trial arrived, de Soto stood up, and by his arguments proved the teach-

ing of Egidius to be heresy against the Roman church, thus betraying him into the hands of his enemies. Egidius was so much taken aback by his friend's false conduct, and so confused by his unexpected change of behaviour, that he hardly knew what he was doing. He assented to all that the Inquisition said, and was carried off to prison.

The Emperor was vexed to hear that the man whom he honoured had been proved to be a heretic, and he wrote to the inquisitors, bidding them to deal leniently with him. The inquisitors were not bound in the least to obey the Emperor, but they consented to do so on this occasion, and only condemned Egidius to three years' imprisonment, forbidding him to preach again for ten years.

So the Protestants of Seville lost their teachers, but they had not lost their Lord, nor His word, and they not only continued to meet together, but they were the means of carrying the gospel to other places, so that in many of the towns and villages around, little companies of Christian men and women gathered together around the Word of God.

In Seville the meetings were generally held in the house of Doña Isabel de Baena, a rich Christian lady. If we could have looked into her room of an evening, when the doors and windows were all carefully closed for safety, we should have seen the faces of grave and earnest men and women gathered

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there. It was a solemn time, for each one knew that it was at the risk of their lives that they were present, and yet they counted that it was worth while, for they thought not so much of the temporal dangers to which they were exposed as of the eternal blessings of which they learned.

Among those who were never absent from the meetings was Cristobal de Losada, a doctor of medicine. He was one who well knew the meaning of that verse: "I am found of them that sought me not." When he was a young man he had wished to marry a lady of Seville, but her father, having learned from Egidius to know the truth, would not give his daughter to a man who still held the errors of Rome.

The young doctor had not much religion of any kind, and he thought it would be as easy to follow Luther as to obey the pope; at any rate, he said, it was worth while to make the change for the sake of winning the prize. So he went to Egidius to learn the "new doctrines."

But God had long before chosen Cristobal de Losada not only to believe on Christ, but also to suffer for His sake, and He spoke to him by His Book when he least expected it. Cristobal opened the Bible in order to learn the errors of Rome, and he learned there his own sinfulness; he wanted to change his religion, and he himself was changed; he intended to become a Protestant, and he became a Christian;

he sought for earthly happiness, and he found eternal life; he listened for the teaching of Luther, and he heard the voice of Jesus.

After that, at the secret meetings in Doña Isabel de Baena's room, it was generally Losada's voice which led the prayers and praises and spoke to the others of the One Who had sought him in the darkness and brought him to the light.

Besides Dr. Cristobal there was a priest named Dr. Juan de Gonzalez, with his mother and brothers and sisters. His father had been a Moor, and he himself, when twelve years old, had been imprisoned by the Inquisition as a Mohammedan. I do not know when he renounced the false prophet and was brought to the true One, nor how he discovered that the Bible was better than the Koran; but God taught him, so that now the word of God was very precious to his heart, and the people loved to hear him explain it.

Don Juan Ponce de Leon was also one of that little company. He was a rich young nobleman, younger son of the Count de Baylen, blest with many earthly blessings. But the Lord Jesus had won his heart, and he joyfully used his money to relieve the poor, and taking up the cross, followed Christ.

Don Fray Domingo de Guzman was also of noble family, a priest, but a very different man to the Domingo de Guzman of whom you heard before. This one's name is not written in the calen-

dar of saints canonized by the popes of Rome, for his life was not spent in persecuting God's people, but in spreading God's word, especially by lending books which set forth the gospel. Of these he had great numbers, written by Luther, Calvin, Valdes, and others, which were afterwards seized by the inquisitors and burned. Domingo himself was not burned, partly on account of the influence of his brother, the Duke of Medina Sidonia (who, as I suppose you remember, commanded the "Invincible Armada," which King Philip sent against England), and partly because, tempted by promises of liberty and honours, he, in his weakness, forgetting to lean upon the strength of God, allowed himself to be persuaded to renounce the truths which he had formerly laboured so earnestly to spread. The promises of the inquisitors were never fulfilled, and Domingo de Guzman spent the rest of his life in prison. We do not know what passed there between him and his Lord, but though he missed the martyr's crown, I do not think he missed the Master's welcome to His home at last.

Fernando de San Juan was another of the company. He was a schoolmaster, and diligently taught the words of Scripture to the boys committed to his care, so that the light of the gospel might shine into their young hearts. His wife, Anna de Rivera, had also known and believed the love that God had towards her, and she counted that

she was not her own, but belonged to Him Who had bought her with the price of His blood.

There were, besides, several other women who came to these meetings. Among them was Maria de Bonorques, daughter of one of the principal gentlemen of Seville. She was a quiet, gentle girl, not yet twenty years old, but so well taught in the Scriptures, and with a heart so full of love to Christ, that Egidius, who had himself taught her to read the New Testament in Greek, and to love it, said that he always felt wiser after having a talk with her.

Altogether there were many hundreds of persons in and around Seville who loved the Bible and the glorious truths which it contained. It was a great joy to them all when, in the year 1555, Egidius was released from prison and came amongst them once more. His heart was as true as ever to the cause of Christ, but his health was broken by his imprisonment, and he never recovered his former cheerfulness. After visiting Valladolid, where he was much encouraged to find so many who were obedient to the faith, he returned to Seville, where he died the year after his release. He was not called to die the martyr's death, but he had spoken to others the word which, because it was the Word of Life, gave those who believed it courage to endure death for His sake, whose word it was.

Now the preacher's work was done, and God called him to his rest. He had

diligently sown the good seed which was one day to yield an abundant harvest. It had not been light or easy work, but his reward will surely come, for "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

(To be continued.)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

"**I**F Thursday is a fine day, I think I shall take you children to see the British Museum."

"Oh, thank you! Thank you!" resounded on all sides.

Thursday having come, and being a fine day, we all started forth, having provided ourselves with food, as we were going to spend the whole day exploring that interesting building.

Perhaps some of you, my young readers, have never had the opportunity of seeing this celebrated edifice, so I am going to tell you a little about it, in the hope that soon you will be able to go and see for yourselves the marvellous collection of Antiquities that are stored within its walls.

Some of you, perhaps, who live away in the country and have never been to London, could scarcely believe what a big place it is. It is a massive structure, built of stone, and containing immense halls, rooms, corridors, and galleries,

all lined and filled with collections of the most precious relics of the past, brought together from every part of the globe.

Large numbers of these are of special interest to us all in these days, because they so wonderfully confirm the histories of the earliest times given to us in the Bible.

The Bible, we must always remember is its own interpreter. It comes to us from God, and though He used different men at various periods to write it, yet when we read it, it is not the words of mere men that we read, but the words of God Himself that He inspired them to write.

We who have learnt the value of this precious Book, and who have learnt to trust and love our blessed Saviour, whose footsteps we can trace, and whose words we can hear while reading it, do not need any other proof of its truth than what we find inside its own covers.

We do not want any one to prove to us that the sun is shining at noon-day in the sky. We see its light, and feel its warmth. That man must be blind, and utterly insensible to every feeling, who would need any proof of the existence of the sun beyond the fact that it shines.

Just so is it with the Bible. It is a Book that sheds a light all around us, a light too that enters our very hearts and consciences. Besides this, it is a Book which has brought peace and

joy, comfort and happiness, to countless multitudes in every age, and of every clime and country.

But there are, I am sorry to say, some poor people, not poor in this world's goods, but poor towards God, and as regards their own best interests and truest happiness, who have ventured to cast doubts upon the truth of the Bible.

How do we know that the early histories contained in the Bible are true? say they. It takes us back thousands of years, but perhaps it is all made up stories and legends; how can we tell whether there ever was a deluge? &c., &c. These are the foolish kind of questions that these people raise. But if they only knew the wonderful things that are stored inside the British Museum, and which God has preserved so many hundreds and even thousands of years, hidden beneath the ground, until this very century, they never could say such stupid things.

As many of you cannot yet visit this interesting place for yourselves, I am going to tell you a little from time to time in the pages of *Words of Life*, that I am sure will interest you greatly, as it has done many others, myself included.

So please remember that next month we are going to pay a visit to the British Museum!

(To be continued).

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS.

1. When He was risen. Luke xxiv. 8; John ii. 22; Acts xx. 35. See also Luke xxii. 61.
2. A house by the Sea of Galilee, ch. xiii. 1, 36.
3. Galilee, Luke ii. 39.
4. Capernaum, compare Matt. ix. 1-7, and Mark ii. 1-12.
5. Matt. ix. 9; x. 3. A receiver of taxes, or a publican.
6. Yes, xii. 28; xix. 24; xxi. 31, 43.

ANOTHER year has come, and again we open our Bibles together. Solomon says there is "a time to *die*" (Ecc. iii. 2); he also says, "thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1), so we must not be sure of finishing our year's study. Even a Jew, who looked for long life here (Prov. iii. 1, 2) as a sign of God's blessing, was expected to prepare for a change. Christians know that length of days is not a mark of God's blessing, yet they are not waiting for death, but for Jesus from heaven, though they *may* die. Before the year 1894 has ended, nay, before January closes, He may be here! Shall you be ready and glad to see Him?

The questions may be answered by any young people, and the answers must be sent by the 21st of each month to—

H.L.H.,

Care of JAMES CARTER,

13, Paternoster Row, E.C.,
accompanied each time by name, age,
and address. Prizes will be given at

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the end of the year. No concordance to be used, nor help asked from elders.

Remember the verse: "This man *began* to build, and was not able to *finish*." Only half those who began answering the questions last year went on to the end!

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

"Every word of God is pure" (Prov. xxx. 5). This is a beautiful verse to begin with.

Proverbs is a book full of precepts, mostly spoken by a king to whom God gave wisdom (1 Kings iii.), which we must seek to profit from—it came from above (James i. 17). Proverbs teaches us how to apply God's wisdom to the daily affairs of life, and how to thread our way with prudence, through the labyrinth of this world. A labyrinth is a place where we may easily take a wrong path, and where it is almost impossible to find our way to the goal or centre, without a guide, unless we know the clue or secret. So in this world; unless we have a guide-book, we may take the wrong road, and lose our way for ever.

Sin is taking a wrong road: "the way of sinners" (Ps. i. 1), "if sinners entice thee" (Prov. i. 10), "refrain thy foot from their path" (i. 15), "the way of the evil man" (ii. 12), and many other verses speak of it. Sin must not be passed over by us, for it never will be by God; sin cost the death of His holy Son. He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil" (Hab. i. 13), and yet *we*

often make light of it. Solomon did not; he says, "the way of the wicked is abomination unto the Lord" (xv. 9).

"*The fear of the Lord* is the beginning of knowledge" (i. 7). This is Solomon's chief subject. Without it no one can walk rightly in this world, nor understand anything properly. We cannot even know fully about natural things if we leave God out. God was the Creator, and a man who denies this is puzzled about the origin of much, which one who has the fear of God believes and can explain from the Bible.

God gave this wisdom to Solomon to be displayed in daily life. No one who knows God should listen to his own foolish heart, which would lead him in the wrong direction, like taking the advice of sinners. Walking with God makes a man happy, and he learns to be a good son, a good father, and so on.

Many kinds of people are spoken of in this book, from a king to a fool, as we shall see. It may be divided thus: chs. i. to ix.; chs. x. to xxiv.; chs. xxv. to xxx., and ch. xxxi. In it we may learn what the path of a wise man ought to be like in this world (iv. 18). H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where are we told how many proverbs Solomon wrote?
2. Which books of the Bible did he write?
What made Israel see that "the wisdom of God was in him?"
4. What men are named in Proverbs?
5. Relate briefly what you know of some of them.
6. What is said of "kings," or a "king," in Proverbs? Give references.

A LETTER FOR YOU.

No. I.

NEW ZEALAND,
October, 1893.

DEAR CHILDREN,

How well you know the sound of the postman's brisk "rat-tat," and how often you have run when you have heard it, eager to be the first to bring your parents tidings from some dear absent one! How glad too, you have sometimes been to see a letter for *you*!

Now, this letter is for *each* one of you, and although we may never meet in this world, and I do not even know your names, I want you to believe that it is from a friend, and as it has to travel 12,000 miles before it can reach you, you must read it carefully. I could perhaps tell you some things which would interest you about the birds and flowers of this sunny land, so far away from dear old England; but this time I am writing on purpose to tell you how good *God* has been to us during this year of 1893. He has in His great love been pleased to send forth a very special gospel message throughout these Islands, and many of the big and little people of New Zealand, when they heard about Jesus, and of how they can have their sins put away, and the beautiful and touching story of "The Man of Sorrows," many, I say, were led to cry from their hearts, "Hallelujah! what a Saviour!"

Now, dear children, can each one of you say that Jesus is *your* Saviour? or do

some of you ask, like the Philippian jailor of old, "What must I do to be saved?" God's Word says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). Get your Bible and read this verse, and another which you will find in John v.; "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."

Many grown up people who attended these services will never forget them, and many children will with joy remember that they had a *new* birthday in 1893! and they will praise God throughout the endless ages of eternity for His gift of eternal life; because they will not forget these meetings even in Heaven!

Have you ever thought that there will be memory in *Hell*?

Ah! there will be, for we read in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke xvi, that when the rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue, Abraham answered, "Son, *remember*." Dear children, may none of you be among those who will remember in *Hell* how many opportunities they had of coming to Jesus.

Perhaps you are tired of this long letter, but before closing let me tell you of one dear lad who had his *new* birthday last may!

His home is "in the bush," that is, in the country, but he had to go to one of

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the large towns to see a doctor about his eyes, and the friend he stayed with there took him to some of the gospel meetings already mentioned. Special requests for prayer were often made, and one night the preacher received a letter, begging him to pray very earnestly that "God's Holy Spirit would touch the heart of the writer, and that he might have his sins forgiven, for that if he died as he was, he would die in his sins and go to hell." Very earnest were the prayers that went up to God that night on his behalf. A day or so later, the dear boy I have told you about spoke to the preacher, and looking up with a beaming face said, "If you please, sir, I wrote that letter, and God has answered your prayer, and my soul is saved."

And now, dear children will you who, like him, know that your sins are forgiven, pray for this boy who has returned to a home where Jesus is a stranger, and for whose sake he may have much to bear; that God who loves him, will keep him in all his ways, and make him a means of blessing to his parents?—I am,

Yours affectionately,

H. S. T.

WHOSOEVER.

THE writer of the following article says "I am fourteen, but that is no reason why I should not be able to write a little bit that might lead some dear

young soul to be saved." May all our young friends remember that:—

"Though I can do but little,
Yet I will always try,
To tell some little children,
How Jesus came to die.' Ed.

DEAR READER—

Have you ever read the 16th verse of the 3rd chapter of John's gospel? If not, let me advise you to take down your Bible and read it. You will find that it says, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Lord Jesus came down to die for us. We were poor, lost, and miserable sinners, and the wrath of God was about to fall upon us, but Christ offered Himself a substitute for us, and the wrath that was due to us, fell upon His own head. There is a little hymn that says,

"He knew how wicked men had been,
And knew that God must punish sin,
So out of pity Jesus said,
He'd bear the punishment instead."

And so He came down on earth and went about and healed the sick, and raised the dead, and was so kind, and yet cruel men hung Him on the cross. We read that when Pilate asked the people whom he should release, they cried, "Not this man, but Barabbas." Now, Barabbas was a robber, a most noted criminal, and yet they released him and crucified Jesus, who had not done one sinful action. And it was all for us, He bore it all for us; thus we

see how "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life."

That word *whosoever* includes everybody, rich and poor, great and small, no matter who they may be, it means every one.

There was an old man once, who went to a little gospel service, and the preacher gave out that text, John iii. 16. The old man could not make out what the word *whosoever* meant, and while he was hard at work ploughing the field next day, he was still puzzling his brain over it when a little boy happened to go through the field on his way home from school. The little fellow was going along whistling merrily, when the old man called him and said, "Here, my boy, can you tell me what *whosoever* means?"

The boy rubbed his head, and thought over it, and then said, "Well, I don't know, unless it means *you, me, or anybody else.*"

"That's it," said the old man, "that's it," and from that day the dear old man became a Christian. And, dear reader, that word *whosoever* includes you as well; it is not a very big word, but there is a great deal of meaning in it.

There are two "*whosoever's*," the one in John iii. 16, "*Whosoever* believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life"; and the other in Rev. xx. 15, "*Whosoever* was not found written

in the Book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire."

Think how dreadful it will be if you are cast into the lake of fire. You will not be able to say like the poor gipsy boy, "*Nobody ever told me.*" No good works will take you to heaven; you have not to do anything. When Christ was on the cross, He cried, "*It is finished,*" and so it is. The work is all done, you have nothing to do but believe. Oh, do not put it off till another day, do not say like many others have done, "Oh, I'll put it off, there is plenty of time." There is not. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, to-morrow may be too late, do not neglect it.

"Take salvation—

Take it *now*, and happy be."

Christ says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

If any reader should be led, like one of old, to say, "What must I do to be saved?" the Bible gives a plain answer. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

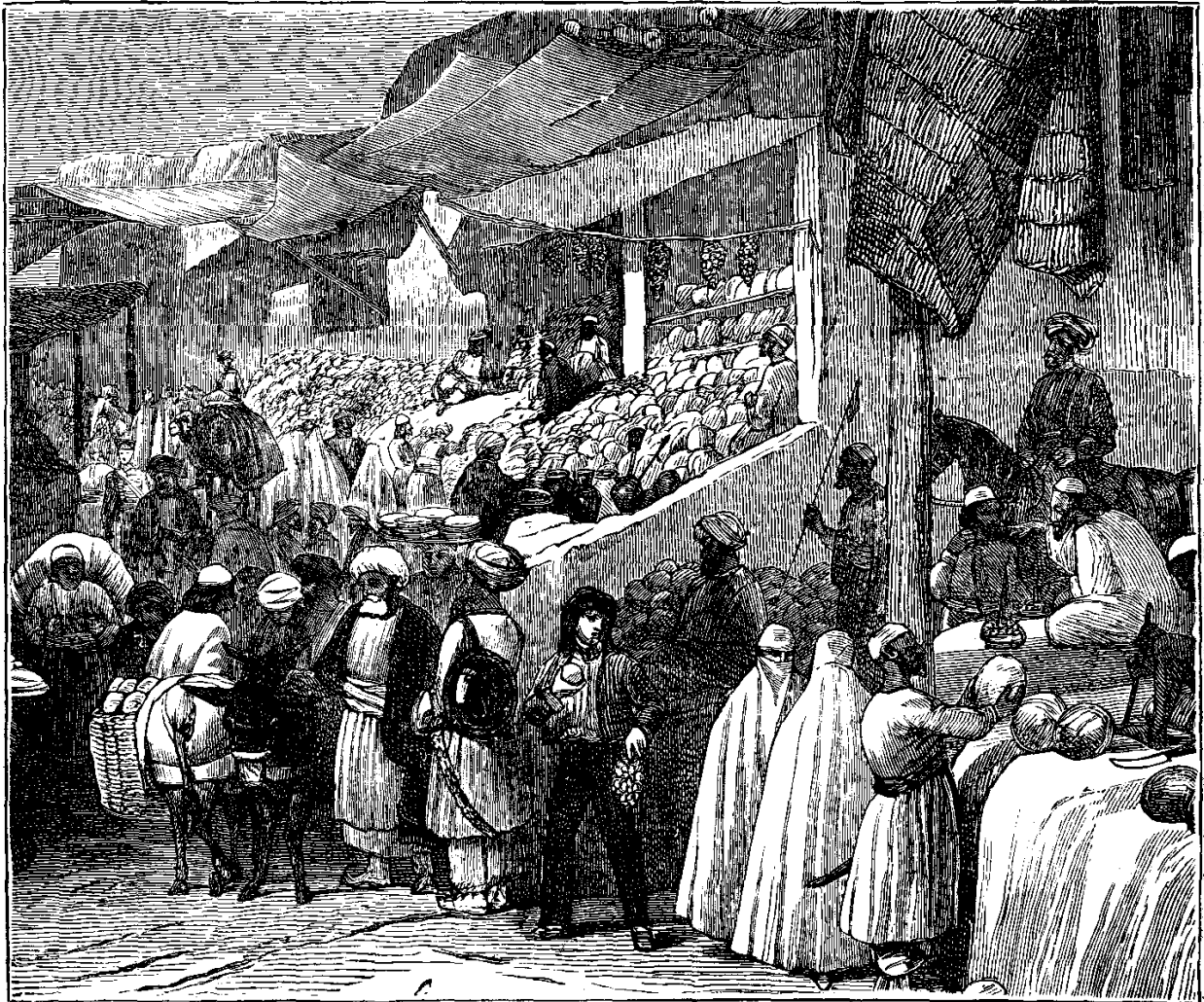
RUTH—

PLENTEOUS IN MERCY.

ABOUT forty years ago lived a man named Dilawar Khan. He was, as far as we know, at that time the only Christian in the country of Afghanistan. The

Afghans profess the Mohammedan religion, and are fierce and bigoted followers of the false prophet. A young friend of Dilawar Khan hearing of his conversion, actually went five days'

circumstance, he said: "I knew Dilawar Khan's former character, he was a man who would have cut off your head on the slightest provocation, and yet he sat still and said nothing. At last I



A Street in Cabul, Afghanistan.

journey to curse him. Dilawar Khan was taken to be with the Lord some time ago, and this young friend, now an old man, has been converted.

Speaking since his conversion, of the

shook him and said: Why do you not say anything? He said: 'This is Christianity,' and he told me what Christianity is. When he had done, I cursed him till I could curse no more,

and all he said was: 'Lad, I have a beard and thou hast none. The Lord will yet have mercy on thee, though it may be when thy beard is not only as long as mine, but white.' And this day," added the old saint, stroking his white beard, "is that saying of Dilawar Khan fulfilled, for the Lord has had mercy on me!"

The Afghans are a wild and cruel people, their feet are swift to shed blood and the poison of asps is under their lips, but from among them the Lord is now "taking out a people for Himself."

Mr. C., a christian doctor, was passing through a part of their country called *The Hazara*, when sixteen men came to him and asked him to settle a difference for them.

'But I am neither a law-giver nor a judge,' said the doctor. 'Nay, but thou art a good man, and the difference is concerning religion. Settle it: tell us which is best, Hinduism, or Mohammedanism?'

'They are both alike, downright bad: the religion of Christ alone is true.'

'Tell us of it,' said they eagerly; 'We have never even heard of it.'

The doctor told them the story of the Gospel; they listened intently, wonderingly, and at the close they said: "Wonderful! wonderful! O that we had some one to walk about among us and tell us these words! Wonderful!"

I will now tell you the story of the conversion of the man who, when a lad, witnessed the example of meekness

in a follower of our Blessed Lord Jesus. God was very patient with him, but he knew Him not. He grew up to manhood and became a devotee, a 'blind guide,' indeed, who, so his followers thought, could lead them to heaven. After a while, he had a son whom he brought up as a Moslem priest. The young man was as fierce and fanatical as any Afghan Moslem could be. Had you known father and son, you might have said they were the most unlikely men ever to bow to Christ.

But the Lord's ways are wonderful, and as he dealt with Saul of Tarsus of old, so does He now deal in grace with sinners. The young priest became very unhappy, thinking of his sins. He used to read constantly in the Qurân, a book which the Moslems consider sacred, and think that God dictated it to their prophet Mohammed. But it is a very wicked and foolish book, and in many things quite contrary to the Bible, the true Word of God. However, the young priest came, in his reading the Qurân, to a sentence which struck him very much, it was this: 'God has sent down the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to give men direction and light.'

'Had I but these books' he said to himself, 'I might yet have direction and light.'

But there were no Bibles nor Testaments in that part of the country where he lived, and no Christian was near to

WORDS OF LIFE.

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help him. He was told that Christ had taken the New Testament to heaven with Him. So the poor young priest waited on in darkness, not knowing what he must 'do to be saved.'

While in this anxious state of mind, he became acquainted with a postmaster, who told him he was sure Christ did not take the New Testament up to heaven with Him, for he remembered reading it when a boy at school. He had been to a christian school. 'What is in it?' said the young priest eagerly; 'Oh!' said the postmaster carelessly, 'I do not remember, it is long ago since I was at school; it was all about forgiveness of sins and that sort of thing.' This made the young man all the more desirous to get the book, and the Lord soon sent him a helper.

A christian lady in bad health, and needing rest and change of air, came with a friend to the place where the postmaster lived, and immediately began 'to do what she could' to tell the Mohammedans around of Jesus.

The postmaster immediately sent a messenger to his friend the young priest, to tell him that now he could get the book he wanted, as no doubt the ladies had it. The young priest was then sixteen miles from the postmaster, but as soon as he got the message, he, without thinking of food, preparation, or fatigue, set off, and rested not till he stood before the ladies. Anxiously he asked for the Testament. They gave him St. John's

gospel. With no thought of anything in life, but the wondrous book he had at last obtained, he there and then sat down to read, and read on, till by the time he had read a few chapters, the light had come and he was a free man.

Can you remember, dear children, some beautiful verses in the early chapters of John's gospel, which may have brought light and joy to this poor sin-burdened soul, when applied by God the Holy Spirit? I will tell you one, and you can find the others: 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life' John iii. 36.

Soon after the young man returned home, he fell ill, and his father tormented him all the time, trying to make him say: 'There is one God and Mohammed is his prophet.' The young man was apparently dying, but he gasped out: 'There is no God but God, and His Son is the Saviour of men.' His father threatened to cut his throat, but the hand of God restrained him, and the young man recovered.

When he was well again, he wished to be baptized, but his father secretly told his cousin to kill him. The cousin seems to have had some affection for him, so he came and said to him: 'We have been lads together; we have played together, and have been as brothers, so I tell you. I have been told to cut your throat to-night, and if you are fool enough to be here, why, cut it I shall.' Our young friend fled and soon after was baptized. Then

his father offered a very large reward to anyone who would kill his son, and also to the messenger who would bring him news of his son's death. The son was working at that time in a hospital, and the christian doctor who had charge of the place, could hardly let him out of his sight for a minute lest he should be murdered.

Some time passed, and the young man was hearing every day something more of God's goodness when his old father happened to come to the town where he was living. On being told that his son was in the town, he cursed him and started off for the railway station, saying that he would not remain in the same town with his son, but sent a messenger to say that he should soon hear from him to some purpose, probably meaning he would get him murdered. The son, hearing that his father was waiting at the station, and knowing that the train would not start for some hours, went to him, weeping, and spoke kindly to him.

'Come,' he said, 'and see my spiritual father,' meaning the christian doctor with whom he lived.

'Yes, I will' said the father, 'that I may curse him too.'

He followed his son to the doctor's house. The doctor met him at the door and said kindly and respectfully to him (he was a fine old man with a white beard), 'Welcome honoured guest!' 'Am I indeed welcome?' said the old man.

'Yes indeed' said the doctor.

He remained as guest for ten days, and was so far softened that on leaving he put his son's hand into the doctor's and said: 'The lad is thine, not mine. Christianity is not as bad as I thought it. He has done right.'

As he left, a New Testament was put into his hand and the doctor saw him no more till nine months after, when he called, but only to ask whether there was an Old Testament? He said that twelve learned men had sent him to make the enquiry and get the book if possible. They saw the book he had was called the *New Testament*; was there an Old Testament? He was given the whole Bible, and went away.

Some time after he returned and was again the doctor's guest. It was observed that he read no longer his daily portion out of the Qurân, and after allowing everybody to wonder for some days, he at last said: 'Since I have read the Old and New Testaments, my relish for the Qurân is gone. Why need I hide it longer? I too, am now a Christian, the God of my son is my God also.' Soon after, his son fell ill and was called home to the Lord's presence. Shortly before his death he said: 'Why should I fear, when I am in the arms of Jesus?'

The old father still lives, a monument of God's grace. E. H. W.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Held over until next month.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." EPHESIANS V. 8.

"He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder."—PSALM cvii. 14.

A SHORT time before Egidius passed away his friend Constantino Ponce de la Fuente returned from abroad. During his absence he had met and conversed with several of the reformers of other lands, and he now came back to his own country more zealous than ever for the truth of God.

Of all the men who were raised up in Spain in those days to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, there was not one who was more beloved than Constantino. His free and courteous manners, his intelligent conversation, his ready wit, charmed all who came in contact with him (except indeed the enemies of the truth, who hated him with bitter hatred). But those whom he trusted and to whom he spoke from the depths of his true, loving heart, loved him with an affection so deep and real that they were willing

to do or bear anything for him. "No one ever loved or hated Constantino moderately," said one of his friends.

He had been educated at the University of Alcala, and in his youth had been wild and reckless. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound, and the young man was brought to the feet of Jesus, a lost and ruined sinner, to receive from Him pardon and salvation, freely and fully, through the blood shed upon the cross.

Constantino had learned how utterly useless any righteousness of his own must be to cover his sins in the sight of God, but now that those sins were entirely put away by the blood of Christ, and he who had once been darkness became light in the Lord, he walked as a child of light. His whole life and conduct were such as adorned the gospel of Christ. His learning was very great, and on this account the Emperor honoured him highly, but he cared little for such things, and his chief desire was to make Christ known to the simple and ignorant. The people loved to hear him preach, and when, on the death of Egidius, he was appointed preacher in the Cathedral of Seville, the great building was often crowded by four or even three o'clock in the morning, though the sermon did

not begin till eight, so anxious were all to obtain seats.

Besides preaching, Constantino was very diligent in writing books which might be spread throughout the country. His "Catechism" was so simple that even a little child could understand it

wonderful grace of God which had met even him.

"What I know of Thee, O my Saviour," he wrote, "draws me unto Thee, and I have begun to know Thee in a manner which makes me see that I am a wretch unworthy to approach



The Terrors of the Inquisition.

and learn from it the good news of God's love. He also wrote a little book called the "Confessions of a Sinner." He had known well himself what it was to be ruined and lost, so he could all the better tell others of the

Thy presence...I joined myself to Thine enemies, as if my happiness consisted in being a traitor to Thee. I closed mine eyes, I shut up all my senses that I might not perceive that I was in Thy house, that Thou wast the

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Lord of the heavens whose rain descends upon me, and of the earth which sustains me in life. I was a sacrilegious person, a despiser of Thy bounty, ungrateful, contemner of Thy mercy, an audacious man, not fearing Thy justice. Nevertheless, I slept as soundly as if I were one of Thy servants, and appropriated everything to myself without considering that it came from Thee... Oh the misery of those who would seek for happiness in any other than Thee, seeing that Thy compassion can give them more than even their own presumption could demand!

"Thou knowest, Lord, the return I have made for Thy benefits, and whether or not I have deserved them... I wished to remain guilty, not considering that by this conduct I both ruined my own soul, and outraged Thy goodness, by rejecting and forsaking Thee even when Thou wast come to seek and to save me.

"But notwithstanding all this, Thy mercy is so powerful that it draws me unto Thee; for if Thy hatred against sin has been manifested in divers ways, much more have the workings of Thy mercy appeared in the salvation of men. To punish sinners Thou hadst only to issue a command; but, Lord, to save them from destruction Thou hadst to lay down Thy life; this cost Thee Thine own blood, shed upon the cross even by the hands of those for whom Thou didst offer it—Lord, since it pleases Thee that I shall not perish,

I come to Thee like the prodigal son... Hast not Thou said, that Thou art not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; not to cure the whole, but them that are sick? Wast not Thou chastised for the iniquity of others? Has not Thy blood sufficient virtue to wash out the sins of all the human race?...

"Since Thou art a physician, and such a physician, here are wounds which none but Thyself is able to heal. Since Thou art the health, and the life, and the salvation sent from our Father in Heaven, look upon my desperate maladies which no earthly physician can cure....

"Having nothing to say for my justification but an acknowledgment that I am unrighteous, destitute of everything to move Thy compassion but the greatness of my misery, unable to urge any reason why Thou shouldest cure me but that my case is hopeless from every other hand; for my part I have no other sacrifice than my afflicted spirit and broken heart, and this I would not yet have had, if Thou hadst not awakened me to the knowledge of my danger. The sacrifice which I need is Thy blood."

All Constantino's books were afterwards prohibited by the Inquisition, but especially this "Confession." It is quite contrary to Romish doctrine that a sinner should be able to come directly to God without a priest to come between as mediator.

Of course the great preacher had many enemies, the false teachers were very much vexed that when they had silenced Valero and Egidiu, yet another and more powerful champion of the truth should arise. The Inquisitors used to send Dominican friars to listen to the sermons in the Cathedral so that they might catch his words and have something to accuse him of. But Constantino was very cautious, and though he set forth the truth of the Bible, he carefully abstained from saying anything about the false teaching of Rome, so that his hearers hardly noticed how far he was leading them from the old traditions, yet they were rather alarmed when a learned man, having heard the fame of the preacher and come to listen to him, exclaimed: "This is not good doctrine, nor such as our fathers have taught us"! To very many, however, the doctrine was indeed good, and if it had not been taught by their fathers it had been taught by Christ and His apostles long before.

When Constantino published his book on the "Summary of Christian Doctrine," the priests were surprised to see that it contained nothing about purgatory or the mass, confession to priests, penances, human merits, or the power of the pope to forgive sins; but it set forth the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, His grace in receiving sinners, and the justification of all who believe in Him. But Constantino answered

all objections by saying that he had not room in one volume to mention every subject, and that his next book would shew them what he thought of the doctrines of the "Church." His next book, however, was never published, and when at last his enemies discovered the manuscript they found in it full and sufficient proof that the author was a "Lutheran heretic," for in it he showed that he esteemed the traditions of which they thought so highly to be but the vain inventions of men, and directly contrary to the Word of God. But even before that time came Constantino was more than once sent for by the Inquisitors to answer for having made use of some expression of which they did not approve. When he returned after the interview his friends asked him what the Inquisitors had wanted him for? "They want to burn me," he answered, laughing, "but they find I am still too green."

The enemy was on the alert, but God had determined for how long the light was to shine in Seville, and until He permitted, the servants of Satan were powerless to put it out.

A few miles outside the walls of Seville there was a monastery, named the "Convent of San Isidro del Campo," inhabited by Hieronymite monks. It was a fair and quiet spot, shut out from the noise of the world and surrounded by gardens and fine trees. But darkness reigned within.

At whatever time of day or night

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you had looked into that convent chapel you would have seen monks kneeling, repeating Latin prayers, and counting the beads of their rosaries. There were masses celebrated at certain times, litanies sung, processions formed, incense burned, and all kinds of minute rules carried out and penances performed, which occupied the days and nights of the monks, and were supposed to make them especially holy and acceptable in the sight of God. But though they were shut out from the world, they could not shut the things of the world out of their hearts, and the monks found that the flesh and the devil were as strong within the convent walls as outside in the city. So, after all, the monastery was not a very happy place.

Yet into that dark place God caused the light of His truth to shine. There was at San Isidro a learned man whose name was Garci-Arias, but he was generally called Dr. Blanco, or "the white doctor," because his hair was like snow. He had heard the Gospel truths and he repeated them to the monks. To them the Word of God was like life from the dead, so different did it seem from the formal rules and ceremonies to which they had been accustomed. But when Dr. Blanco saw how readily the truth was received, he became alarmed lest his hearers should go too far and discover the errors of the Romish church, and as it was then the season of Lent, he

exhorted them to fast more rigorously than ever, to do the most severe penances, not to lie down at night but to sleep standing up, or if they must lie down to do so on the bare stone floor of their cells. By these and other such like means he told them that they would make themselves acceptable to God and atone for their sins.

The poor monks, who had heard from the white doctor's own lips that it was in Christ alone that God could accept them, and that His sacrifice had once and for ever atoned for their sins, were terribly confused by these exhortations and knew not what to believe.

The fact was that though Dr. Blanco knew the truth, and knew that it was the truth, he did not at that time love it or think it worth suffering for. He was particularly anxious to keep on good terms with the Inquisitors, who had always thought him a staunch supporter of the Romish Church. On one occasion a Protestant of Seville had been summoned to appear before the tribunal of the Holy Office to answer for something that he had said which was supposed to be heretical. This man was not ready to give a reason for the hope that was in him, though he knew it was true, so, knowing Dr. Blanco to be learned in the Scriptures, he asked him to write down some arguments for him in favour of the truth. The doctor did so, and at the appointed time the Protestant appeared before

his judges, as he thought, well able to answer them. But what was his surprise to see Dr. Blanco among the Inquisitors! and when the learned doctor stood up and answered the reasons which he had himself written down for the accused, by arguments which seemed to every one to be far more conclusive, there was nothing for his victim to do but to submit and bear his punishment. All the Protestants of Seville were very indignant with the double dealing of Dr. Blanco, and Constantino rebuked him so sharply that the doctor in great anger threatened to denounce them all as heretics to the Inquisitors. "And do you think," said Constantino, "that if we are forced to descend into the Arena, you will be allowed to sit among the spectators?"

I dare say it was only the fear of being punished with them himself that restrained the angry man from carrying out his threat. You will hear by-and-bye how, when called to face death, the white doctor found that hypocrisy was of no use, and when there was nowhere else to flee he fled for refuge to the only One Who could help him in that dread hour. But at the time of which I am speaking, the monks of San Isidro found him to be like a broken reed to lean upon, or like a trumpet giving forth such an uncertain sound that no one knows whether to prepare for battle or not. It was quite impossible to follow his teaching, for he contradicted himself continually. So

they went to Egidius, and he told them the simple gospel of the grace of God, how Christ had done the work which was necessary for their salvation and all they had to do was to accept it by believing in Him.

Still the monks were not quite sure whether it was true, and there were doubts in the minds of many. But one day in the year 1557, a treasure was brought to the monastery of San Isidro, a treasure worth more to the monks than all the wealth of the Indies. Can you guess what it was? It was a cask full of Testaments—New Testaments in their own Spanish language, translated at Geneva by their countryman, Juan Perez de la Pinceda.

Now they could know what was true! With zeal and earnestness, like the Bereans of old, they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. And they found that what Egidius had told them was truth, so, believing in Christ, they rejoiced.

Everything went on very differently in the monastery after that. Instead of repeating long Latin prayers, the monks spoke to God from their hearts; instead of useless ceremonies, they exhorted each other and encouraged each other in the faith; instead of penances and formal devotions they studied the Word of God. There were no more vain efforts made to become holy, but being now children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and because they were children, being indwelt by His Spirit, they

brought forth the fruit of the Spirit, so that love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance reigned in that beautiful place. It was a very happy place now, a place where Jesus was.

God often sends us seasons of special joy and peace just before trouble comes upon us. He gives us time to learn to know our Pilot before the storm bursts. He lets us feel what it is to hold His hand before He brings us to the roughest part of the road. He teaches us to hear His voice before the tumult arises.

But if it were always calm, we should never know how wise our Pilot is. If the road were always smooth, we should not know how firm and strong is His hand. If we never cried out for fear, we should not know what it is to hear Him say, "It is I: be not afraid."

Thus for about 13 years from the time of Francisco de San Roman's death, the light went on shining in Spain. Now and then one or another of those who walked in the light was summoned before the Inquisitors and rebuked or punished, but it was only now and then. As yet the priests of Rome had no idea to what extent the "Lutheran heresy," as they called the truth of God, had spread.

If you have ever read the "Pilgrim's Progress," you will remember that when Christian had reached the top of Hill Difficulty, he was told that a little

way on before there were two lions in the path. This frightened him much; but as the way to the Celestial City lay past where they were, he dared not turn back, but went straight on. And when he came to the place he got safely past, for the lions were chained.

In the days of which I am writing the lions were not chained, but though for a time they might seem to be sleeping, it was only *seeming*; at any moment they might be ready to spring. But if the road to Heaven lay past their lair what could the pilgrims do? They must either go on,—or turn back.

Which would you have done?

(To be continued).

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

THE BUILDING ITSELF.

"**T**HERE is the British Museum!"

With this exclamation we hurry along Museum Street, at the end of which a portion of the great building can be seen. A few steps more and it is in full view.

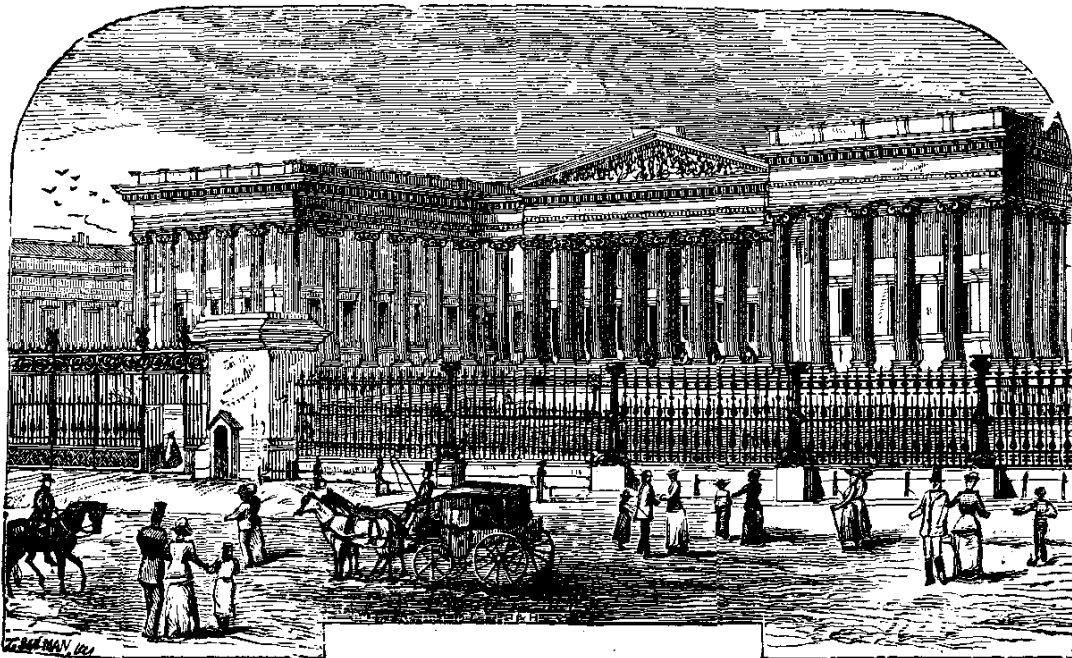
Before attempting to describe any of the wonderful relics of the past that are stored within, a word or two may be said about the place itself.

The British Museum, as it now stands, was not made in a day. Everything has a beginning. The vast city where the Museum is found had a beginning.

Accustomed as we are to walk through the streets of London, and to see the houses, shops, railway stations, omnibuses, vans, carts, and cabs, to say nothing of its six millions of inhabitants, it is difficult to imagine the time when the first house was erected and the first shop opened. And yet we know even London had a beginning.

God is the only One who had no

lived at the end of the 16th century, when he laid by his first manuscript (a *manuscript* is something written by the hand, such as a letter) think that the collection of papers and books that he was then making, was soon to swell to such dimensions. The collection which was begun by Sir Robert was "presented to the nation by his grandson, Sir John Cotton, in the year 1700."



The British Museum.

beginning. He always was, He created everything, but He was not created. You remember what the Bible tells us in the gospel of John:—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The One spoken of here as *the Word* is the Lord Jesus Christ. He had no beginning, because He was God.

Little did Sir Robert Cotton, who

Until the year 1731, this Cottonian Library (as it was called) was preserved in a building at Westminster, but this having been burnt down, the Government decided to remove it, along with other collections, to a house in Bloomsbury, "the site of which is occupied by the existing Museum."

This house having been built for

Ralph, Duke of Montagu, went by the name of *Montagu House*. The various collections "were brought together in the year 1754 in Montagu House," which for a long time was found large enough to contain them. But like boys and girls who will grow and grow, until they outgrow their clothes, so these valuable collections outgrew the space available in Montagu House.

It was in the year 1854, that the four sides of the present Museum were erected, and to the regret of many Montagu House ceased to be.

I am not going to write about *all* the different things now to be found gathered together within those massive walls, from the immense blocks of stone and iron down to the little postage stamps, for the British Museum has just lately begun to collect stamps!

It is of late years that some of the most interesting discoveries were made; interesting to us, and of special importance too, because of their connection with Biblical history, the confirmation which they give of its truth, and the tribute which they pay to its accuracy in detail.

The true Christian does not need this external confirmation in order to convince him of the truth of the Bible. For him the internal evidence is sufficient. "Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did," with the poor sinful woman at the well of Sychar, was ground sufficient for the conclusion which she drew. "Is not this the

Christ?" So we, too, have learnt that the Book which speaks to heart and conscience as no other book does, has fully established the claim which it makes to be "THE WORD OF GOD."

In the words of another:—"There are many ways of proving or testing the truthfulness of the Bible. One of the best is to begin with the chief Person to whom it testifies. There was such a Person as Jesus Christ, who declared Himself to be the Son of God. He either was the Person He professed to be, or He was worse than Barabbas because of the higher claims which He made. Then it is the old choice—Christ or Barabbas. Will rationalists face the alternative?"

Again:—"After the truth as to the Person of Christ is admitted, it is but a step to proceed to affirm the authority of Scripture. Jesus used it, and quoted from its various books, so as to leave no room to question its divine character. Thus the Person and the Book must stand or fall together; of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets, Jesus said that they spake concerning Him. Thus we have a Divine Person and a Divine Book.

"The effect of both upon the heart and conscience of man, even with children and heathen, is sufficient to prove that the Bible is no ordinary Book. Then from its practical results, under the power of the Spirit of God, the Bible maintains its own claims. The facts connected with missionaries,

martyrs, and reformers, and those influenced by them, are evidences which cannot be gainsaid."

"We now come to the monuments of Antiquity, so remarkable for the testimonies they render in these days of unbelief. Here we find 'graven in the rock' such direct and incidental confirmations of Scripture as leave the impression that there has been a Divine hand controlling the production of these monuments at the first, as well as their discovery and interpretation in these last days. These ancient 'sermons in stones' confirm faith and lift hearts in praise to God, when read in the light of 'the Word of the Lord, which endureth for ever.'"

(*To be continued*).

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS.

1. 3000. 1 Kings v. 32.
2. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles.
3. "The judgment which the king had judged" about the child. 1 Kings iii. 28.
4. Ten. Solomon, David, Israel (the family), Hezekiah, Judah (2 tribes), Agur, Jakeb, Ithiel, Ucal, Lemuel.
5. Solomon and David were kings of Israel, Hezekiah was king of Judah; five are unknown, unless Lemuel was Solomon.

William R., Herbert S., Harriette B., Jane and Ernest D., with two others, have received prizes for the best answers to the Questions during 1893; and Jennie B., Edith O., Gertrude L., Edward and Eugene D'O., deserve commendation and encouragement.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

The King, part I.

SOLOMON was a king, the son of a king, the father of a king, and he writes about kings. He was the third and last king of the twelve tribes of Israel.

God had, some 400 years before this book was compiled (see 1 Sam. viii., and ch. xxvi.), given to His chosen people a monarchical (or kingly) form of government. It is true they had *asked* Him for a king, but He might have done other than reply "Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king" (1 Sam. viii. 22). Until that time God Himself had been their King and ruled over them (1 Sam. viii. 7), and He orders Samuel to put before them what an "absolute monarchy" would be like (viii. 11-18), for such a form of government was evidently that intended by God—either He, or a king, would rule. In England we have a "limited monarchy," which is different. Solomon writes of "a king, *against whom there is no rising up*" (Prov. xxx. 31), and he adds, "where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, what doest thou?" (Ecc. viii. 4). Even in the New Testament (1 Pet. ii. 13), the king is spoken of "as *supreme*," or chief in power.

Nothing happier could be conceived than Israel in a beautiful land watered from heaven, ruled over by a king chosen by God, and with His temple

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in their midst. The Queen of Sheba exclaimed, "Happy are these thy servants . . . because thy God loved Israel, to establish thee for ever, therefore made He thee king over them" (2 Chron. ix. 7, 8). Alas! their kings departed from Him, and the people followed them, until He removed them from their favoured land into captivity.

But all this does not alter the fact that a monarchy is God's way of government. He says, "By Me kings reign" (viii. 15), "a divine sentence is in the lips of the king" (xvi. 10), "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord" (xxi. 1), and in the last chapter we may see what the character of a king should be. He ought not to allow himself that which would make him forget the law—God's law, or pervert judgment. He should be on the side of the dumb, the oppressed, the poor, and the needy. (*To be continued.*) H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. Which Psalm describes the reign of Solomon, and that of Christ in the future?
2. How many kings are named in Proverbs, and how long did each reign?
3. How many kings of David's family reigned in Jerusalem?
4. Who first in the Bible had a kingdom?
5. Find the first kings spoken of.
6. And the last; and how occupied?

CORRESPONDENCE.

Q. Will any more sinners be saved after the Lord has come *for* His saints, and they are caught up to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv)? E. G.

A. It is important to distinguish

between Israel and the Church. All the saints, from Pentecost until the Rapture (Thess. iv.) form the Church. At the coming of the Lord *for* His saints, *they*, as well as the saints who have died from the very beginning, will be caught up.

After that God's dealings with Israel will recommence. These dealings had been interrupted by their rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah.

Now, during the interval of time that elapses between the coming of Christ *for* (1 Thess. iv), and His return *with*, the saints that had been caught up into the air, the Spirit of God will have (2 Thess. i.) wrought in the hearts of the remnant of Israel (*i.e.*, the godly ones in contrast to the apostate nation).

By means of this remnant the heathen nations will be evangelized just before the Millenium. If you read Matt. xxv. 31 to end, "these, my brethren," are the Jewish remnant, and "the sheep" are those who will be converted *through* their means from amongst the nations, (*i.e.*, the heathen). This takes place *after* the removal of the Church.

For a fuller exposition of this subject we would recommend a volume entitled, "Eight Lectures on the Second Coming of Christ," price 1s. 6d. To be had of our Publishers.

Q. "What is the symbol of the *thorns* in the Crown of Thorns?" H. A. S.

A. Matthew, Mark and John, all mention the platted crown of thorns which was put on the Lord along with

a purple robe. A purple robe was worn by sovereigns, and Jesus when clothed in it was hailed in mockery, "*King of the Jews.*" Are we not meant to infer that the crown of thorns was simply the painful imitation of a royal diadem with which they *would not* crown Him?

Dr. Cunningham Geikie writes: "The Nubk tree (*Spina Christi*), is found round Jerusalem It gets its Latin name from the belief that from it was made the crown of thorns forced on the head of our Lord; and the flexible twigs with their tremendous spines, which bend backwards, are assuredly well fitted to make an awful instrument of torture if twisted into a mock diadem... The leaves are bright green and oval, the boughs crooked, the blossom white, and it bears from December to June, a yellow fruit like a very small apple."

AHUBBUKA.

WHAT a strange word you will say, my readers. But I will explain it to you, as it was explained to the one who heard it for the first time, and in order to do this I will tell you under what circumstances the word fell upon his ears. The person of whom I speak, among men was esteemed a very great personage, in fact it was he who became Emperor of Germany under the name of Frederick III, reigning however only a few months. While yet Prince Royal, and

as he was travelling in Palestine, he came to Jerusalem. There he paid a visit to the hospital of the German deaconesses, amongst other places, which was situated upon Mount Zion. He went through the whole building, stopping in each room enquiring with interest into the nationality of those who were sick, and into the maladies from which they were suffering. Having arrived at the women's quarter, his attention was particularly drawn to a little girl, three years of age, with crisp black hair. Leaning over her, and bending on one knee near her little bed, he amused the child for a time. She, made quite happy, not by the exalted rank of the stranger, but by the kindness that he shewed her, fixed upon him a radiant look, murmuring several times in a low voice in her own language, the Arabic:—"Ahubbuka! Ahubbuka!" "What does the little thing say?" asked the Prince. "She says to your Royal Highness:—'I love you!'" answered the deaconess.

Dear reader, the Son of a very great King, the Son of God most high, the King of Kings, came upon the earth and humbled Himself, laying by His glory for your sake. He, the Creator of all things, the Sustainer of the Universe by His all powerful hand, not only has manifested His loving kindness toward you, but has so loved you as to give His life for you. And you, do you love Him? Hear His word to you to-day after so long a time, "Lovest

thou me?" May you be able to respond from the heart, "Yea Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee" (John xxi. 15). "We loved Him because He first loved us" (1 John iv. 19).

BIBLE PICTURES.—No. I.

AN old man, who from early youth had heard and obeyed the voice of the Lord, was once commissioned by God to carry a message of great importance to a youth who lived in a Judæan village. It was to inform the young man that he had been appointed to hold a noble and influential position in the realm.

At first the old man hesitated a little about going, because he was afraid that if his errand became known, it might reach the ears of the king, and that he might order him to be put to death for interfering in a matter which closely concerned his interests.

However, God graciously encouraged His servant, and gave him very plain directions as to the course he was to pursue, and those he carried out to the letter.

On arriving at the village, he caused no small stir amongst the principal people, for he was a well known personage, and many anxiously enquired why he had come, and what his business was. Indeed, they were filled with fear by his presence, because sometimes he had been sent to tell people things they did not like to hear.

However, on this occasion he set their minds at rest by telling them he had come to perform a public ceremony, and by asking them to join in it. He specially invited the man and his sons to whose house God had sent him, and they accepted the invitation.

When they had assembled, each member of the family then present was introduced to God's messenger; but, not finding among them the object of his mission, he enquired of their father whether all his family were there. Being informed that one was absent, he particularly requested that he might be sent for, and on his arrival he received an intimation from God that the object of His choice stood before him; accordingly the servant of God conferred on him the dignity which God had reserved for him.

Who was the old man?

REGIONS BEYOND.

AN Italian missionary writes:—
"While dining at a restaurant I asked the waiter at what price he valued his soul. He replied, '*At very little.*' I answered, 'I value it at ten million tons of gold, and a great deal more.' The man looked quite dazed at such a representation of the value of his soul, having probably never had his attention directed to the inquiry of the Master, 'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' In my

efforts to awaken attention to God's truth I have met with some most remarkable incidents illustrating the fact that there is nothing like personal conversation with a view to awaken in human hearts attention to eternal realities."

FROM UGANDA, in AFRICA, comes a petition for prayer. One of the last requests of a native Christian before he departed quite recently to be with that blessed Saviour, who had shone down from glory into the darkness of his poor heathen heart:—

"I want to ask you to pray often to God for us, and ask all our friends, the Christians of England, who have the pity of the religion of Jesus Christ, to pray that we may receive the strength of the Holy Spirit to make known His Word in Buganda."

FROM BENGAL, INDIA:—

"The Mohammedan is about fifty years of age, not well educated, but able to read and write his native Urdu. By trade a calico printer, he worked in his shop open to the roadway, near the city. A New Testament fell into his hands, and, being a thoughtful man, he pondered on its contents. Before he had made up his mind as to the truth or otherwise of Christianity, it had been discovered by his relatives that he was wavering, and he had to decide between giving up his search for truth and getting a livelihood. As he still persisted in his study he was turned out of doors, and his wife, though an

ignorant woman, yet, from love of her husband, followed him. They found shelter for a few days with a family who had left Mohammedanism some time before, and by these were brought to our notice.

"On her simple mind the sweet story of Jesus had an almost immediate effect. She had followed her husband from a sense of wifely duty, but soon she found herself drawn after Christ. Her husband had had greater difficulties to encounter, but he had reached smooth waters at last, and his testimony was very clear. He had felt his need of a Saviour, and had found in trusting in Christ a peace and satisfaction which he had not known before. We heard that more than once he had been called on to bear testimony to the faith that was in him. On one occasion a company of his relatives and former companions had visited him, and in the long argument which ensued he had spoken out boldly for his Lord. The change in the appearance and bearing of both man and wife was noticed by many. They came to us dejected and doubtful, with a settled—almost sullen—expression of determination stamped on their faces. They had loosed from their old moorings, and had not yet found another port. But, as time went on, their new experiences manifested themselves in a more cheerful, open, and responsive manner, and it was evident to all that they knew the joy of believing in Christ and God's Word."

FRAGMENTS.

A DEVOTED servant of Christ writes :—

“Upon the margin of my Bible, opposite Isa. xli. 17, 18, I have marked ‘Miss W. Perth, Scotland, September, 1880.’ This was a young woman upon whom I called, who was dying of a painful disease. She suffered much from thirst, but was unable to take water. She loved her Lord, and was sustained wonderfully by His grace to bear a cheerful, happy face in the midst of her suffering. ‘His will be done’ was evidently the sincere expression of a heart wholly resigned to Christ. The Lord was asked for a special message of comfort for His child that day, and it was very beautiful to look upon her face as, with soulful eyes attent upon the reader, she drank in these words, ‘When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.’ The living God made these words a living power to her soul; and in the satisfaction of her spirit in God her thirst was forgotten. Her Lord had thought of her when He caused these verses to be written, and the words of Jesus, ‘Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst,’ were fulfilled to her. ‘Rivers

in high places’ were opened for her, and ‘living water’ from the fountain above flowed into her soul.

“So for every experience that can ever come to a child of God in this world, whether of adversity, sickness unto death, pain, poverty, or persecution, there will be found for him the message that shall exactly meet his need, in the wonderful Word of our wonderful God.”—

* * *

I WAS glancing over an old report of the London City Mission, in which is given the experience of one of its missionaries. He was visiting a woman, and inquired if she had a Bible. “Oh, yes,” was the reply; “we would not live without one.” “Do you read it?” “No!” “Then what do you keep it for?” “Oh, you see, it is always ready in case of sickness.” Not a few appear to entertain this poor woman’s view of the matter, and leave the reading of their Bibles for a sick-bed.

“THE MOST PRECIOUS
THING.”



ANY years ago, a Hindu convert came to an American missionary to be baptized. Now, it happens sometimes that persons ask to be baptized without being truly converted at all; they merely exchange the profession of one religion for that of another; but I am glad to tell you that this dear Hindu had been really “born again” (see John iii. 3), and washed

from his sins, in the precious blood of Christ. At his baptism he took the name of Kai Das, which means "the servant of Christ," and we shall see how well it suited him. It was his delight to serve his blessed Master, and to go about in his native country, preaching the glad tidings of the grace of God.

But travelling there is not so easy as it is here, and especially in the part where he lived it was attended with many dangers. As he was riding along late one evening, on his little pony, six highway-men attacked him, and asked for his money. He handed them all he had, which was scarcely five annas (about eightpence), and they then stripped him of nearly all his clothing. On looking it over, one of them discovered his watch. What a lovely thing! They had never seen one before, and Kai Das was questioned as to its use and its history. After satisfying their curiosity, he quietly remarked, "The most precious thing I have, you have not found yet."

Dear children, can you guess what this was? The robbers certainly could not, and they wondered where he kept it!

"Give it at once," they said.

"Wait a bit first," he replied, and much to their amazement, he struck up a hymn in their native language. Would you not like to have seen this dear captive, all undisturbed in spirit, singing the Lord's praises in the midst of these fierce men? It reminds one of the scene in Acts xvi.; Paul and

Silas singing praises to God at midnight in their prison. You might say there was not much in their surroundings to make them happy, and besides, after having "many stripes" laid upon them, their bodily suffering must have been great. Ah! but they possessed the same "precious thing," which Kai Das spoke of, and that was the secret of their joy! Well, when the hymn was finished, he went on to tell his captors of the blessed Saviour, who left His Father's home on high, and came down to this poor world to suffer and to die in the sinner's stead. His love for sinners had made him willing to undergo all this suffering that they might be saved. Would they all take their place as guilty ones before Him? Then He would receive them, one and all, (see John iii. 16, and John vi. 37). In a word, Jesus was his precious treasure, and he longed that Jesus might be theirs. The hearts of the robbers were touched; they restored the stolen goods, and their leader invited Kai Das to his own house. Here he was able to speak to many more about his Master, and we may hope the good seed thus sown brought forth fruit in due time.

And now, dear young reader, let me ask if you have yet responded to the call of the loving Saviour? He stands ready, waiting to receive you. Oh, come to Him without delay, and you will then own a priceless treasure, which none can ever take from you.

A. R. V. A.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XV.

"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—JOHN iii. 19.

WHEN you go out of a brightly lighted room into the darkness of night, the very brightness of the light makes the darkness blacker than ever. And if a lamp is lighted in the darkness, though it makes it light close around it, the places where its rays do not reach seem darker by contrast. Just so, when the light was shining in the hearts of those who believed the word of God it made the darkness in those who believed it not seem darker than before.

In the year 1556 a new king ascended the throne of Spain; his name was Philip II. Not that the Emperor Charles was dead, but being weary of governing he had given up the empire of Germany to his brother, and the kingdom of Spain to his son, and retired into the monastery of San Justo, there to prepare for death by saying prayers, doing penances,

and thinking over his past life. There were many things which he had done during his long reign for which Charles might well have reproached himself, but in that dark convent, from which the light of truth was shut out, he could not see things in their true colours, and the deed of all others which seemed to trouble him most, was, that when God's faithful servant Luther (the "arch-heretic," Charles called him) had been in his power, he had let him go free without killing him. "Though I spared him solely on the ground of the safe conduct I had sent him," he said, "and the promises I made, I confess I did wrong in this, because I was not bound to keep my word to a heretic." Poor Charles! he did not know that it was a higher power than his which had staid his hand that day from doing harm to the servant of God.

To make up for his past negligence Charles wrote letters to his successors and to the inquisitors of Spain, urging them to do all in their power to destroy the "Lutherans," and to banish heresy from their dominions. It did not, however, need his father's exhortation to make Philip II. a persecutor. If there was one thing in the world which he hated more than

any other, it was the "Lutheran heresy." To stamp it out he was willing to destroy thousands of his loyal subjects, and all the while he had the most firm conviction that in this he was doing God service.

Think how fearful it must have been to awaken from such a delusion, and to find that, when he thought he had been pleasing God, he had been fighting against Him; so that instead of receiving a reward, he had to bear the punishment of the enemies of Christ. How was it that Philip made such an awful mistake? By following the guidance of his own dark heart, and the advice of men as ignorant as himself, instead of looking into God's word to see the way which He has marked out as the only right and safe one. God does not wish us to be ignorant of His will: He has given us His word that we may know it. If any one refuses to read that word he must bear the consequences of his sin.

At this time the Inquisitor General in Spain was a man named Fernando Valdes, who, like the king, had a deep hatred for all who loved the truth of God. To him, in the year 1557, the news was brought by spies of the Inquisition, who were at Geneva, that a large number of Spanish testaments had been sent from that city to Spain.

If the inquisitors had been careless before, this news roused them. Bibles in Spain! It was too dreadful to be

allowed for a moment. What would become of the Romish Church in that country which boasted the name of the "Most Catholic," if once God's Word were given to the people? No pains must be spared, no means neglected to stop the bearer of those Bibles and seize his goods. Spies were sent through the length and breadth of the land, guards were set at every pass into the country; it seemed impossible that their prey could escape. And yet in spite of all, the precious books were brought safely through every danger and deposited with the monks of San Isidro, as you have heard before, to be distributed to those who would value them.

But the inquisitors were on the alert now. Who had received those Bibles? Where were they hidden? What had become of the audacious man who had dared to bring them in? Surely there must be many in Spain who loved the Scriptures, or the books could not have been so successfully concealed. Had the inquisitors been asleep? and had the light been spreading without their knowledge? At any rate they were not asleep now, and, urged on by the Jesuits, they resolved that they would never rest until every ray, every spark, was extinguished.

The first thing to be done was to find the man who had brought in the Bibles. When he was in their power, they thought they could force him to tell of those who had received and read

his books. So like bloodhounds they hunted him—and *they found him*.

Yes, they found him at last, and who was he?

You would not have thought much of Julianio Hernandez if you had seen him. He was poor, uneducated and small; so small that he was called "Julianillo," or "Hernandez el chico," which means "the little." "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are—that no flesh should glory in His presence." And so God chose Julianio to be His messenger—to carry His blessed "Word of Life" into thirsty Spain.

God had spoken to Julianio's heart and He had saved his soul. He could say: "The Son of God who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*," and was it any wonder that he longed that others should know his Saviour too? He had learned a little of the value of God's word: when he had been in darkness, it had brought light to him; when he had been dead in sins, it had brought him life. And though the Inquisition was doing its utmost to keep it out of Spain, would it not be worth all risks to carry that word of life to his perishing countrymen? Julianio thought it would.

He had been living for some time at Geneva, helping Juan Perez de la Pinceda, who had taken refuge there in order to complete the translation and printing of the Spanish New Testament. But it was one thing to translate and print Testaments within the safe walls of peaceful Geneva, and quite another to go forth with the precious burden, to brave the fury of the Inquisition in benighted Spain. But Julianio knew that though he was small, God was great; though he was feeble, God was strong. He knew, too, what he was about when he undertook to carry the Testaments of Perez to the Spaniards.

He set out disguised as a muleteer. Any one who saw him travelling along the roads with his mules and baggage would have thought him an ordinary travelling merchant or pedlar. Little would they know that among his goods were two large barrels full of Spanish Testaments. He knew that the officers of the Inquisition were on the watch, and that if he fell into their hands there would be no escape for him,—his cargo would condemn him at once in their eyes as a heretic. But Julianio was not easily daunted.

And God was with him; for he crossed the carefully guarded border, travelled through the country, distributing here and there copies of the Testament where he found a thirsty heart, and after many perils and narrow escapes reached Seville in

safety. There he deposited his treasure with the monks of San Isidro, who soon scattered the "Word of Life" throughout the land.

Then, when his work was done, came the day (which no doubt Juliano had often pictured to himself) when, in spite of his watchfulness, he was seized and carried off in triumph to the Castle of the Triana. A smith, to whom he had shewn a New Testament, betrayed him to the inquisitors, and great was their rejoicing that day over their prize. At last they had caught the arch-heretic, and he was a poor, uneducated, little man; no doubt they could easily make him tell them of many whom they had tried to track till now in vain.

He did not try to hide from them what he had done; what need was there to be ashamed of having helped to distribute God's message of life to dying souls? He always answered frankly when they asked him of his belief, and often silenced them with quotations from the Scriptures which he knew so well. But when questioned about his friends and those who had helped him in his bold work, Juliano's lips were sealed.

The inquisitors were disappointed, they had hoped through him to be able to track out the whole company of "heretics." They examined him, and cross-examined him, they threatened him, they sent persons to him who pretended to be friendly to the re-

formed doctrine—but it was all of no use.

So then they had recourse to torture. But the Lord was with His servant, as He had said: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," and little Juliano's lips never uttered one word that could betray his friends. When he was carried back to his cell after repeated tortures, and as the monks retreated, baffled and angry at their ill success, he would call out triumphantly: "See how the wolves run!"

Three long years they kept him in the "Holy House," as they called the Triana, but his spirit was as undaunted at the end of that time as on the day when he first passed through its terrible gate. For Juliano belonged to a faithful Master, who draws only nearer to His servants when the storm grows wildest. "For Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."—Isaiah xxv. 4.

Only a muleteer hardy and bold,
Travelling in lowly guise,
Over the Pyrenees,
Bringing his merchandise
Here to be sold.

Yes, but a messenger sent by the Lord,
Into the land of death,
Bearing a prize whose worth
No one can tell on earth—
God's precious word.

Now to the weary ones rest shall
be given,
Now before blinded eyes
Jesus Himself shall rise,
Bringing, oh glad surprise!
Pardon, and Heaven.

Only a heretic! there let him lie,
Low in the foulest den,
Hated and scorned of men,
Tortured and maimed—and then
Brought forth to die.

Yes, but Christ's servant shall have his
reward,
Choosing His path below,
Suffering, shame, and woe,
So shall he enter now
The joy of his Lord.

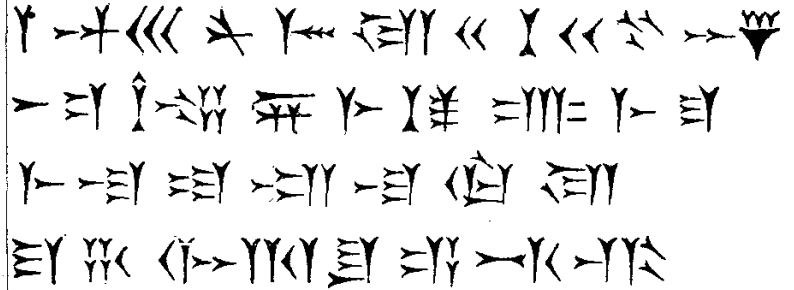
(*To be continued.*)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

THE MEN WHO WORKED THERE.

IN our visit to the British Museum, we shall of course have more especially to do with the treasures that are stored therein. But we must not take all the credit to ourselves, for other nations have likewise worked in the same field of exploration, excavation, and decipherment of ancient inscriptions.

Italy and Spain seem to have been the first European countries to make an attempt in this direction; for, in the seventeenth century, Pietro della Valle, an Italian, and Figueroa, a Spaniard, arrived at some sort of conjectures



The above is a specimen of Assyrian cuneiform writing.

regarding the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions.

As we may often have occasion to mention the word "*cuneiform*," it may be as well at once to explain what it means. Before the art of writing had been invented, and before letters had been thought of, which we now form into words, wedge-shaped signs were the only means employed, and these wedges were either stamped upon soft clay, which was afterwards hardened by baking, or they were engraved on the solid rocks. These wedges were placed in all sorts of different combinations and inclinations, some vertical, others horizontal, and others again slanting.

The word cuneiform is derived from the Latin *cuneus*, a wedge.

Niebuhr, in the year 1798, was the first to publish any exact copies of these inscriptions. Even then it seemed to be an impossible task to make out what these signs could mean. However, in 1800, a young scholar in the University of Bonn, took the first bold step in this direction, which has made him

famous in the now recognized science of Assyriology.

Grotefend, for this was his name, communicated to the Royal Society of Göttingen the result of his labours, and in 1802, so much of the alphabet that he had been able to decipher was given to the world.

Thus not only Italy and Spain, but Germany too, contributed its share in this great work.

Norway must not be forgotten here, for Christian Lassen, though he lived and laboured as an Orientalist in Germany, was born at Bergen, in Norway. Between 1836 and 1844 "he published three memoirs developing an alphabet greatly in advance of any previously constructed."

But France also contributed her share. The names previously mentioned were noted for their labours in deciphering the cuneiform inscriptions. M. Botta, a Frenchman, who was consul at Mosul, the site of ancient Nineveh, on the east bank of the Tigris, "was the first to commence excavations on the sites of the buried cities of Assyria, and to him is due the honour of the first discovery of her long lost palaces."

As the art of excavation was then only in its infancy, M. Botta at first made but slight progress; in time, however, his labours were rewarded, and the results are stored in the great French Museum at the Louvre in Paris.

The time had now come when in the

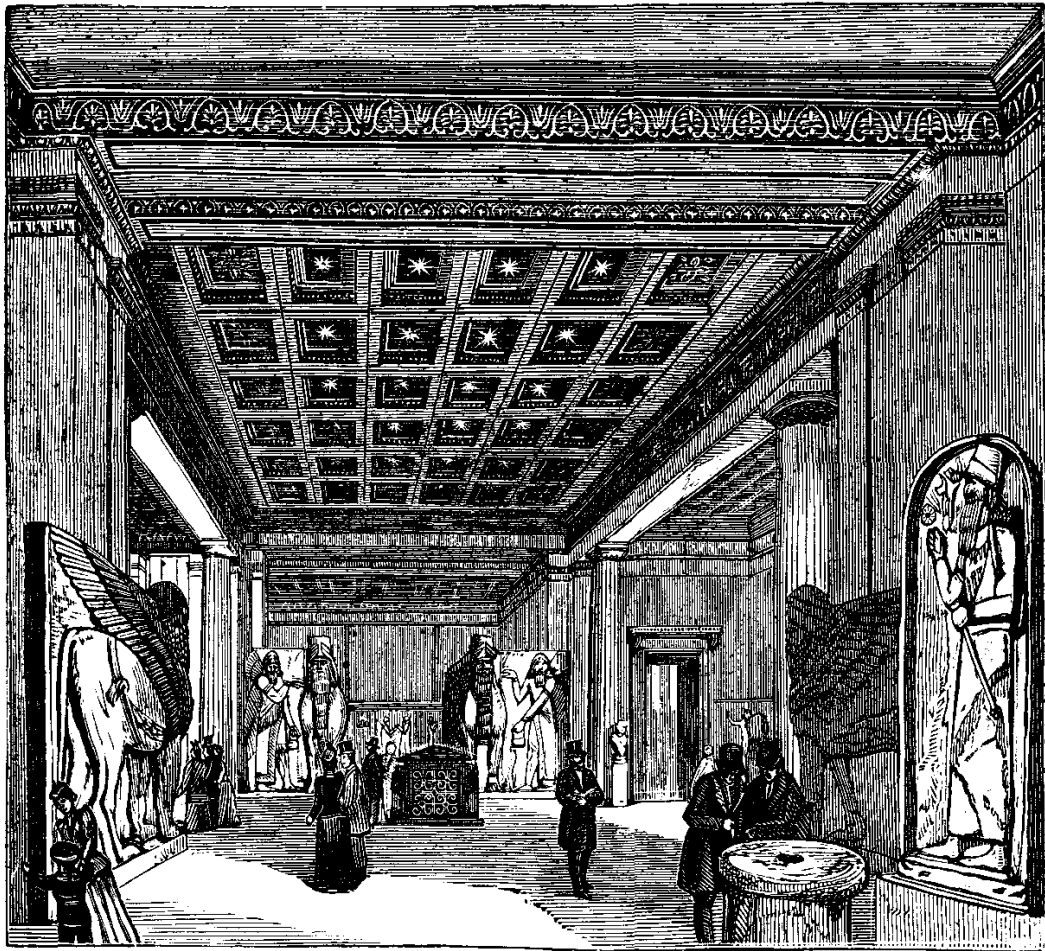
providence and wisdom of God, these "sermons in stones" were to cry out and tell their tale. We cannot but be struck with the fact that God had reserved for a day so marked by rationalism and doubt the recovery of long buried monuments whose silent records are so confounding to unbelief and so confirmatory of faith. It is as though He would leave that man without excuse, who in the rebellion of his will and the enmity of his heart would cavil at His Word and reject its truth. That Word, despised and rejected by so many, the Saviour has said will judge us at the last day (John xii. 48). Woe, then, be to the man, who in spite of its accumulated evidences, both from without and from within, will still persist in refusing its warnings and its counsels.

In the year 1840, a traveller reached Mosul, which as you remember is the site of that great ancient city Nineveh, and his name has become inseparably connected with Assyriological research. Mr. (now Sir) Henry Austen Layard was "seized with a desire to visit the ruins of the capitals of the old Assyrian and Babylonian empire." He there came in contact with M. Botta, both at his first visit in 1840, and also in 1842. But not until November, 1845, did he set to work himself. On the 8th of November, Layard started down the Tigris from Mosul, and arrived at Nimroud. Both there and around he soon hit upon some stupendous monuments of the great empire of Assyria

lying buried beneath the ground and forgotten in the lapse of centuries.

We need not now describe these, nor the laborious efforts to unearth them, suffice it to say that in the Assyrian galleries at the British Museum,

of baked clay, covered with cuneiform inscriptions, God in His wisdom was employing another, elsewhere in the East, in deciphering these very cuneiform characters, "so that almost as soon as those ancient monuments were



Entrance to the Assyrian Galleries at the British Museum, showing the immense winged human-headed bulls, found by Layard at Nimroud.

unanswerable proofs may be seen of his enthusiasm, energy, and perseverance.

At the same time that Layard was digging up the mounds at Nimroud, and other localities, and bringing to light monuments, cylinders, and tablets

placed in our British Museum, a key was in the hands of Oriental scholars which enabled them to read the inscriptions upon them. These things certainly did not happen by chance."

(To be continued.)

“THE TEARS WON’T STAY AWAY!”



WAS walking slowly through the public gardens of a beautiful city in California one lovely day in summer.

A sweet little maiden came up the path towards me, toddling along by her mother’s side. The tiny hand was safely held by the mother, the little head was sadly bent towards the ground. Evidently some source of childish sorrow lay not far distant in the past. Then a faint and quivering voice gave utterance to the words:—

“The tears won’t stay away!”

“The tears won’t stay away, won’t they?” was the tender reply, and quick as thought, a kind hand stooped to wipe away the crystal drops, and the little maid toddled on, contentedly resting in a mother’s love.

How much we may learn from childhood and its artless ways! I thought to myself as I walked along, after turning to give one more look at this living picture of real sorrow, wiped away by a touch of genuine sympathy.

Dear young readers, be always more ready to remove sorrow than to inflict it; be always quicker to wipe the tears of others away than to cause them to flow. This is good advice for all, both young and old, and it is the special exhortation to those who are the children of God, and who as dear children, are told to be followers of God. Can the reader find in his own Bible where it

says that God’s children are to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven them?

God loves to forgive, and He loves a forgiving spirit. God is love, and He wants all His children to walk in love, first of all one to another, and then towards all. Find the verse in your Bible.

We read of the time which is coming, when God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more sorrow. But in order that we might reach that happy land where “no tear-drops glisten in the eyes,” Jesus had to die and suffer for our sins, that we might be washed in His precious blood and be made whiter than snow.

Dear young reader, have your sins been forgiven?

A LETTER FOR YOU. No. 2.

DEAR CHILDREN,

QUANY long years ago, when I was quite a child, a kind lady gave me a little cross, anchor and heart, cut out of a pretty stone called Cornelian; and in the top of each was bored a small hole, through which was a tiny gold ring. These she called “Faith, Hope, and Charity.”

I have since seen similar devices cut in granite from the little Island of Guernsey, in stone from the great Rock

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of Gibraltar, in lava from the fiery mountain Vesuvius, and in Kauri gum from the old forests of Kauri trees in New Zealand.

To tell you the truth, I do not much care for these ornamental crosses that people make and wear ; it reminds me rather of "graven images" which God said we were not to make, and I fear people forget what the cross of Christ really meant to Him, when He had to suffer there for our sins.

However, in the Bible there is a verse where the three things which these emblems or signs are supposed to stand for, are mentioned together.

We read in 1 Cor. xiii. 13, "And now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity," and I want you to look with me at each of these three things, separately and in order.

Faith. Jesus Christ is said to be the Author and Finisher of faith, and so I suppose the cross is chosen as the emblem of faith because it was at the Cross that His blessed path of faith ended so far as the earth was concerned. He "endured the cross, despising the shame," but He is now "set down at the right hand of the throne." It was upon the Cross of Calvary too that Jesus shed His precious blood to save us. And it is in *Him* who died we must have faith.

But some of you may ask, "What is faith?" Dear children, it is belief in some one or something you have never seen. Little children in New Zealand,

and a great many in England, have never seen Queen Victoria, but they believe that there is such a person, because they have heard about her, and "Faith cometh by hearing."

God's children of old, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others were able to do many great and wonderful things because they had faith in God ; and in the New Testament we read of some whose faith the Lord Jesus was pleased to honour. Perhaps you remember how when He went into the house of Simon the Pharisee, a poor woman followed Him ; and while He sat at meat she washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and anointed them with ointment ; and the Lord said to her, "Thy faith hath saved thee."

Again, when He restored the sight of Bartimæus, the poor blind beggar who when he heard that Jesus of Nazareth passed by, cried, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me," He said to him, "Thy faith hath saved thee." Would you not like to hear the Lord saying to *you* in tender loving accents, "Thy faith hath saved *thee*: go in peace"?

Hope. You all know what hope is. When you get a nice apple given to you you do not *hope* for it ; you have it, it is already your very own. But if you are told that perhaps you may get a letter to-morrow, you say, "Oh ! I *hope* I shall." You hope for things which you *want*, and not for the things which you *have*.

I do not know why an anchor should be the emblem of hope, unless it is because of the verse in the Hebrews which speaks of hope as an "anchor of the soul." There is not much about anchors in the Bible, I do not think the word occurs except in the verse already alluded to, and in Acts xxvii., which gives the account of St. Paul's shipwreck; but there is a great deal about hope. And do you know what I think is the grandest hope for the children of God? The Lord's coming. Yes. May we all be looking for that Blessed Hope.

Charity. The word charity means love. Love comes from the heart, where it has been implanted by God, and I suppose this is why the heart has been chosen as the sign of charity or love. You can always remember having had some one to love you, and someone that you could love in return. Oh! how hard it would be to live without love! God knows this, and so he has given us kind parents and friends to love us and to be the objects of our love.

If you will look at that verse where Faith, Hope and Charity are spoken of (Cor. xiii. 13.) you will see that it says, "The greatest of these is charity." Can you guess why charity or love is said to be the greatest? I believe it is because *God is Love*, and also because Love is immortal, it will remain when Faith and Hope have passed away. But when will this be? When we see Him whom not having seen we love.

Well, dear children, good-bye, have *Faith* in God; *Hope* for the return of His Son from Heaven; and may the Lord direct your hearts into the *Love* of God.

I am,

Yours affectionately,

H. S. T.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS.

1. Psalm lxxii.
2. Four; David, 40 years; Solomon, 40 years;
3. Twenty two. [Hezekiah, 29 years.
4. Nimrod. Gen. x. 8-10.
5. The four kings who fought with five. Gen. xiv.
6. "The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour" to holy Jerusalem. Rev. xxi. 24.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.—

The King. Part II.

WHAT, then, are Christians to do with regard to Kings, and that of which our last class spoke? To "fear God and honour the king" (1 Pet. ii. 17). But if they are living in a country where there is no king, or that, worse still, in our favoured England a change of government were to occur which might be extremely obnoxious to them?

The Bible provides for that difficulty; they are still to be obedient. "The powers that *be* are ordained of God" (Rom. xiii.); and again, "Submit yourselves unto every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (1 Pet. ii. 13-17). Christians have nothing to do with the government of this world: they belong

to heaven where Jesus is (Phil. iii. 20). They are sent down here to be witnesses for God as Jesus was (John xvii. 18), and are waiting to go to their own place with Him; then they will take part in the government of the earth with Him (Matt. xix. 28). Meanwhile, they are to be doing good, to be subject, to be separate from the world and to be holding forth the word of life.

Proverbs does not tell us of these things, because it is a book setting forth the conduct of a man (and as a perfect Man, the Lord fulfilled its precepts) who is going on to heaven at last, not who belongs to it *now* as we do, though we are also going on to it. But a Christian *ought* to be a better father or son or friend than an ungodly man would be.

Until Jesus reigns over the earth, no one will ever come up to God's standard as a king. He came to be King over Israel, but they refused Him because He appeared in lowly form. God then set aside His earthly kingdom for the time, and Jesus died to win for Himself from among Jew and Gentile the Church for His bride: when He comes back again in glory with His saints, He will reign during the millennium for 1000 years "in righteousness" (Is. xxxii. 1), and they will reign with Him.

It is solemn to learn that during a certain time before the millennium, Satan will imitate God and set up a man to reign *for him*, to whom he will give great power (Rev. xiii).

He is sometimes spoken of as *the* king: this and other events will usher in the coming of the true King.

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. What kind of a man do kings "love"? Answer from Proverbs.
2. What does Paul say to Timothy about Kings?
3. Find passages in Isaiah describing the reign of Christ.
4. What does Nehemiah say Solomon was . . . of God?
5. 1 Kings iv. 33. Solomon "spake of trees." In what book does he the *most*?
6. Where does it say that "the saints shall judge the world"?
7. Find the youngest king named in the Bible.

THE GOSPEL IN JAPAN.

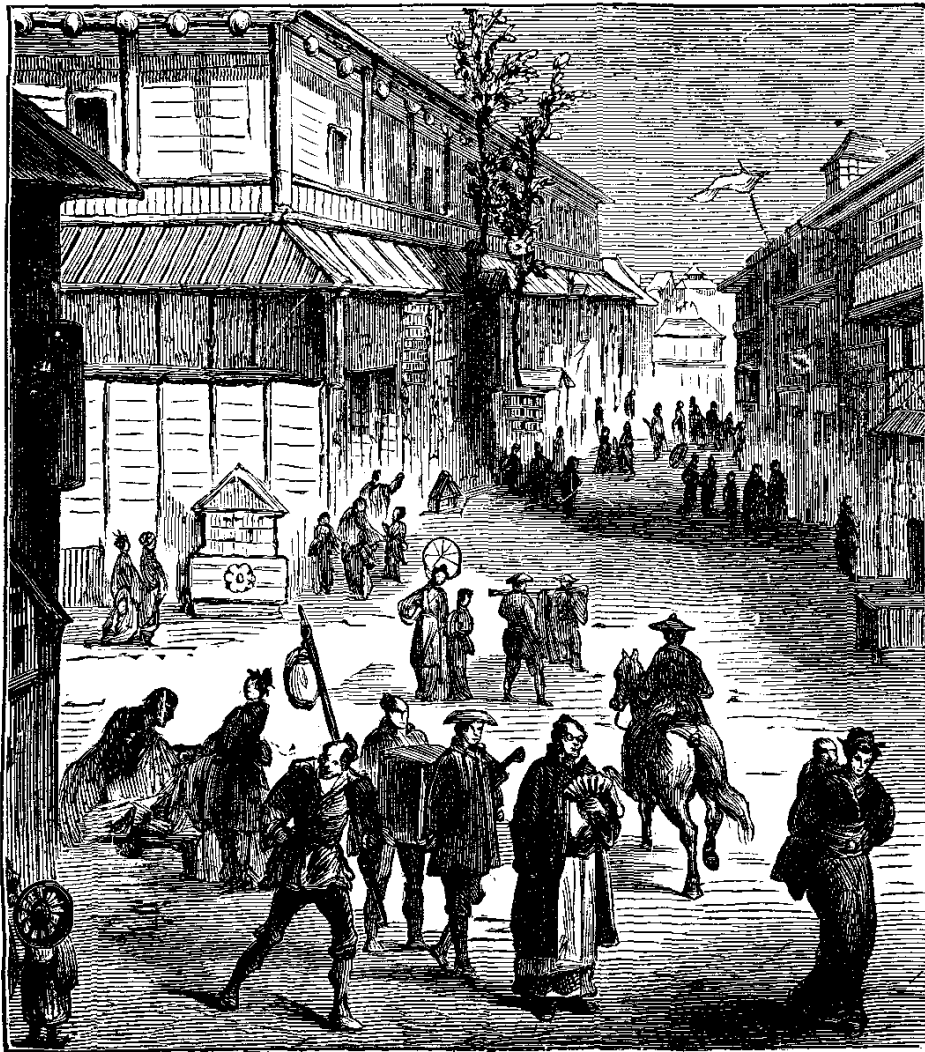
THE FLOATING BIBLE.

IT was long before any Christian Missionary was allowed to land or work in Japan. In 1859 some messengers of Jesus Christ settled there for the first time in this century. But they were still forbidden to teach or to preach, and no Japanese might, at that time, under pain of death, openly embrace Christianity. It is only since the year 1872 that Japan has been really opened to the preaching of the Gospel.

Yet, even before the year 1859 there were some Japanese who in secret believed in Jesus Christ the Son of God as their Saviour, and had been led to Him through God's word alone.

It happened in this wise. One day a Japanese gentleman, who held a high office in the state, was walking by the bay of Jeddo, shortly after an American or English ship had left the

hand, he found that it was a book, which he could not read, and he learnt from some Dutch merchants that it was an English New Testament, believed by many to be the only true



A Street in Yokohama, Japan.

harbour. Seeing a little black object floating very near to the shore, he sent one of his attendants to fetch it and bring it to him. On taking it in his

and living word of God. The merchants also informed him that it had been translated into Chinese, so he immediately procured a copy of this

translation, and began, with five or six other gentlemen of the court, to read it diligently.

The officer's heart was moved, as it had never been before, by the life and work of the Lord Jesus, and he exclaimed, "I never heard of such a Person." Two of his friends were also reached by the Word of God. They became troubled about their sins, and were led to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, in whom they found life and light, salvation and peace.

Later on when the Missionaries came, they turned to them for further instruction, and were able to encourage them in the work of faith and labour of love in that idolatrous land.

And now let me ask you, dear reader, you, who have God's Word in your house, has it brought the same rich blessing to you, which it did to these men in that heathen country? Woe be to you if it be not so, "for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."—Luke xii. 48.

After reading the foregoing, our young friends will be interested in the following extracts from a letter just to hand from that far off land.

A remarkable awakening has lately taken place there, and as some of us are rejoicing at what the Lord has been graciously pleased to do during this last winter in London, let our praises resound for Japan. Let us also all pray that the visit of our brother to

China, may be greatly blessed of the Lord.

Please notice that it is only when we are truly the children of God, that we should take the Lord's supper. To such only the words are addressed, "This do in remembrance of Me."

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE COME." I Cor. xi. 26.

ED.

"YOKOHAMA, 1893.

"Since sending you the long letter, the Lord has been working here among the Japanese. My cook (he was formerly Brand's cook, but as Brand is thinking of going to China for a few months, he has turned him over to us), who confessed the Lord many months ago and was baptized, takes his place at the Lord's table next Sunday.

The Lord has also been working with his wife. About a week ago I asked her, in my poor Japanese (having just learned how to ask the two questions) If she were a sinner? and also if she believed in the Lord Jesus or in the Saviour? I could get no definite answer from her, but in the evening she came to us (wife and I, there was no interpreter in the house at the time), and with the aid of our dictionaries, we gleaned the following confession. "Jesus Christ I adore. God's Son He is. Our Idols are no gods. I am a sinner. I desire to be baptized." We asked when this change had taken place, her answer was, 'Now, to-day.'

She had evidently but just decided for Christ. This rejoiced our hearts much, as she had been a regular Jezebel to her husband. When he came to the meetings, she would go down the road to worship her idols and would oppose him with all her heart. We ascertained later that he has been reading the Word to her every day, and we doubt not the Lord has been working there for some time. Brother Sawada baptized her last Lord's-day; both he and Brand believe there is a real work of God in her heart."

H. S.

NOT AFRAID TO DIE.

IN a workhouse bed lay a dying girl, in whom many of the suffering inmates of the ward were greatly interested, and a kind nurse watched the closing hours with thoughtful care. That precious soul about to pass from time to eternity had been the tenant of a very frail and distressing tabernacle, if so we may speak of a body deformed, and a mind as weak as her limbs were helpless.

Some of my young readers may remember a little about Katie, whose joints were all twisted in an unnatural way, and who could not even hold up her head, nor speak more distinctly than a child just beginning to express itself in words. For those who have not before heard of her, I shall mention one or two circumstances connected with the

last few months of her life, in which it was my privilege to know something of her.

God had sent a messenger to tell Katie about Himself and His Son, and her astonishment was very great as she listened to the story of such wondrous love, and lamented that she did not "know God." Then followed the mention of the precious Name of Jesus, and her heart followed, with interest, the sweet story of the cross, as she wonderingly asked, "How did He die?"

But a farther lesson had to be learned, and this God taught her in a remarkably simple way by the words which He knew would reach the conscience of His hearer. We were, one day, startled to find Katie's bed empty, and still more astonished to see her in the day-room, dressed, and on a half-reclining chair, with a doll on her lap, which she could not even handle.

The nurse, who was in the habit of explaining the imperfect words to me, was not there, and only a vacant look, and sounds which I could not understand, met my attempts to be understood. Then God gave me a thought from Himself, and I said,

"KATIE! YOU ARE A SINNER!"

The look on the poor girl's face was enough to show that her conscience had been reached, for with all the force she could command, she stammered forth her reply, but still I could not catch the words. A second time the

WORDS OF LIFE.

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same sounds were poured forth, and then with a distinctness altogether new to me from her lips, the refusal was plain, and the tone likewise—

“ I AIN’T—A SINNER ! ”

The friend who was with me, and who knew the girl better than I, also plainly caught the words, so I could confidently answer Katie—

“ GOD SAYS YOU ARE A SINNER.”

As the weak one listened to the line of a hymn—

“ TWAS FOR SINNERS JESUS DIED.” she seemed quietly to allow God to be true, and herself a liar, and we left her, with that one thought—a sinner !

The next and last time I entered that sick ward and sat down by Katie’s bed, the first word she uttered as she looked at me was, “ Dod ” ! thus connecting my message with the Blessed God. Telling her that Jesus was coming soon, I asked her—

“ WHERE IS JESUS, KATIE ? ”

“ Up ki ! ” was the quick response.

“ And are you going up there with Him ? ”

“ Es ! ” she replied gladly.

“ He loved me, and gave Himself for me ” rose in my heart, and slowly, word by word, dear Katie repeated this after me, till she knew the verse as much as could be expected of her. As I rose to go, and I lingered thinking I might see her no more (as I was going away on the morrow), I once more repeated those beautiful words, but when I came to “ Himself,” she burst forth

with the closing two, ere I could say them,

“ FOR ME.”

And with those faint sounds on her lips, I said Good-bye.

A few weeks afterwards, the hour of death drew near, but she told the nurse that she was not afraid to die, because (she said) :—

“ I AM GOING TO GOD ! ”

So at sixteen, this poor helpless girl passed from earth to Heaven, and I expect to see poor deformed, imbecile Katie, that was, all perfect and holy, and bright in the glory of God.

“ There no stranger, God will meet thee ;

Stranger thou in courts above :

He who to His home will greet thee—

Greets thee with a well-known love.”

Will you, my reader, be there to receive the Father’s greeting, because cleansed by the precious blood ? “ The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”

G. W.

GOING HOME. No. I.

“ THE TITLE.”

WE are writing for Children, and who that knows anything of School life, but can enter into the joy of the welcome cry. “ Home for the holidays ” !!

The day, so eagerly looked forward to, has come at last. The work of the term is finished. The packing up done, the many valued prizes and little love gifts for home carefully stowed

away in the trunks, which are corded, labelled, and ready for the owners to take with them.

A period of joy and rest in the loved home circle, with its well-known welcome, is before them, for however happy each may have been during the time of study, we all agree that "There is no place like *Home*."

Home, no word so full! it speaks of love, rest, and happiness!

But let me ask, Is it only for this scene that these words speak? What of the Home above, where God is? And where Jesus, the well-known friend of little children dwells? Where they will have rest—joy, and love beyond anything known on earth.

God the Father's desire is to have all His beloved children at home with Himself, not for a time merely, but *for ever*.

Has everyone who reads this little paper a *Title*, a *sure* and *certain Title* to be there? Yes, if you believe in Jesus, that His blood was shed for *you*, God tells you that He sees the blood and not your sins, and He makes you His child for ever. You need have no doubt nor fear, the work was done on the Cross, and God is satisfied.

Would there be any doubt as to the reception those from school were to receive? Would they doubt their right to be at home? Nothing could take away the *title* of *children* to be there; and nothing could take away the title of children who believe in Jesus to their home above where God dwells.

This is a settled thing by God Himself.

Can you each truly say before God:

"I have a home above,

From sin and sorrow free,

A Mansion which Eternal love

Designed and formed for *me*."

"My Saviour's precious blood,

Has made my title sure,

He passed through death's dark raging flood,

To make my rest secure."

M. V.

THE GUIDING LAMP.

I need the word of God's own truth,
His message to mankind;
To warn, to guide, to keep, to teach
My uninstructed mind.

It warns me of my lost estate,
As Adam's ruined child;
And tells me of my wicked heart,
To God unreconciled.

It tells me, too, of one who came
To seek and save the lost,
Who paid the debt I owed to God,
Though His own blood it cost.

And though the sword of justice once
Hung o'er my guilty head,
'Tis sheathed for me, now I can see
That Christ died in my stead.


Lord, teach me more and more to prize
That precious word of Thine;
And may it, like a "guiding lamp,"
Along my pathway shine.

Then shall my feet tread firmly on—
And should the foe assail,
O'er those who wield the Spirit's sword,
His might can ne'er prevail.

A. R. V. A.



Words of Life,

For Old and Young. 

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XVI.

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—2 CORINTHIANS iv. 4.

WHEN the inquisitors found that it was utterly impossible to get the information that they wanted from Julianio Hernandez, they had recourse to other methods. Their secret agents were everywhere, and before very long, by bribery and other base means, they discovered what they sought for.

In Valladolid the wife of Juan Garcia (the man, you remember, who used to summon the people to the meetings) was persuaded to act as a spy. Her husband had never told her where the meetings were held, for she did not love the truth; but one night she secretly followed him in the dark, watched where he went in, and pointed out the house to her confessor. Poor woman! I wonder whether the money, which was allowed her every year, as reward for this great service to the "Church,"

quieted her conscience and set her heart at rest.

I do not know how the inquisitors found out the meeting place in Seville; they did find it out before long. But they were too clever to act hastily in either city. For months they kept their secret, and watched carefully to see who attended the meetings, their agents leaving no stone unturned, no device, however wicked, unused, to discover the names of all in any way connected with the "Lutherans."

Among the children of God there was a vague sense of apprehension, a feeling that *something* was going to happen. But nothing was certain, and quietly they went on their way, for were they not safe in their Father's keeping? Yes, safe in His hand for ever, even if the way He led them were through the fire,—and Heaven was at the end.

It was the monks of San Isidro who caused the fatal blow to fall. For a long time their consciences had been troubled about their position. How could they, children of God, go on living in a way that was quite contrary to His word? For they had searched the Testament from Matthew to the Revelation and could find nothing in it about monasteries or monks. They felt

that, as children of light, they could not continue, even outwardly, in the ways of darkness. The matter was talked over seriously very often. It was well known that if the monks should leave the convent they would be sure to be arrested. The only way would be to flee from the country, but then they would at once be denounced as heretics, and if they themselves should escape, their friends would be sure to suffer. At first they agreed to remain quietly at San Isidro, but as rumours of coming persecution became more and more alarming, it was decided that each monk should do as he chose, and twelve of them resolved to escape.

No sooner had they gone than the inquisitors heard of it. They saw that their plans were suspected, it was time for them to act. They were quite prepared. Armed familiars were waiting in every place to do the work, spies and traitors were at hand to point out the victims, horsemen were ready to pursue fugitives. So the command was given by Valdes, and in one night the blow fell throughout the country.

Picture to yourselves, if you can, that night in Seville when two hundred persons were arrested at once. Think of parents being carried off before the eyes of the children; well known preachers, noble gentlemen, honest tradesmen, seized like criminals; women snatched from their homes; young girls led away by the silent masked Alguazils, and no power on

earth was strong enough to stay them.

The castle of the Triana was filled, and when, day after day, more prisoners were brought in until the number in Seville and its neighbourhood alone amounted to eight hundred, all the Dominican monasteries and even private houses had to be turned into prisons.

In Valladolid eighty were taken, and many others in different places. "The Vipers' nest," as Valdes said, was crushed with one blow.

Poor Spain! She made choice that night, and the darkness which she desired has covered her to this day.

King Philip and Valdes were exultant, and wrote to the pope to ask for an increase of authority, in order to be able to deal with their prisoners with proper severity, and to seize others. Pope Paul IV., who, like Saul of Tarsus, breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, was not slow in granting this request. He sent a brief to Valdes, charging him to catch all suspected of holding the "Lutheran" doctrines, whether they were bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, cardinals or legates; barons, counts, marquises, dukes, princes, kings or emperors." He gave him permission also, to condemn to death all who had ever taught what he called "heresy," however sincerely they might seem to repent.

The Emperor Charles from the monastery of San Juste wrote to encourage

his son in his work of persecution. It was almost his last message, for the great monarch's life was drawing to a close. In spite of all his penances and prayers his mind was not at rest, he could not think with confidence of death, for he knew that judgment lay beyond. I suppose it was to comfort him that, at the last, Philip sent the Archbishop of Toledo to San Juste.

This Archbishop was Don Fray Bartholomi de Carranza. He had once been as bitter against the people of God as Charles himself. You remember that it was he who preached the sermon against heresy at Valladolid the day that Francisco de San Roman was burned. When he had been in England, on the occasion of Philip's marriage with queen Mary, he had assisted her in her bloody persecution of the Protestants, and had been specially severe on Archbishop Cranmer, whom he had helped to condemn to death.

And yet Carranza knew the truth, and at that solemn moment when his master the emperor was passing into eternity, he dared not tell him anything but the truth, dared not give him anything but a sure foundation to rest upon. So kneeling beside the bed of the dying monarch, the archbishop earnestly entreated him to look away from himself and his poor "merits," to Christ Who had died for him and atoned for sin.

Little did Carranza think that for speaking those few words at such a

moment: he would ere long be deprived of all his honours and titles, and for the last seventeen years of his life be kept a prisoner of the Inquisition. But it is always worth while to deliver God's message, whatever it may cost us, even if others do not listen to it.

I do not know whether Charles did look to the Lord Jesus at the last moment: there would have been salvation for him even then, though he had so often before refused the grace of God. But his servants said, that though he was too ill to speak, he did not seem to care to listen to what the Archbishop said. Satan is terribly earnest in blinding the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them.

Now that the prisons were full, there was but one thing which vexed Valdes, it was that the "Vipers' nest" had not been discovered sooner. He considered it a great disgrace to the Inquisition that the Protestants had been left so long unharmed. As he concluded that his subordinates had been very negligent of their duties, he appointed new sub-inquisitors, whom he could trust to be as severe as himself.

To Seville he sent Gonzales Munibraga.

This man might have been seen any day in the streets of the city, attired in the richest robes, attended by numbers of servants, and followed by crowds of flatterers. In the pleasant summer

evenings he spent the time sailing on the river Guadalquiver in his gaily painted barge, accompanied by the sweet strains of music ; or walking in the luxuriant gardens of the Inquisition

“ Holy House,” noble minded men and gentle women were, by his orders, suffering all the horrors of imprisonment and torture. But sometimes the places that look to us the darkest in



Some of the Tortures of the Inquisition.

House ; or feasting in the great banqueting hall on the most expensive dainties, surrounded by every luxury that money could buy.

Meanwhile, within the walls of the

this world are really the brightest, for “ unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness,” and I do not think that one of those prisoners would have been willing, even *then*, to change places

with Munebraga; and think of the difference now!

Do you remember what David said, after he had been speaking about the prosperity of men of the world?—"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

It were well worth waiting a little while for such a portion.

(To be continued.)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

OTHER MEN AT WORK.

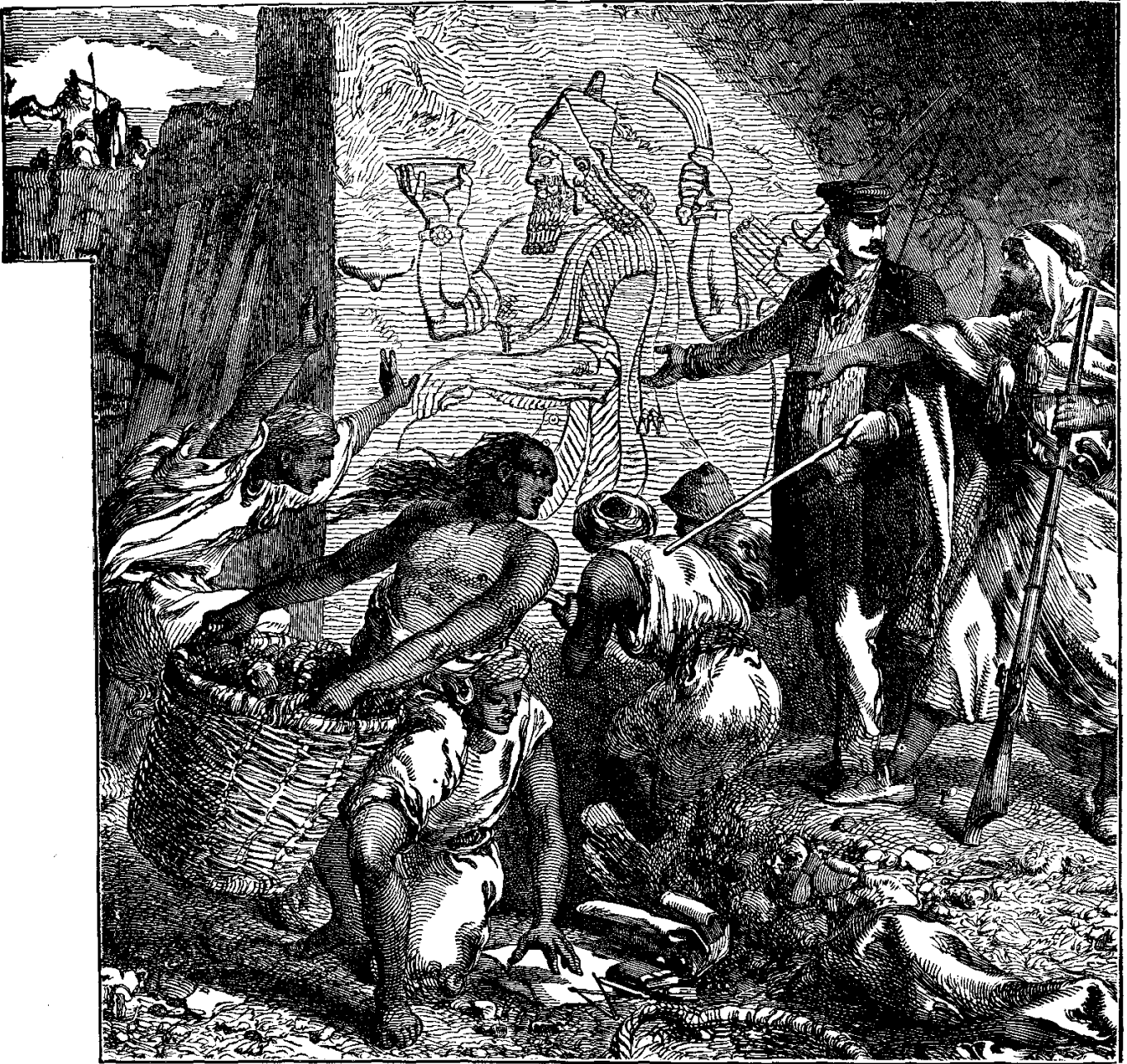
ABOUT, or a little before, the time that Layard and others were busily at work, and others endeavouring to decipher the inscriptions, by a remarkable ordering of divine wisdom, a young man found his way to Persia, who was to be the instrument in God's hands of supplying the key which was to unlock the precious *Records of the Past*.

Colonel (now Sir Henry) Rawlinson, was born at Chadlington, in Oxfordshire, in 1810; was educated at Ealing, and entered the East India Company's service in 1827. In 1833 he was sent to Persia, where he remained for some years, constantly on the move.

Being a man of energy and enterprise he soon began to study the Persian cuneiform inscriptions. At the same time, and unknown to one

another, Lassen, at Bonn, was working at the same task. A glance at any tablet now in the British Museum covered with these wedge-shaped characters will convince any one of the great difficulty of the work on which they were engaged. And yet, marvellous as it may appear, they both succeeded in constructing an alphabet by means of which those conversant with the matter can read these strange looking tablets with almost as great ease as you, my young readers, can read this article! Perhaps the most remarkable thing of all is, that when these alphabets were published it was found that except for *one single character* they were both identically alike. Surely we may believe that the hand of God was in this. For several years Sir Henry held various important posts in the East, and thus his acquaintance with Oriental customs and languages became matured. While Layard was excavating at Nineveh, Rawlinson was stationed at Bagdad, and the interesting discoveries of the former incited the latter to still more strenuous efforts to decipher the cuneiform characters so constantly being brought to the light of day. He had already succeeded, as we have seen, so far as the Persian inscriptions were concerned, was he to be baffled by those of Babylonia and Assyria?

On the high road between Ecbatana and Babylon, a long, narrow range of hills is found bounding the plain of



Layard excavating at Nimroud.

Kermanshah to the eastward. The terminal point of this range has been called "The Rock of Behistun," *Bhagistân*, signifying "the place of the god."

From ancient times this Rock has evidently possessed a sacred character, and being situated on the high road, must have been well known, for which

reason we may suppose it had been chosen by Darius as a suitable place whereon to record his victories. But in all human affairs there is a hand that directs and a power that controls. Little did Darius imagine when centuries ago, flushed with his success, he caused in pride of heart the celebrated inscriptions to be chiselled on the rock, that he was merely a tool in the hands of God to place on record, not the history of his own exploits, but an alphabet whereby inscriptions of greater importance might be deciphered.

“God everywhere hath sway,
And all things serve His might.”

The very spot on the rock chosen for the purpose is additional proof of this. In the words of Sir H. Rawlinson, “This range is rocky and abrupt throughout, but at the extremity it rises in height and becomes a sheer precipice. The altitude I found, by careful triangulation, to be 3,807 feet, and the height above the plains at which occur the tablets of Darius is perhaps 500 feet or something more.” So that the very difficulties experienced in reaching it have preserved it all these ages from the destructive interference of passers-by.

In the Book of Esther in the Old Testament we have an inspired example of the same kind. The name of God is not found, as no doubt my young readers are aware, from the beginning to the end of the book, and yet His hand is noticeable everywhere. His

people were in such a low state that He could not publicly acknowledge them, and yet He cannot forsake them; consequently He controls, without their being aware of it, the movements of the whole empire of Media and Persia, with a view to the blessing of His faithless people.

Thus the Book whose inspiration poor rationalism denies becomes of peculiar and special interest to the child of God, possessing as it does internal evidence in a remarkable degree, of the handiwork of God.

The inscriptions on the Behistun Rock were in three different languages—Persian, Babylonian, and Scythian, and owing to this circumstance, by comparing the one with the other, Sir Henry Rawlinson, who had previously deciphered the Persian, was enabled to interpret the Babylonian, and thus to construct the long-sought alphabet which was required for the purpose of reading the Assyrian inscriptions. No doubt the object of Darius was to announce to those several nations the boastful record of his own victories, but God had another end in view.

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.”

(To be continued.)

GOING HOME. No. II.

ANOTHER thought may strike us, as we think of this happy day, of going home, and it is a solemn one. It is the

uncertainty of everything down here. "We know not what a day may bring forth," so well may God tell us in His word, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

Some who have been looking forward to this day may never see it, and I will tell you about one, who, like all the rest, was eagerly counting the days to the holidays, perhaps saying (as many do), "This day so many weeks, I shall be at home." When you said this, you possibly did not think God's thoughts might be different.

Lily G. was a bright happy little girl about the age of ten or eleven. Illness of a very serious nature came into the school where she was. One by one was laid down but, through mercy, was raised up again.

However, one Sunday morning Lily was said to have the dreaded symptoms, and, without telling you all the details, she was so ill that, in spite of all that care and skill could do, she sank under it in a few days, about three weeks before the holidays, and she was taken, not to her earthly home, but to be with Jesus, whom she knew as her Saviour, to His home above, and to be with Him for ever.

The day before she was taken ill, she repeated that hymn to her teacher, which begins thus :

"One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er :
I'm nearer home to-day
Than I ever have been before."

and ends with

"It may be, I'm nearer home,
Nearer now than I think."

What was her title to be there? the precious blood of Jesus, and His word which assures us, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

If you were taken ill and had to face eternity, would *you* be sure of your *title* to go from this scene to the one above? If not, do not delay, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," for it may never come! "*Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation."

But there is also the way in which they get home, and this has also a word to our hearts and consciences, especially to those little ones who know God as their Father.

Some are seen departing from school under the charge of careful ones to see them off by trains going East, West, North or South. Others may be going by boat across the water. And many a prayer goes up to God for the dear ones that no evil may befall them, that "He who neither slumbers nor sleeps" may have them in His own tender keeping, and permit them to have the loved embrace. But others may have to wait some time for their father to fetch them, and I know of some, who would not be trusted to any one else.

Hours pass away, and these children wait on and on, watching intently for the familiar footstep of him they love so dearly, and listening for his voice. "Why does he not arrive?" "Do you

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think he has forgotten to come for you?" asks one or another. I need not tell you that the beloved ones did come and take their children home.

Now pause, and look at John xiv. 3. The Lord there says, "I will *come* . . . and receive you unto myself." Will He keep His word? Can we doubt it? No. His desire is to have us with Himself in His home, in His "Father's house are many mansions." Jesus is gone on high, and has a place ready for each little child who belongs to Him.

In 1 Thess. iv. 16-17, we read *how* He will take them to Himself. Are you ready? Are you watching and waiting? and are you longing to be "for ever with the Lord"? His word to all is, "Behold, I come quickly."

E.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS.

1. "Him that speaketh right." Prov. xvi. 13.
2. That supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks are to be made for them. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.
3. Isaiah ii, iv, xi, xxxii, xxxv, xlix, lx, lxxv.
4. Beloved. Neh. xiii. 26.
5. Song of Solomon.
6. 1 Cor. vi. 2; Jude 14, 15.
7. Joash. 2 Chron. xxiv. 1.

PROVERBS.

A Wise Son.

SOLOMON was not only a King, (which was his public position) he was a father; he was this in his private life, and he

had been also the cherished son of his father David. "I was my father's son, tender and only beloved" (iv. 3), he says. This Book then is full of instruction concerning children, and though the precepts are given in the masculine gender to "my son," no child need say he or she is left out in them.

Let us see what Solomon expects of a son: "Hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (i. 8). He expected attention and obedience; so does God (Eph. vi. 1). Until children are old and wise enough to direct their own way, their only safe path is that of obedience, and this will be their ornament (i. 9). Solomon also taught what the dangers to be avoided were. "In vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird" (i. 17), means, that if you *believe* your parents when they tell you that the feet of sinners "run to evil," you will be forewarned, and will not be enticed to go and see for yourselves, which would be walking into the net to be caught. We all should remember this.

Solomon says moreover, "My son, if thou wilt receive *my* words, . . . then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord . . . and then shalt thou understand . . . every good path" (ii. 1, 5, 9). Those who obey the words of an earthly father may learn the fear of the Lord too, besides being wise with God's wisdom in every human affair. Solomon does not preach of what he did not practice:

he says, "I was my father's son *he taught me*" (iv. 3, 4), and it seems from his life as if he had profited from David's instructions, though not in every particular, for God has not told us of any *perfect* person on this earth until we come to His own Son. Of Him, as to His earthly parents it is said, "He was subject unto them" (Luke ii. 51), and of His Father in heaven, He Himself said, "I do *always* those things that please Him" (John viii. 29); no one else can say this. Yet God *inspired* Solomon, who was imperfect himself, to write down these wise words for us.

No child likes punishment, but "Chasten thy son," "Correct thy son," remain written: the "foolish son" who is a "heaviness" or a "grief" and a "calamity" to his parents, might be less often seen if they did spare not the rod for fear of the crying of the children (xxii. 15). Think of Eli's sons, and Lot's children, and the 42 little children who mocked at Elisha, and you will thank God if you have parents who try to obey Him and train you in the way you should go.

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. How often is it said, "A wise son maketh a glad father"?
2. What kind of sons "cause shame"?
3. Note some of the verses where Solomon exhorts his son to heed his father and mother.
4. Who were Solomon's father and mother?
5. What was the name of Solomon's son? and was he a wise son?

6. Which verse in Proverbs contains 6 or 7 questions?

7. Answer those questions with verses to prove them.

A LETTER FOR YOU. No. 3.

DEAR CHILDREN,

HAVING seen extracts from your letters in the January number of "Words of Life," I think you may like to read extracts from two letters which I have by me, written by a dear boy to his sister in England.

Bertie lived in a far-off land, and when his father died it was found needful for him to leave his house, and dear ones, and go to another country to live with an elder brother. Happily this brother had been brought to know Christ as his Saviour, and God used this trial to bring Bertie also to learn the precious love of Jesus in a very real and blessed way for one so young. He was then between ten and twelve years old.

"MY DARLING A.,—I was very glad to receive your letter. N. told me that your Aunt was ill, I hope she is better in the body, but if not I hope she is cheerful, and happy. There is a chapter when my heart was sad comforted me very much, it is in the 14th chapter of John. I had read in a book that if we pray to God He will help and counsel us. So I took up my Testament and opened it, the words I first saw were the 1st and 2nd verses. Oh! such joy then entered my heart, and I said, There's a message straight from heaven.

Just fancy, when I was first saved, a person told me I would get mad, but she saw I did not get mad, so she didn't say anything else on that subject. I have been saved since the 15th of

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February; don't I remember the morning! I felt as if I would burst with joy. I saw the Lord (not as my judge) everywhere. I stood gazing into the sky and thought I saw Him there. Oh! didn't I feel happy! Ah! but I was too full, I didn't feel this earth was my home, I felt too happy, but I got miserable for two weeks, and then I got happy again. Since then I have felt both, but A. I have not served Him fully, I have been wandering far from the fold, but have returned, and with His help hope really to serve Him. I have learned a lesson that I cannot serve two masters, so I say, Christ, keep me. A., you are in trouble now, the Mason is preparing His precious stone to be placed on the foundation, the chisels are sharp, but they are used by a kind, gentle, loving Mason who numbers the hairs of our head. If He numbers anything so insignificant as a hair, how much He must care for us! . . . resumed on the 4th.—I have not been writing for sometime but hope to be able to write a little to-night, for the last few days I have been learning a lesson from the Lord, and to me it has been wonderfully blest. I find my mistake was in trying to patch up the old man instead of accepting Christ's finished work. Oh, A., the Lord has taught me a beautiful lesson, I wouldn't miss it for the world, it has renewed my joy, it has shown me my sin in all its terrors, and doubled my faith in God. I told E. that I would never be a Christian, and after further talking, the Lord showed me all I needed, and then no doubt arose in my mind as to my being one.—Your affectionate Brother."

I hope, if the Lord will, to give my young readers the second letter with a few other details soon. M. B.

REGIONS BEYOND.

"CONTINUING round the coast from Liberia we reach the great kingdoms of Dahomey and Ashanti; in these you find

a race of magnificent men, but fierce and warlike to a degree. In this country we may stop to take one illustration of what Paganism means. In Ashanti (and in many other parts) there is a strong belief that the spirits of dead people need to be treated with as much reverence as when the persons themselves were alive on earth. For instance, if a king dies, he is supposed to need the attendance, into the next world, of a large number of men and women who would have waited on him while he was alive, and accordingly there are human sacrifices. It is said that on the death of one king of Ashanti two hundred slaves and a great number of freemen were sacrificed every week for three months. And it is not only on a king's death that such sacrifices are made. A missionary was once travelling and came at sunset to a village where he was very kindly welcomed and given food. All was peaceful and bright, but during the night a little baby of the chief's died. Next day the body of the little thing was buried, and *with it the body of a woman*, who was killed in order that her spirit might go with it to another world and there take care of it. This is in no way an uncommon practice.

"You will agree with me that this is a proof of intense darkness; and to the word 'dark' we must add another—the word 'fear.' 'Fear' rules in Africa. The African has no comfort, no peace, no satisfaction in performing

these terrible cruelties. His greatest hope is that by so doing he will appease the evil spirits, and keep them from harming him. Do you want to send them news of that Saviour who died that He might deliver men who, 'through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage'?

"Beyond the darkness of which we have spoken, there is a darkness which cannot be put into words—the darkness of lost souls, a blackness of darkness which can only be lighted by the Light of Jesus. He is the Light of the World. If you believe this, and if you feel the darkness of death, the thick darkness which hangs as a pall on Africa, will you not ask God to light your little lamp of prayer or of personal service, so that you may bring its gleam to bear on the dark souls of the African world?

"Possibly God will not call you to go Africa, or to China, or to any heathen land. He may say to you, like the Lord Jesus did to one of old, 'Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things God hath done for thee.' But remember that, wherever you are, whether at home or abroad; whether in the family circle, at school, or in business:

"Jesus bids us shine,
With a pure clear light,
Like a little candle,
Burning in the night;
In the world of darkness,
So we must shine,
You in your small corner,
And I in mine."

NELLIE'S PRAYER.

"**M**OTHER, I wish I could have some toys."

Poor little Nellie had often expressed that wish before, and her mother again replied as she had done on former occasions, "Yes, child, so do I, but times are very bad, and I have no money to buy toys with."

Nellie was the eldest of four young children, whose parents were very poor. She had been afflicted ever since she was born with a weakness in her side, so that she was unable to walk far. Her mother earned a small pittance during her spare moments, by making Tambour lace for a neighbouring town, some three miles distant, and it was during her mother's absence as she carried her work to and fro, that Nellie felt so terribly lonely and longed for some toys to amuse herself with.

Some few moments passed in silence, when Nellie again addressed her mother:—

"Mother, I've heard them say at our Sunday School, as how if we asked the Lord Jesus for anything, He'd be sure and send it. Shall we ask Him, mother?"

"Sure child, there'll be no harm in asking," was the reply.

Down on the hearth knelt the child, and then and there in a few simple words she took her trouble to that "Friend for little children above the bright blue sky."

"Lord Jesus Christ," she said, "please send a sinful child a few toys, Amen."

Soon after, her mother left home to take the parcel of lace she had finished to her employers, and to get her hard earned wages. And many times as she trudged along, her thoughts went to the little girl at home, and she wondered whether or not her faith would be answered.

But God never disappoints any that put their trust in Him. As she opened the cottage door on her return home, Nellie greeted her with the words :—

"Mother, the toys have really come."

And then she told how that very shortly after her mother had left, a lady visitor arrived, bringing with her a nice supply of the coveted treasures.

"Mother," said the child again, "I shall always trust the Lord Jesus after this."

Let us hope she did, and let us encourage our own hearts by remembering that not a sparrow falls to the ground without *His* knowing, and that in His loving ears even the prayer of a little child is not unheeded.

E. R. M.

DELIVERED FROM DEATH.

"GREAT was the peril of Dr. Jacob Chamberlain, of the Arcot Mission, India, in a walled town in Hyderabad.

The natives, in a rage at his telling of a different God from theirs, bade him leave at once. He replied that he had a message which he must first deliver ; but they declared that if he should say another word he would be instantly killed. He saw them standing with arms filled with paving stones, and heard them say one to another, ' You throw the first stone, and I will throw the next ; ' but he lifted his heart to Him who can subdue man's angry passions, and asked leave to ' tell them a story,' with the understanding that then, if they pleased, they *might* stone him.

"It was the 'old, old story' that he told them, beginning with the birth of Jesus. When he spoke of the Cross, and explained that the agony there suffered was for each one of them, they listened with wonder. Surely God was speaking through the words of the missionary. Their anger ceased, their hearts were touched, they threw down their paving stones. After telling of Jesus Christ's cry—'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'—of His resurrection and ascension to heaven, and of the glorious offer of salvation for all, Dr. Chamberlain said he was done—now they might stone him. But he had nothing to fear, for those men, lately infuriated, were weeping. They gathered around to buy his books, that they might read for themselves of these wonderful things."

HAVE YOU EVER THANKED HIM ?

“**A**RE you happy, Eva, dear” ?
 “No, Mamma, I wish I was,” a sad little voice replied.

The question was put by a very bright Christian mother to her little girl, whose soul's salvation she had been anxious about, and had prayed about for some time.

“Do you believe Jesus died for you, Eva” ?

“Oh yes, I am quite sure I do, but I am not quite sure I'm saved, and I feel very unhappy !”

“Have you ever thanked God for sending His beloved Son into this world to suffer, bleed, and die for you, dear ?”

“Oh no, Mamma, I never thought of that.”

One morning after this, before Eva had come down to breakfast, her mother went quietly upstairs into Eva's bedroom, and there the little one was on her knees in prayer. Directly her mother entered, she rose from her knees, and, throwing herself into her mother's arms, with tears running down her little cheeks, she exclaimed with joy, “Oh, Mamma, I've been thanking God for sending Jesus to die for me, and I feel so happy.”

Now, dear little reader, may I ask you the question that Eva's mother asked her ? Are *you* happy ?

The same One who made Eva happy, is waiting to make you happy too, He is waiting for you to let Him take you up in His strong, loving arms and make you His very own little lamb for ever. Will you give your young heart to Him ? He is saying, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28). “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. x. 9). Oh, believe on Him now before it is too late. Come to Him now *at once*, He is waiting for you, and it will save you from ten thousand snares to come to Christ while young. He will watch over you, and carry you safely all the way home to be with Himself for all Eternity.

A. E. J.

IS THERE A GOD NOW ?

A CHRISTIAN woman quite lately received a telegram, to ask her to go and see a sister-in-law who was very ill, and who was not ready to die. She hastened to her house and was very sorry to hear that before she was ill, her mind had been filled with infidel thoughts; and that she had been telling the young people in her shop, that there was no God ; no heaven ! She lost no time in

seeking to arouse her to a sense of her danger, and point her to Christ.

"Is there a God now, dear?" she asked her, to which she replied, "*Yes.*"

Yes, dear young friend, when God lays His hand upon us, we are obliged to confess that *He is*. "*The fool* hath said in his heart, There is no God." When brought face to face with death, you will find that if you have *lived* without Christ, you will not be able to *die* without Him. "What wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jer. xii. 5.

The sick one of whom I write had to cry for mercy from the very God whose existence she had doubted: "Is there forgiveness?" she said. "I have been such a wretch." And in her wandering moments was heard to murmur, "If God spares me, what a different life I will lead."

Dear young reader, let nothing cause you to doubt God or His blessed word, for "the *unbelieving* shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" Rev. xxi. 8. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget God*" Psa. ix. 17.

If unbelieving thoughts *have* filled your heart, remember there is forgiveness even for you, for "The blood of Jesus Christ His [God's] Son cleanseth us from *all sin*." Our friend found the forgiveness which she sought, and ere her sister left, was rejoicing in the knowledge of it, and in God's mercy.

So may you, if you seek it now through Christ.

E. H. G.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

M.L.P. "Is it possible for a Jew who rejects our Lord Jesus Christ *now* to be saved after the Church is taken up"?

We are plainly taught in 2 Thess. ii. 10-13, that none, who refuse Christ as presented in the gospel will be saved after the removal of the Church, be they Jew or Gentile. It is "*because* [mark this word] they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved;" that "God shall send them strong delusion; that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned [or judged] who believed not the truth," etc.

The Gospel now is preached to all without distinction. All who receive it, whether Jew or Gentile, are saved; all who reject it, whether Jew or Gentile, are lost (see 2 Cor. iv. 3-4). Further, when the Lord comes in judgment He takes vengeance on two classes (2 Thess. i. 8); (1) those "that know not God," these are the Gentiles, or the heathen (compare, Jer. x. 25; 1 Thess. iv. 5). (2) those that "obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." This last sentence *especially* refers to the Jew, though no doubt in a general sense may be applied to all who refuse the Gospel message.

E.L.J., London. It is always dangerous to allow our minds to speculate on subjects of which we are ignorant.

As to the future, whether of saved or unsaved, we know absolutely nothing except what God has been pleased to reveal to us in His Word. There we are told that "they that have done evil will come forth unto the resurrection of judgment" (John v. 29). We are further told that the resurrection of the wicked will not take place until after the millennium, and that then those whose names are not found written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 15). These are solemn words, may the Lord deliver any from making light of them!

But while awaiting their final doom, they are not in a state of unconsciousness. No, they are spoken of as "in prison" (1 Pet. iii. 19); "delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. ii. 4, 9, Jude 6, 7). Besides which the Lord, in a solemn parable, has told us of one who "died, and was buried; and in hell [or, hades] he lift up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke xvi. 22-31). The word "hades" refers to the state of departed spirits between the period of death and that of resurrection; it simply means the "unseen" state.

Oh, that men and women, instead of reasoning about these things, would just simply believe God!

E.L.J. asks the meaning of Exodus xxxiii. 20, and 1 Tim. vi. 16.

We learn here a much needed and important lesson of man's littleness in the presence of God's greatness. We

must remember that under the law, and until Christ came, God was unrevealed. In the essence of His nature, no man can see God. Moses is told that no man can see Jehovah's face and live. After Jehovah *had* passed by, Moses might trace His steps and behold His ways, but he could not *meet* Him and look upon His essential and divine glory.

Twice we are told in the New Testament that, "No man hath seen God at any time" (John i. 18; 1 John iv. 12). But when the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, having become flesh that He might dwell among us, then God was fully revealed, so that Jesus could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). He (Jesus) was the image of the invisible God (Heb. i. 3.) So that though it ever remains true that God, in the essence of His nature, dwells in unapproachable and inaccessible light, yet believers have now "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," so that Christians may truly sing:—

"We meet our God in Jesus,
And fear and terror cease."

A practical thought may be gleaned from 1 John iv. 12. If Christians walk in love one with another, God dwells in them and His love is perfected in them, so that the world will see God manifested in their lives. May He grant to His children so to walk and to glorify Him!

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XVII.

"I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."—ISAIAH xlii. 16.

IT was at the beginning of the year 1558 that the first arrests were made. Most of the prisoners were put to the torture, to force them to give the names of others who shared their faith; and though, as Munebraga mockingly said, "These heretics have the commandment, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' so deeply seated in their hearts that it is necessary to torture them very severely to make them inform against their brethren," there were some among them who were induced to tell of others, so that many more Protestants were brought into the prisons throughout the year. Most of them were kept for many months and even years before they received their sentences. Their trials were carried on in the most profound secrecy. It was not until hundreds of years after-

wards that the papers relating to them were brought to light; at that time no one but the inquisitors and their victims knew what was done within those dark walls; for when the condemned were brought out, and their sentences read before the public, only so much was told as served the purposes of the judges.

Constantino Ponce de la Fuente was among the first arrested. His preaching days were over. Never again should his voice be heard from the pulpit of the Cathedral, proclaiming salvation "without money and without price," to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The people had listened, and had gone their ways. Some had believed, and some had not. To some the word preached had been life from the dead; to others it had been "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument"—nothing more.

But now the voice that had spoken God's word so faithfully was hushed; the hand that had sown the good seed so diligently was chained; the light that had burned so brightly was put out. The preachers who came after Constantino may have been eloquent men, but they preached lies instead of the truth, for they spoke not of the gift of

God, but of salvation to be won by works, to be purchased by money, to be bargained for and bought.

So where the light had once shone the darkness reigned, and the people's minds were deceived and their souls ruined. It was as in the days of old, when God spoke by His prophet Jeremiah: "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Yes, for there is an end, and "strong is the Lord God who judgeth."

When the Emperor Charles, in the monastery of San Juste, heard of Constantino's arrest, he exclaimed, "If Constantino be a heretic he is a great one!" and when afterwards he was told by one of the inquisitors that his favourite chaplain had been condemned, he said sadly, "You cannot condemn a greater." Charles had always admired Constantino, though he loved not Constantino's Master.

Perhaps it was on account of the Emperor's affection for him that the great preacher was never put to the torture; or perhaps the inquisitors knew that no sufferings would be sufficient to make him betray his friends. They found, too, that nothing would persuade his friends to say anything that would injure him. Yet, in their eagerness to make the prisoners confess their heresies, the inquisitors tried to make them

believe that Constantino had informed against all those whom he knew held the Lutheran doctrines. No lie was too mean for those servants of Rome to use for their wicked ends.

As no one could be found to witness against the beloved teacher it was difficult to convict him of heresy, for he refused to tell his judges what he thought of the traditions of the Romish Church, and maintained that he had never taught anything but the truth. For a long time none of his writings could be found, but at last the inquisitors made what was, to them, a grand discovery.

A lady of Seville who had been arrested, was known to possess some very valuable jewels, and as the inquisitors were entitled to appropriate every thing that belonged to their victims, they sent their servants to search her house. Her son, on seeing the Alguazils, thinking it wisest to do all he could to keep in the favour of the Holy Office, told the men, before they declared their errand, that he would shew them what they had come for. Leading them to the cellar of the house, he broke down a thin partition wall, and displayed a number of books and manuscripts.

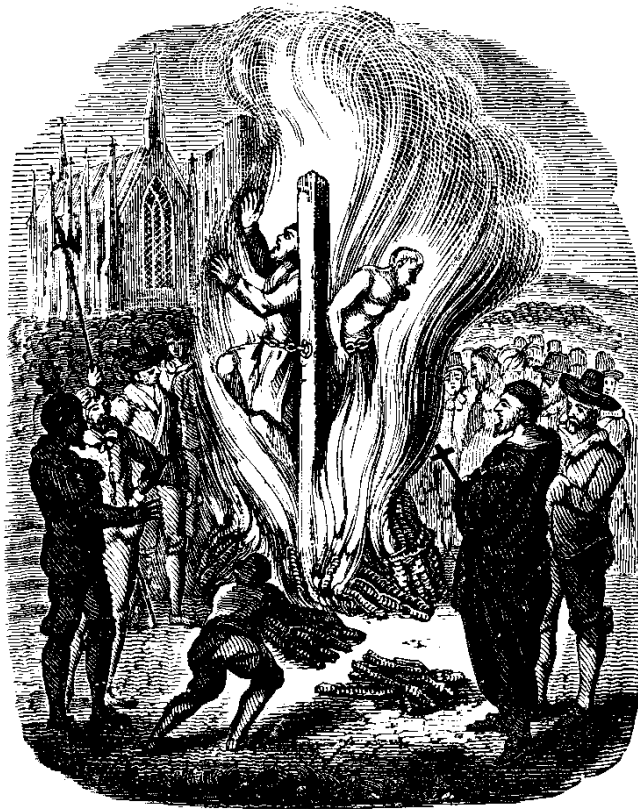
What a triumph for the inquisitors! These were the long sought for books of Constantino, which he had hidden in his friend's house before his arrest. The Alguazils carried off their prize at once, but not before they had forced

the young man to give up the jewels as well; and I have no doubt that there was great rejoicing in the Inquisition house, that day, at two such valuable acquisitions.

Among the manuscripts was a book on the doctrines of "the Church," written in Constantino's own handwriting, in which he proved from the

preacher was a "confirmed Lutheran." When they shewed him the book he at once acknowledged that it was his, and added: "It is unnecessary for you to produce further evidence; you have there a candid and full confession of my belief. I am in your hands: do with me as seemeth you good."

It seemed good to the inquisitors to



Carrying out an Auto de fé (act of faith).

Scriptures that the Church of Rome is not the Church of God, and plainly shewed the errors of her teaching, especially on the doctrine of purgatory, which he called "a bug-bear invented by friars so that they may get something to eat." It was plain enough now to the inquisitors that the great

condemn this servant of God to be burned, but as the time for an *auto-de-fé* had not yet come, he was still kept in prison. It was about this time that the Emperor Charles died, and as there was now no one in high places to take an interest in Constantino's welfare, he was thrown into one of the secret

dungeons of the Triana, low, dark and damp, where the air was so foul, and the smells so horrible, that his sufferings were greater than they would have been had they laid him on the rack. Before long he fell sick.

It was a terrible place in which to be ill; however loudly he might call for help, his jailors were not allowed to go near him, except at the regular hours for bringing his food; neither might they do anything to relieve his sufferings. But God had not forsaken His servant; He knew how much Constantino was bearing for His sake, and in His mercy He sent a friend to be with him in his pain. This friend was a young monk from the convent of San Isidro, who was shut up with Constantino because there was no room for him anywhere else. At that time the Castle of the Triana was so full that there were two or more prisoners in each cell.

It was little enough that could be done for the sufferer; it was impossible to soften his hard bed of straw, or to make the coarse, unwholesome food pleasing to his taste. But what he could do, Fray Fernando did, lovingly and tenderly; and you can fancy what a comfort it must have been to the dying man only to feel the touch of a friend's hand, and to hear a voice in the darkness. It may be that, like Paul and Silas, they sang praises in the dungeon, though the inquisitors had forbidden their prisoners to sing, or to look cheerful, or even to pray, except in

such words as the priests thought proper. Yet I do not doubt that Constantino and his gentle attendant often did pray, and talk together of Him for whom they suffered these things, and of the time when He should call them to Himself. And though they lay in one of the darkest places of this earth, the Lord Jesus was with them there, and in His light they saw light.

At last, after Constantino had been nearly two years in the hands of the inquisitors, God called His servant away. There was no one beside him, except Fray Fernando, as he passed from that noisome dungeon into the paradise of God, from the darkness of earth into the light of heaven, from the power of the priests of Rome into the presence of the Lord Jesus.

The inquisitors were very angry when they found that their prisoner had escaped them, so that they could not bring him out and disgrace him in public. They could invent the most wicked stories about him; they could slander his memory; they could make effigies of him to display to the crowd; they could burn his body to ashes; but they could no longer touch *him*. He was safe for ever with his Saviour; and even his body, which men had first allowed to be wasted by sickness, and afterwards caused to be consumed by the fire, shall one day rise from the dust, all fair and glorious, and fashioned in the likeness of Him Who died for us and rose again.

Soon after Constantino passed away, Fernando, too, fell sick and died in the same cell. I do not know whether he had any one beside him, to tend him in his last moments, and to speak words of comfort to him; but I do know that He Who welcomed the great preacher Constantino to His heavenly home, welcomed likewise that gentle monk.

When anybody does anything for one of His people, the Lord Jesus counts it just the same as if they had done it to Himself, and He never forgets it. So, though Fray Fernando had never had the opportunity of being a preacher, or a teacher, or of doing for his Master anything that we should call great, we may be sure that, in that day when every man's work will be tried, he will not lose his reward.

Constantino and Fernando were not the only Protestants who died in the prisons of the Inquisition; there were others whose frames were unable to stand the bad air and the unwholesome food and the tortures. So God took them home by sickness instead of by fire. But none the less were they "martyrs of Jesus," whose names are written in His book, and whose blood will one day be required at the hands of those who slew them.

In the year 1559 a very notable person was added to the prisoners of the Inquisition at Valladolid. It was no other than the primate of Spain, Don Fray Bartholomé de Carranza y Miranda, Archbishop of Toledo. King

Philip had eyed him suspiciously ever since that visit to the Emperor at San Juste, and Valdes, who had always been jealous of him, was delighted to have an opportunity of getting him into his power.

Poor Carranza! he had never joined himself to the "Lutherans," had never thrown in his lot with the people of God, so he thought it very hard that he should be imprisoned as one of them. But he had said so many things that agreed with the teaching of Luther, that he was strongly suspected of being as great a heretic as any one. Besides, he had been a friend of Don Carlos de Seso and Domingo de Rojas and other Protestants; and though he had re-proved them for venturing to refuse the traditions of the Church of Rome, he had not denounced them as heretics to the Inquisition, as everybody, either priest or layman, was bound to do. The words which he had spoken to the dying Emperor were said by many to be heretical; and, moreover, he had once declared that if he were about to die, he would send for a priest, in order to confess to him that he disclaimed all merit of his own, and rested for his salvation on Christ alone. Such words sounded very strange from a Romish Archbishop, and were considered suspicious. It was also said that he had once remarked, "It would not matter much if there were no purgatory."

That, of course, in the opinion of his judges, would have been rank heresy,

since the Church of Rome teaches that there is such a place. But the principal charge against Carranza was, that he had written a catechism in the Spanish language, in which he said much more about the truths of the Bible than about the doctrines of the Church. It seemed to the inquisitors to be a very dangerous book.

Still it was not easy to convict the Archbishop of heresy, because the witnesses could not agree in their charges against him. Besides, he had been so very active in persecuting Protestants that it seemed hardly possible that he could be one himself. Moreover, many learned men doubted whether his words were really heretical. "They *might* be interpreted in a Catholic sense," they said, though they certainly did not sound much like the teaching of "the Church."

The trial seemed as if it would never end, and at last Carranza wrote to the Pope, saying that it was quite illegal for him to be judged by the inquisitors, who were his inferiors in rank, and begging to be allowed to go to Rome and answer for himself before his only superiors, the Pope and the cardinals. This request was at last granted, and after seventeen weary years of waiting in prison (years which Constantino and the others had spent in heaven) the Pope pronounced sentence on the Archbishop of Toledo, declaring him to be violently suspected of being a heretic, commanding him to abjure

the doctrines of Luther, and condemning him to five years' imprisonment, with certain penances.

A few days after this sentence had been given, Carranza died, and passed into the presence of a higher Judge than he had faced before. We do not know what *He* said to him, but we know that His judgments are just and true, and that He never makes mistakes.

(To be continued.)

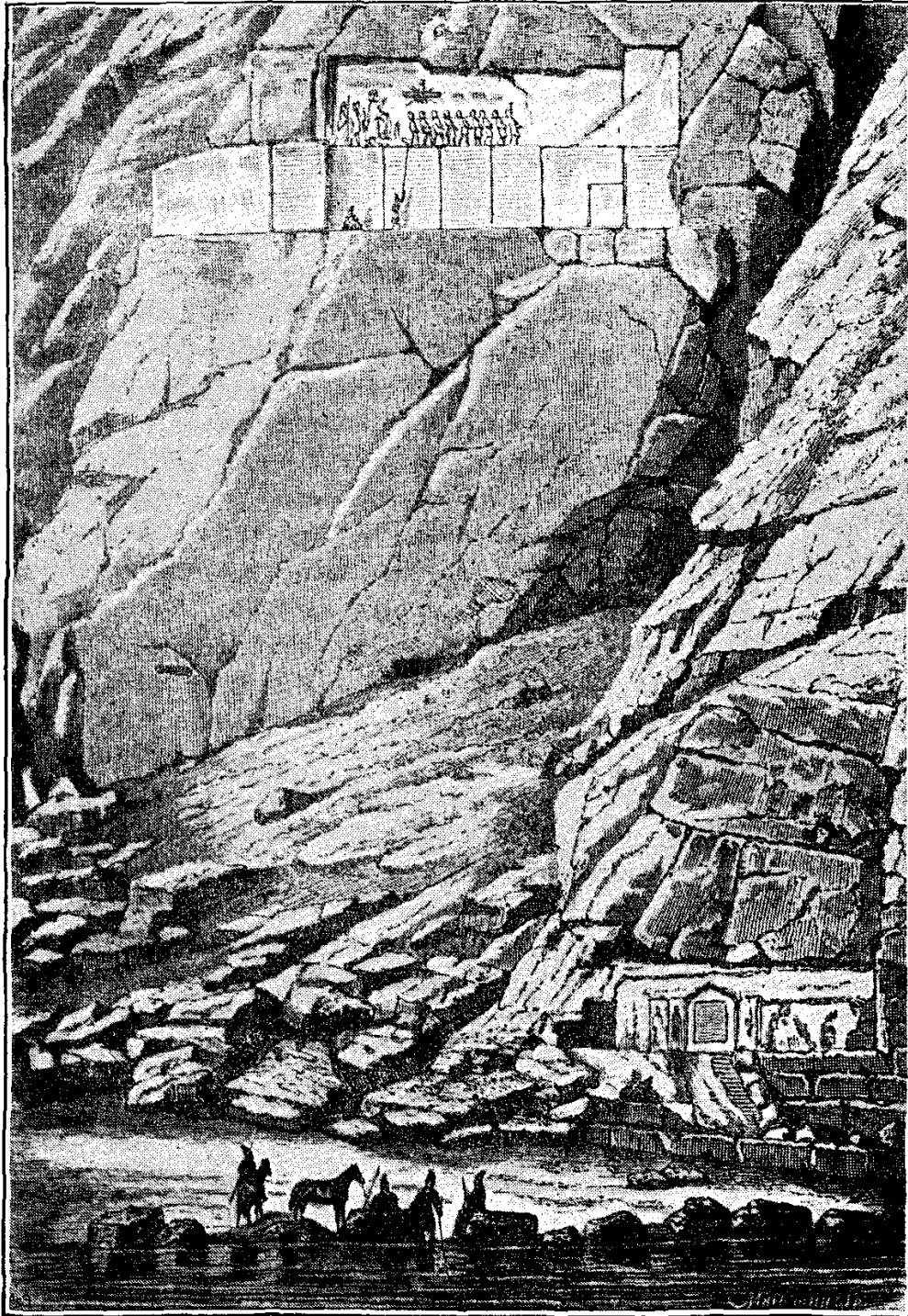
A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

A DIFFICULT TASK.



T had long been felt that the inscriptions on the Behistun Rock contained the key to unlock the treasures of Assyrian and Babylonian history. There they were, easily visible from the plain below, but how were they to be reached? Some travellers had already pronounced this to be an impossibility. But in ages past they had been placed there by human hands, so that an enthusiastic discoverer might well argue that where man's foot had trod, man's feet might still be placed.

Rawlinson was not the man to be daunted; and, indeed, from his own account, he seems to take no great credit to himself for having accomplished this feat in climbing. In the paper which he read on March 7th, 1850, before the Archæological Society of



Tablets on the Behistun Rock.

London, we hear him say :—" When I was living at Kermanshah, fifteen years ago, and was somewhat more active than I am at present, I used frequently to scale the rock three or four times a day without the aid of a rope or ladder—without any assistance, in fact, whatever. During my late visits I have found it more convenient to ascend and descend by the help of ropes where the track lies up a precipitous cleft, and to throw a plank over those chasms where a false step in leaping across would probably be fatal."*

But on reaching the ledge where, in the accompanying engraving, two Arabs are seen, his difficulties had only just begun. The ledge, be it well remembered, is only at the most two feet in width, in some places it is not more than eighteen inches; besides which there is a large gap where no ledge exists at all.

Will our readers refer to the drawing we have appended? The face of the rock at the summit of which the tablets are placed is an almost perpendicular precipice of 500 feet. Above this, though not shewn in the picture, the mountain rises for more than 3,000 feet. The tablets to the right contain the Persian inscriptions; those to the left, the Scythian; while the one just above the Scythian, and immediately to the left of the figures, is the Babylonian, and is the most difficult to reach of all.

The figures represent Darius receiving the homage of ten captive kings. Nine of them are tied together by their necks, while the tenth is lying on the ground with uplifted arms, as though appealing for mercy. Darius, with two of his princes standing behind him, has proudly placed his foot upon this king's prostrate form.

These inscriptions were now to be copied, besides which squeezes had to be taken.

Possibly my readers may be wondering what a *squeeze* may be, and for their sakes I will explain. A strong, tough sheet of white paper having been wetted, is carefully applied to the surface of which an accurate impression is desired. It is then carefully beaten into the depressions in the rock by means of a hard brush. More paper is added until the desired thickness is obtained, and the whole is then left to dry, which it quickly does in the sunshine.

By this means the most perfect embossed copies of those and other inscriptions and sculptures have been obtained, invaluable in the hands of Archæologists.

In order to reach the top of these tablets Sir Henry had a ladder dragged up to the ledge. Once there, we can easily conceive the difficulty in erecting it. No sooner up than it was found that the slant was not sufficient to venture an ascent, owing to the narrowness of the ledge on which the foot of the ladder rested.

* *Archæologia*. Vol. xxxiv.

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Not to be baffled, Sir Henry broke off the end, and now, to his dismay, discovered that it was too short. Notwithstanding the danger of the situation, he however ascended, an Arab holding the ladder firmly at the bottom; and, standing upon the topmost round, and steadying himself by leaning his left arm against the rock, he held his note book in the left hand while he wrote with his right.

"In this position," says our enterprising friend, "I copied all the upper inscriptions, and the interest of the occupation entirely did away with any sense of danger."

To reach the Scythian tablets on the left nearly cost the discoverer his life. Having broken off the end of his ladder, as mentioned above, he now found that one side of it was just too short to reach across the gap where the ledge was deficient. So resting the ends of the longer side upon each extremity of the ledge, the shorter side of the ladder being below, he was attempting to cross the yawning chasm by holding on to the upper side with his hands, and placing his feet on the lower side between the two staves.

While in this perilous position the lower side parted from the staves and went tumbling down the precipice. Sir Henry Rawlinson would have done the same had he not retained his presence of mind, but by the aid of his assistants he soon regained the ledge. Another ladder was then procured, by means of

which he bridged the gap, and eventually obtained squeezes of the Scythian tablets.

The Babylonian still remained, and even to such an athlete the task seemed impossible. The difficulty, however, was overcome by a Kurdish boy, though, as Sir Henry himself confessed, the feat was nothing short of miraculous.

Hanging on to a rope which, with marvellous cleverness, he had swung across the face of the rock, this boy, under Sir Henry's direction, took a squeeze of the Babylonian tablet. It would appear that this has been accomplished none too soon, as there are evident signs that the piece of rock to which the tablet is attached may soon, by the trickling of water, become separated from the main rock, and then, dashing down the precipice, it must be broken into thousands of fragments.

In this, too, we can see how God not only chose the man who should accomplish this task, but the very time at which it was to be done.

"His every act pure wisdom is,
His path unsullied light."

(To be continued.)

A LETTER FOR YOU. No. 4.

DEAR CHILDREN,

I HOPE my young friends have felt interested in the extracts from Bertie's first letter in the previous number of "Words of Life," and have been

looking out for the second, which I now give :—

“MY DEAREST A.,—I received your letter yesterday evening (C.’s birthday). I was very glad to get it, I was longing to hear from you. I can indeed sympathise with you, as *I* had to part with *nearly* all my best loved ones. Mamma, C., N., K., and D., but it was *all* for the best, I can *truly* say, for if I hadn’t gone out into the world I wouldn’t have got everlasting life for a good many years, if at all. I would rather go through all this trouble, sorrow, and parting again, if possible, than lose Christ, His love, His smile; but *nothing* can separate me from that wondrous love, every trouble and mortification brings me closer and nearer to it, and the sense of it fills my heart with rapture and warmth. When I think of the cross, and the Lord hanging there, rejected by the world, by His own people, forsaken by God (who could not bear to look upon sin), just fancy His doing that for the people who had just spat upon Him, and were then mocking Him ! How fully the world has rejected Him ! and it does now.

People miss a great deal when they don’t study the Bible; they do indeed miss a great deal, those that are unconverted. Communion with the Lord is worth a great deal; without it I fail in *every* thing. There is a sweetness and tenderness about the Bible, that makes it sweet indeed. In some verses there is such a deep meaning, it is speaking of a *great* and *lasting* love. There is a beauty in the Lord that surpasses *all* the world can bring out; indeed, the world’s things cannot be compared with Him. I can look back on my past life, and see the Lord’s hand in it all, my coming out here moved me from my Mamma’s care, and made me feel my need of a Saviour. Often I had felt it by God’s, yours, and E.’s help, but when I came here the blackness of sin had not been revealed to me. However, I learnt that soon, and then I felt terribly until I was saved. Besides, among a lot of things, I can see the hand of God my Father among all my trials and troubles, I can see His loving hand chastening me, and making me learn very hard lessons at the

time, though the fruits of them are very sweet, and nice, for they have drawn me closer to the dearest, truest Friend, and made me feel full of love to Him.

Your loving Brother,—BERT.

Now, dear children, I think you would like to hear more of dear Bertie, and where he is now: perhaps you may be saying, I would like to know him. You can never do so in this world; he is now with the Saviour who loved him, in *all* the joy and blessedness of His presence. He taught him in a very remarkable way to see himself a lost sinner needing a Saviour, and sanctified the trials of his young life; sweet it was to see him repose on the bosom of the one he calls “the dearest, truest Friend.” Earnestly I pray that my young readers may be brought there with the reality he was, and love the precious word of God as he did, so that it may be “a lamp to their feet, and a light to their path” through this dark world.

Not very long after Bertie wrote these letters he got an attack of measles, and though every thing was done that love and skill could do, he quickly sank into unconsciousness, and then departed to be with Christ. Had he put off accepting Christ until a death-bed, as many do, how awful it would have been for him, as he was never restored to consciousness! Oh, dear children, suppose this were to be your case, how would it be with you? are your sins washed away in His precious blood? do you know Him as

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your own Saviour? How sweet to see the young life with its freshness given to the Lord, as Bertie's was, and as I pray yours may be ! M. B.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS.

1. Twice ; x. 1, xv. 20.
2. Chs. x. 5 ; xvii. 2 ; xix. 26.
3. Chs. i. 8 ; ii. 1 ; iii. 1 ; iv. 10, 20 ; v. 1 ; vi. 20 ; vii. 1.
4. David and Bathsheba ; 1 Kings i. 28-31.
5. Rehoboam. No ; 1 Kings xii. 1-19.
6. Ch. xxx. 4.
7. Jesus, Eph. iv. 10 ; God, Isa. xl. 12 ; God, Job xxxviii. 8-11 ; God, Job xxxviii. 4-7 ; He is Jehovah, Ex. xxxiv. 6 ; His Son Jesus, Matt. i. 21.

PROVERBS.

Wisdom.

WHEN Adam was placed by God in Eden, he did not need wisdom, because he was not a sinner and had no sin around him. When he had sinned he was shut out of the garden, and all was changed ; he was sinful, and he knew good and evil. Thenceforth there were two ways in the world—the path of wisdom and the path of folly ; the way of God and the way of Satan ; the narrow road of life and the broad road of death. Abel chose one, Cain the other. If you think over the history of men since those days, you will see that this is true. Noah chose God's way, and the drowned sinners Satan's ; Samuel hearkened to the

Lord, whilst his sons sinned against Him.

Solomon desired wisdom more than long life or riches or victory (1 Kings iii.), and God granted his desire—"he was wiser than all men" (1 Kings iv. 31). Wisdom is the mind of God—being able, like God, to know good from evil ; it is divine knowledge. Proverbs sets this wisdom plainly before us : "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom" (iii. 13-18). It is described often, and the contrast between it and folly pointed out.

If *we* want to find out the path of wisdom, it is to be found in following Christ. When He was here *He was wisdom*. He was "good in the midst of evil," and in ch. viii. there is a lovely description of Him. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v., vi., vii.) Jesus spoke of "excellent things" (viii. 6), and taught the path of life and wisdom to His disciples, as well as the right ways of Wisdom's children. Though He was "from everlasting" (viii. 23), and is such a wonderful Person, yet He stoops to us, and says : "Hearken unto Me, O ye *children* ; for blessed are they that keep My ways" (viii. 32). In the last two verses the true paths are pointed out—a child who finds Christ, finds life—one who sins against Him loves death. Read also ch. xv. 24. One path leads *up*, the other *down*. Jesus called these two ways *the broad way* and *the narrow way* (Matt. vii. 13, 14). Thank God

if He has turned our steps into the
"way of peace." H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. Did any kings or queens come to hear Solomon's wisdom?
2. Who was "greater than Solomon"?
3. Where does it say, "Wisdom is justified of all her children"?
4. Give references to some striking passages about Wisdom, in Proverbs.
5. Give instances of men who went in Wisdom's ways, and others who walked in paths of folly.
6. Two men in the Old Testament were given special wisdom to *make* what God commanded: who were they?
7. Who is now the Wisdom of God?

THE FADING AND THE UNFADING.

"**F**OR all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the *Word of the Lord endureth for ever.*" 1 Peter i. 24, 25. (See also Psalm xc. 5, 6, and ciii. 15, 16, and James i. 10, 11).

These scriptures referring to grass are more easily understood by those who have been in the East, and seen the effects of the burning sun and the hot sirocco winds; and the flower of grass there is so fragile, that a breath will often blow it away. But all grass is perishable in its nature, and it must wither and decay at last, even if not cut down by the mower's scythe.

One evening, on our way to a meeting

for prayer, we noticed a large fire burning in the open air. At the meeting, prayer went up for a family lately bereaved. On enquiry, we found that the loss was that of a little boy who, only a few days before, had been in his usual health. He had died of fever, and the fire we saw was consuming his clothes. Before he grew up to manhood he was *cut down* by the scythe of death. "As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."

A good many years ago, at one of our English watering-places, I saw two gentlemen get out of an ordinary hired carriage, and walk down towards the little boat in which they were going to have a row. One of them was middle-aged, and the other quite a youth. These were the ex-Emperor of the French and the Prince Imperial. As they passed, a few persons respectfully saluted them, and they raised their hats, and smiled.

Not many months before, they could have claimed, as their right, all the honours due to Royalty; but now their position was changed; for "all the glory of man is as the flower of grass," which can be blown away by a breath. Everything that belongs to man in the flesh is of the same transitory character; but in contrast to all this we find there is one thing that "*endureth for ever,*" and that is the "*Word of the Lord.*"

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Have you ever realized, dear young reader, that the earth you are living on, and the heavens above you, will all pass away? It is a solemn thought for those who are not sheltered by the blood of Christ; but it brings no sorrow to His ransomed ones, who are waiting for His coming, and looking for "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter iii. 13).

Shall we now look at some instances in Scripture illustrating the sure fulfilment of the Word of God, and see what sorrow, and even ruin, came upon those who disregarded it? First of all, in Genesis iii., we find Adam and Eve listening to Satan's lie, instead of to God's truth. God had said, "Ye shall not eat of the tree . . . lest ye die"; and Satan said, "Ye shall *not* surely die." They acted upon Satan's lie, and thus brought death into the world.

About 2000 years afterwards, Noah warned the ungodly that God was going to destroy the earth by water. In long-suffering He waited many years before fulfilling His word (1 Peter iii. 20), but they would not believe it, and so they all perished.

Later on, a righteous man was living in a very wicked city. God told him to flee from the place ere it was consumed. Lot, hoping to save the lives of his sons-in-law, warned them; but they did not receive God's word, and they shared in the destruction of the city (see Gen. xix. 24, 25).

We find a very sad instance of unbelief in the Israelites, God's chosen people, to whom He had *promised* the land of Canaan. His power had delivered them out of the land of Egypt, and from the hand of their enemies. How wisely He had guided, and how tenderly He had cared for them all along the way! And yet, when they reached the borders of the land, they doubted His promise that He would bring them in. How dishonouring was this to His great Name! It grieved the Lord much (see Heb. iii. 17-19).

In the time of the kings, we read of a man who brought great sorrow upon his own house by disregarding God's word. This was Hiel, the Bethelite (see Josh. vi. 26, and 1 Kings xvi. 34). And there are more instances of the kind which it might interest our young readers to search out.

Let us just look at one more, in the New Testament. A beloved saint of God, the aged Zacharias, was told by the angel Gabriel that God was about to give him a son. Now, he had prayed for this blessing; and yet, when the answer came, he would not believe it! And so, because of this unbelief, he was stricken dumb until God's word was fulfilled (see Luke i.).

Shall we now turn to the brighter side of the picture, and see what blessing follows the reception of God's word in simple faith? First, in the case of *Noah*, who, filled with godly fear, "prepared an ark to the saving of his

house"; thus he and all his family were preserved, and Noah "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. xi. 7). What an honourable title he has gained!

Then "*Abraham* believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 3). And on carefully reading his history we find in how many ways he was blessed because of this unquestioning faith.

Lot took God at His word, and fleeing from the doomed city, escaped its destruction.

Moses believed God, and kept the Passover, by means of which the first-born of the Israelites were saved from death (see Heb. xi. 28).

Caleb and *Joshua* did not doubt, and thus they were the only two of that generation privileged to enter the land (see Num. xiv. 8, 9, 38, Josh. xiv. 6-14).

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is full of these instances of faith, and we might name many other scriptures bringing out the same principle. But is it not very clear, from all that we have looked at, that God's word *invariably* comes true, whether men believe it or not? "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, and every man a liar . . ." (Rom. iii. 3, 4). When man takes it upon him to question what God says, he himself is sure to be the loser.

Instead of the direct communications which they had of old, we

have for our guidance the WRITTEN word of God—the revelation of His mind and will. This precious word He has preserved to us, and it is now accessible to all, notwithstanding the many efforts of the enemy of our souls to deprive us of it, and to prevent its being read in the vulgar tongue. Attempts to weaken its influence have also been made by learned men who tried to find in the old manuscripts such differences as might render the real meaning doubtful. One of these had to own at last, "that the different readings of the Hebrew manuscripts scarcely afford enough interest to repay the labour bestowed upon them." So their work was in vain, and we may well say, in the words of the apostle, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. i. 20).

A very different kind of wisdom from this was once found in a little boy; and he gained it from the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. That little boy's name was Timothy, who was "made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 15).

Dear young reader, is *this* wisdom yours?

A. R. V. A.

"I HAVE DONE WITH MY TOYS FOR AYE."

THE following account of a very young child was received by the writer directly from the mother, and is rendered

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almost verbatim. The child was too young to be able to give a reason for the hope that was animating his heart. His desire always seemed to be and to do "like Jesus," and when apparently in full health, without any known symptoms of disease, a few weeks only before he was taken, he gave up voluntarily (without a word being said to him) all of earth; and appeared to possess an almost prophetic sense of what was to take place, both concerning himself and the family, which also seems to have been literally fulfilled.

*"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them,
and they follow Me."* John x. 27.

"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."
Matt. x. 14.

O wondrous story! "God is Love!"

He gave His *only* Son,
Who left for us those realms above,
For wretched man undone.

The Shepherd came to save the lost,
His wandering sheep from sin;
He knew and counted all the cost
It needed souls to win.

'Twas Love Divine come down in Grace,
Life to the dead to give;
In love Christ took the sinner's place,
And died that man might live.

And naught could stay that Love Divine,
Naught stop its wondrous flow,
In Christ the Father's love did shine
Towards sinners here below.

His blood, once shed upon the tree,
Is now before the throne,
It answers there for you and me,
It tells His work is done.

That work avails for rich and poor,
The weary and the weak,
Has opened wide Heaven's folded door
To all who entrance seek.

It was the Shepherd's voice that called,
It was His smile that won
The heart His love had spoiled for earth,
Ere life had scarce begun.

The Word that spake the world from naught
Came down in Love to save,
And gave the lamb His blood had bought,
Victory o'er the grave.

'Twas Grace which touched the hidden spring
Of childhood's opening love,
And made responsive echoes bring
Glory to God above.

Another object than of earth
Now filled that infant heart;
A higher joy than childish mirth
Bade him from all to part.

"I've done with these, my mother dear,"
Thus spake the child one day,
When, wrapped and folded up with care,
His toys he put away.

"'Tis well, my child," his mother said,
"If tired you are of play;
They'll do for you, or baby Fred,
Again, another day."

"No, mother, *I have done with them*;
Baby can with them play;
I do not want my toys again,
I've done with them *for aye*."

The mother smiled, nor deeper thought
Of what those words did tell,
Till Sorrow's bitter lesson brought
Their meaning back full well.

Again the child's sweet voice was heard:
"My mother, come with me,
I want to show you what I've made;
Something for you to see."

The child and mother speed their way,
And so anon they stand

Before a little church-yard ; they,
 Together, hand-in-hand.
 The baby-boy a church had made,
 Two graves on either side,
 No word was to his mother said,
 By him her joy and pride.
 The mother looked with wondering gaze
 At childhood's strangest toil
 Nor yet withheld the meed of praise,
 His childish joy to spoil.
 "It is a picture sweet," she said,
 "Two graves for you and me ;
 Close side by side we shall be laid,
 And those still empty be.
 For father one of those will do,
 And baby, by-and-by;
 But side by side, for you and me,
 Together we must lie."
 "Mother, that little grave is mine,
 And this for father here ;
 Neither of those two graves is thine,
 Nor yet for baby dear.
 He'll live to be your joy and care ;
 Mother, he'll care for you,
 When I am laid in silence there.
 Mother, I tell you true."
 Yet still the mother's heart nor mind
 Could grasp th' o'erwhelming thought ;
 Her boy was in that heart enshrined,
 All else to her was naught.
 And still that mother's heart remained
 Dull to the warning voice.
 She yet the knowledge had not gained
 To make *God's* will her choice.
 He drank the Spirit from above ;
 In him Christ's ways were seen ;
 His tender heart went out in love
 To all of wretched mien.
 Round children poor his arms he threw,
 When them he chanced to meet ;
 Jesus did love the poor, he knew—
 To be like Him is sweet.

"And what He loves, I always may,
 I hope, for ever love ;
 Oh, mother, never say me, Nay !
 To be like Him above."
 Three fleeting weeks had scarcely passed,
 With all their joys and care,
 When sorrow its dark shadow cast
 On all earth's sunshine there.
 The hand of Death was on the child,
 Held by the hand of Love,
 And Death e'en veiled itself, and smiled,
 And own'd the Power above.
 "Mother, I could not always live
 In such a world as this ;
 I do not want what it can give,
 I do not want its kiss.
 This rude world is, whate'er befall,
 Too coarse, too rough, for me :
 Jesus Himself, who knows it all,
 Calls me with Him to be.
 To be with Him, where all is bright,
 Where there's no grief nor pain ;
 Where all is sunshine—never night,
 Mother, we'll meet again."
 He closed his eyes upon the scene,
 His infant heart was free—
 Free from the path where Christ had been—
 Free with that Christ to be.
 The mother's heart had ever lost
 The warnings gently given ;
 Till Love that gave at such a cost,
 Called home her child to heaven.
 Love gave—Love claimed again the gift
 Love then so little known—
 Love that the mother's heart could lift,
 That perfect Love to own.
 Two graves there are, and memory well
 Owns the prophetic word,
 The father's and the child's—they tell
 That both are with the Lord.

C. M. B.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever."—REVELATION XXI. 3, 4, 5.

THE trials of the other prisoners did not take so long as that of Archbishop Carranza. At Valladolid about eighty Protestants had been arrested. Some of them had tried to escape, but were caught and brought back again. Juan Sanchez, servant of the Cazalla family, had succeeded in leaving Spain, and had reached the Netherlands, but the letters which he wrote to tell his friends at home of his safety were seized and opened by the inquisitors, who sent word to their agents abroad, and, just as he was on the point of embarking for England with one of his friends, a monk of San Isidro, the servants of the Inquisition seized them both and sent them back to Spain.

Domingo de Rojas, the priest, had fled from Valladolid in disguise when the first arrests were made, but he only got as far as Callahorra, where he stopped to bid farewell to his beloved friend, Don Carlos de Seso. Perhaps he wanted to warn him of coming danger and advise him to fly. However it was, the delay cost him his life, for the familiars found him in his friend's house, and carried him back to prison.

Don Carlos de Seso was taken soon after. He had no thought of flight. There were numbers of charges brought against him; that he had not only held doctrines contrary to the teaching of "the Church," but that he had publicly taught them. For him there could be no mercy, nor did he ask for it. When he heard that sentence of death had been passed upon him, he called for ink and paper, and, refusing to confess his sins to a priest, he wrote a clear confession of his faith: "thoroughly Lutheran," his enemies said. But de Seso's faith was based upon something firmer than any man's teaching, and if his judges had known their Bibles as well as he did his they might have said that his confession was "thoroughly Scriptural."

When the trials of the prisoners were

over, and they had been kept in prison more than a year, those convicted of heresy were brought out to receive their sentences, but not all at the same time; some were reserved until the return of King Philip from the Netherlands, that he might enjoy the sight.

The first of the great *autos-da-fé* was celebrated in May, 1559. Among those "relaxed," or given over to the secular arm to be put to death, was the learned Dr. Augustin Cazalla. He had tried hard to save his life; he had renounced the truth, and begged to be reconciled to the "church." But, as he had been a teacher of the Protestant doctrines, the only favour that could be allowed him was that he should be strangled before being burned, so that he might suffer less. To gain this advantage he publicly declared that he had been in error, confessed several times to a priest, and on the way to the *quemadero* he, who had been accustomed to preach the Gospel, exhorted his fellow-prisoners to give up their faith and to return to the Church of Rome. So the one who had been counted the first now came far behind the others.

I do not know how you and I would feel if we were called to go to the stake, but this I know: He Who long ago stood with His three faithful servants in the midst of Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace, has never forsaken one of His own in their time of trouble, and it were better to pass

through the fire *with Him* than to die the easiest death *alone*.

Dr. Augustin's sister Beatriz was also condemned to the fire that day, but at the last moment her courage failed, and she consented to confess to a priest, so that she might be strangled first.

Juan Garcia and eight others did the same. It is sad to think that when they had trusted their souls to the Lord Jesus they could not trust Him with their bodies too. He could have made the flames to be to them but chariots of fire, to bear them up to heaven.

Of the thirteen who were that day given over to death, only two were quite firm to the end. They were Francesco Cazalla, the priest, and Antonio Herezuelo. In the torture-chamber of the Inquisition, Francesco's faith had failed for a moment, and he begged to be pardoned and to be reconciled to the "Church"; but afterwards God gave him courage, he boldly confessed the truth, and faced the fire without a sign of fear. They put a gag in his mouth so that he might not speak to the people, and thus he went to death, refusing to listen to his poor brother Augustin, who exhorted him to recant. Francesco knew Whom he had believed.

Antonio Herezuelo walked calmly from the Grand Square to the *quemadero*, but there was a look of deep sorrow on his face. From the day

when the Alguazils had appeared in his house and carried him and Leonor away to prison, he had never faltered or wavered. He had always expected that the way to heaven might lead through suffering, so he was not surprised when it came. No torture could shake him, no threatenings could frighten him. Did not he belong to Christ? and was not He worth suffering for?

I dare say that, in the loneliness of his cell, he had often prayed for Leonor, and he had counted that, though they were separated on earth, they would be sure to go to heaven together. But, oh! the grief of his heart when, as he stood in the Grand Square before the assembled multitude, he saw his wife among the penitents, condemned not to death, but to life-long imprisonment. It was hard to leave her behind in the hands of such men as the Inquisitors (and she was but twenty-four years old), but harder still to know that, in order to save her life, she must have denied the faith of Christ. As he passed her he gave her one look—a look which said better than words could have done, what was in his heart. They bound him to the stake, and tried again and again to persuade him to recant, but it was of no avail. Without the least sign of pain or fear he passed through the fire to his home.

There were sixteen “penitents” led out that day. All the de Rojas family

were amongst them, except Domingo (he was still in prison), Constanza Cazalla, and her brother Juan, Ulloa de Pereira, too, the Knight of St. John, and Leonor de Cisneros. Their sentences were that, as they had repented of their errors and renounced the doctrines of Luther, which they had formerly held, they were saved from death; but their property passed into the hands of the inquisitors, they were condemned to wear the *sanbenito* and to be kept in perpetual imprisonment, with penances, and their names should be forever counted infamous. Luis de Rojas alone was allowed his liberty, though stripped of his title and all else, and forbidden to see his home again. The others were led back to their cells.

It is sad to think of those “penitents” who had renounced the truth of God for the sake of a few years of life, to be spent in prison. But dare we blame them for it? Think of them—alone, with no possibility of human help ever reaching them, in the hands of men who knew not what it was to have pity—the pulley and the rack before them, and beyond that the stake! and when it needed but one word to save them from it all, was it possible for any one to keep from speaking that word? Could human nature stand firm under such an ordeal? No; nothing but *faith* could stand in such circumstances; unless they rested entirely on God they needs

must give way. But God could have kept them, for He never fails those that rest on Him.

And if they really were His children, in spite of all their failure He would never let them be lost, but would bring them back to Himself. And even if they never before had really come to the Lord Jesus it yet was not too late, for He has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." So it may be we shall meet those "penitents," too, in heaven, but, as yet, we know the rest of the story of only two of them. Leonor de Cisneros never could forget that last look which her husband had given her; life was very sad to her without him, and it grieved her to the heart to think that his last hour on earth had been darkened by her unfaithfulness. She thought, too, of One who loved her far more than even Antonio had done. And how must it have grieved Him when she denied His name? So, in her loneliness and captivity, Leonor turned again to the Lord Jesus, who is a very present help in time of trouble, and He received His wavering child. Indeed, He had been holding her all the while, though she knew it not, and He gave her grace to confess Him once again. She refused to do the foolish penances which the priests imposed upon her, and told them that she still believed the truth of the Bible which her husband had taught her. For eight long years they kept her a

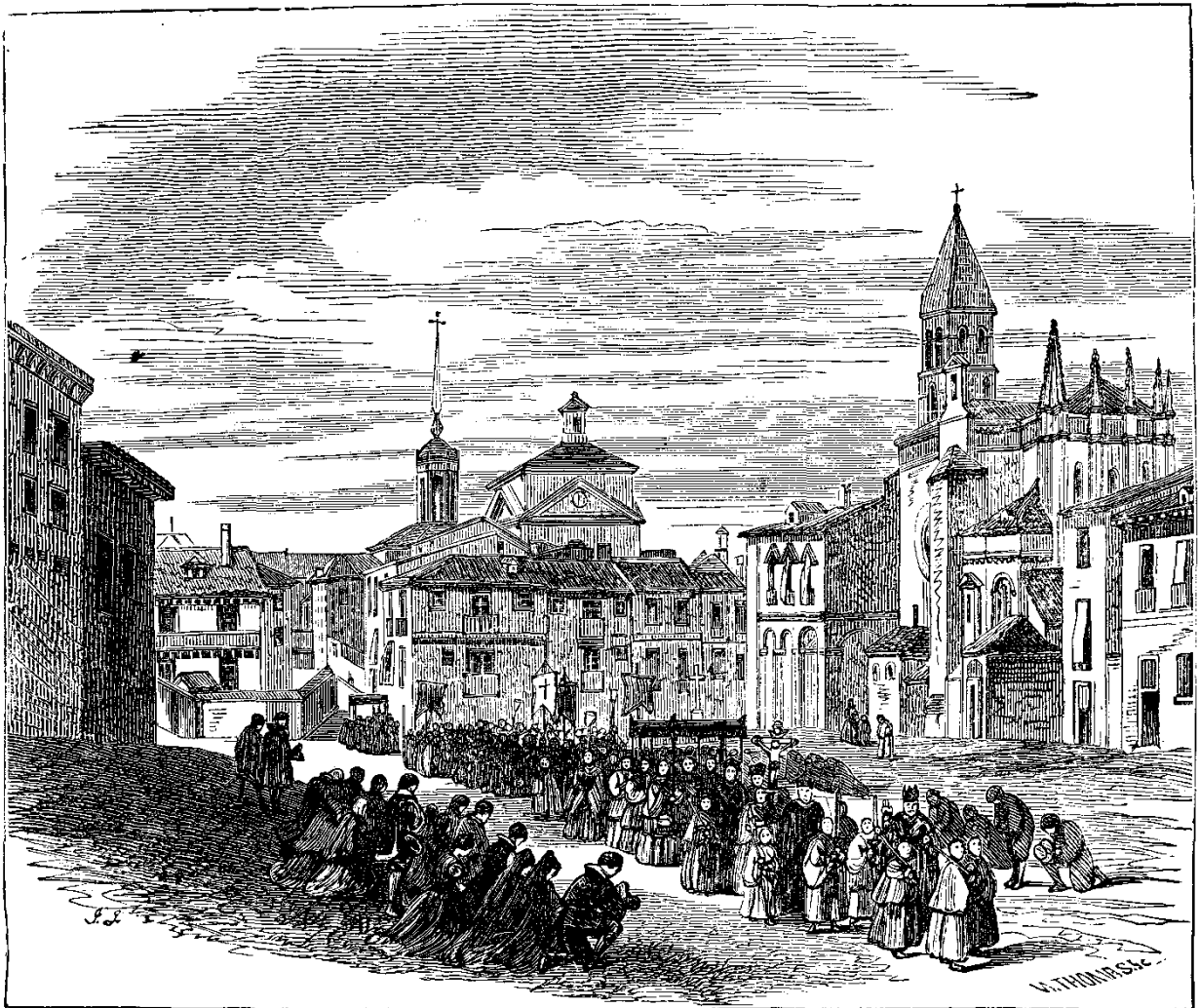
prisoner, trying by every means to shake her faith. But it was all in vain, for she was resting now on the Rock which cannot be shaken. So they brought her out at an *auto-da-fé*, at Valladolid, in the year 1567, and sent her home to heaven by the same way that her husband had gone.

I wish I could tell you the same of Don Juan de Ulloa Pereira, but his is a very different story. For six years he endured, as best he could, the confinement and the penances and the shame, and then his proud spirit could bear it no longer. You know there are two sides to every ditch, and if you fall in you may get out by either one of them. Leonor de Cisneros looked to the Lord Jesus, and He brought her out of prison on the heavenward side. Ulloa de Pereira looked to the Pope, and he brought him out on the side of this world. Ulloa wrote and reminded Pope Pius IV. of all the valiant deeds he had performed against the Turks in former years, and in virtue of these, he having renounced the Protestant faith, the Pope forgave him for having once been a heretic, and restored to him the liberty and the honours which he had forfeited. Do you think his heart was satisfied then?

That was more than three hundred years ago, the honours and titles and wealth which Ulloa Pereira valued so highly have vanished away, the poor body which he saved from the fire is crumbled to dust, and even his name

is almost forgotten. Do you think he is glad now that he denied the name of Christ that his own might be honoured? Do you think he still considers that the world's approval

At the next *auto-da-fé* at Valladolid, in October of the same year (1559), there were thirteen prisoners brought out to be burned. Among them was Pedro Cazalla, his servant, Juan



Papal Procession in Valladolid.

was worth more than that of the King of kings? And do you think that, in the light of eternity, he counts the glitter of earthly glory better than the joy of the Lord?

Sanchez, Domingo de Rojas, and Don Carlos de Seso. Twenty thousand persons were present as spectators and King Philip himself attended in state, and followed the prisoners to the

quemadero to watch the sight to the end.

Pedro Cazalla's faith had failed more than once since he had been arrested, but he walked boldly to the stake, his mouth gagged lest he should speak of Christ. Yet at the last he consented to confess to a priest that he might die the easier death.

His servant was more steadfast. As the cords which bound him to the stake were snapped he sprang out of the flames, and, for a moment, seemed ready to accept the "mercy" which the priests offered him, but seeing Don Carlos de Seso calmly enduring the fire, he cried, "I will die like de Seso," and, returning to the blazing pile, walked resolutely into it and was burned.

Domingo de Rojas had also faltered in the prison, when he stood before the instruments of torture, which he feared more than death, but now he was bold for the Lord who had bought him. As he passed the place where King Philip sat he stopped, and openly confessed his faith, saying that he was no heretic but believed in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that to the death of Christ alone he trusted for his salvation. Numbers of Dominican friars crowded around him, begging him to recant, but even at the stake he resolutely answered that he would never renounce the doctrine of Christ, and that the faith in which he died was the faith of the Gospel. So

he, too, went home by fire. Yet the friars, vexed at the disgrace which his so-called "heresy" brought upon their order (you remember he was a Dominican) invented the story that at the last moment he had recanted, and was strangled.

And Don Carlos de Seso? Do you think that when the time came he found death more terrible than he had expected? No; when any one has walked with God in life they have learned to know their Guide before they come to the worst part of the journey, they can trust Him, therefore, even in the valley of the shadow of death, and its darkness is not dark to them because He is with them. So, calmly and fearlessly, as he had lived, de Seso went to the stake, bidding the executioners make haste to light the fire that he might die in it. And without one groan or struggle he passed into his Master's presence.

If you had been in Valladolid that day you would have seen a gorgeous sight—banners waving, horses prancing, the sun glinting on gilded armour and shining weapons, the glitter of gold and jewels, and the splendid robes of royal personages, noble lords and ladies, and high ecclesiastical dignitaries. You would have seen, too, the procession of penitents, with downcast faces, clad in yellow sanbenitos, led by dark-robed Dominicans. And you would have known that, in darkened rooms and secret places of the city,

there was weeping and mourning and hearts sorrowing for those whom they would see no more on earth—and outside the city walls, on the quemadero, there were a few heaps of smouldering ashes, nothing more: and the sun looked down upon it all.

But if you could have seen beyond the sun! Ah, if only mortal eyes could have seen the meeting of those redeemed souls with Him who had redeemed them!

The Bible does not tell us very much about the souls of those who have left this earth for heaven, and our imaginations dare not play upon the hidden things of God, but this we know for certain: they departed to “be with Christ, which is far better.”

(*To be continued.*)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

MORE MEN AT WORK.

AMONGST the number of those who have laboured in the field of Assyrian research, the name of George Smith must not be forgotten.

Having from early youth had a taste for Oriental study, as he tells us in his work on *Assyrian Discoveries*, he was not long left without the opportunity of prosecuting it, according to the old adage, ‘Where there is a will there is a way.’

What is of special interest to us is

this, that his bent lay mostly in the direction of Biblical research.

“In 1866, seeing the unsatisfactory state of our knowledge of those parts of Assyrian history which bore upon the history of the Bible, I felt anxious to do something towards settling a few of the questions involved,” writes Mr. Smith, and with this end in view he requested permission from Sir H. Rawlinson to consult the paper casts and fragments of inscriptions relating to the reign of Tiglath-Pileser, which were stored in his work-room at the British Museum.

This permission being readily accorded, Mr. Smith threw himself with such energy into the work so congenial to him that, at the instance of Sir Henry, he was “engaged by the Trustees of the British Museum to assist him in the work of preparing a new volume of *Cuneiform Inscriptions*.”

Thus in the beginning of 1867, he entered upon his official career as Assyriologist, which was so soon to be cut short by his early death, though not before he had accomplished much for which every Bible student may well feel grateful.

Whilst hard at work in his little sanctum in London, he one day came across a piece of a clay tablet which turned the current of his labours, and filled the scientific world with enthusiasm.

I will here allow Mr. Smith to tell us about this in his own words:—“In

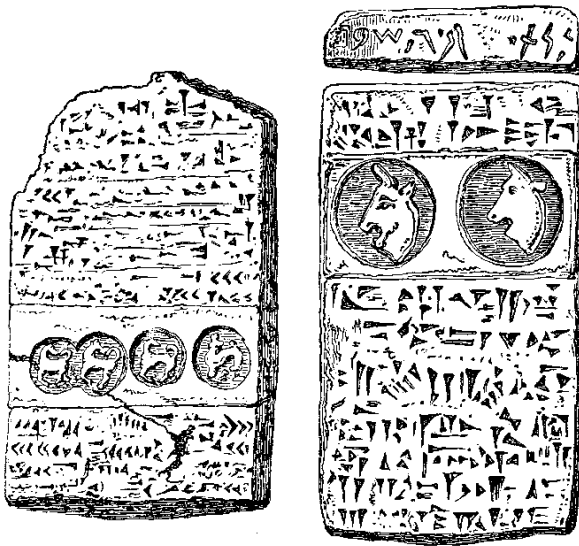
1872, I had the good fortune to make a far more interesting discovery, namely, that of the tablets containing the Chaldæan account of the Deluge. The first fragment I discovered contained about half of the account: it was the largest single fragment of these legends.

"As soon as I recognised this, I began a search among the fragments of the Assyrian library to find the remainder of the story.

"This library was first discovered by Mr. Layard, who sent home many boxes full of fragments of terra-cotta tablets, and after the close of Mr. Layard's work, Mr. Hormuzd Rassan and Mr. Loftus recovered much more of this collection. The fragments of

anything of interest, it was my practice to examine the most likely parts of this collection, and pick out all the fragments that would join, or throw light on the new subject. My search for fragments of the Deluge story was soon rewarded by some good finds, and I then ascertained that this tablet, of which I obtained three copies, was the eleventh in a series of tablets giving the history of an unknown hero, named Izdubar; and I subsequently ascertained that this series contained in all twelve tablets. These tablets were full of remarkable interest, and a notice of them being published, they at once attracted a considerable amount of attention, both in England and abroad. I arranged to give the public, as soon as possible, a translation and account of these fragments in a lecture before the Biblical Archæological Society, and this was delivered on the 3rd of December, 1872."

The following day this lecture appeared in print in the pages of the *Daily Telegraph*. A wide-spread interest was at once awakened, and so far-reaching were the results felt to be, and so universal their importance, that the proprietors of that paper immediately came forward with an offer of "one thousand guineas for fresh researches at Nineveh," urging that Mr. Smith should conduct the expedition, and that he should start without delay, while the interest of the subject was fresh in the mind of the public.



Clay Tablets.

clay tablets were of all sizes, from half an inch to a foot long, and were thickly coated with dirt, so that they had to be cleaned before anything could be seen on the surface. Whenever I found

The necessary leave of absence having been granted by the Trustees of the British Museum, our traveller left London for the East on the evening of January 20th, 1873.

After various experiences both during the journey and on the spot where his excavations were carried on, an interesting account of which is given in *Assyrian Discoveries*, he had the good fortune to light upon the very fragment of the tablet which was required to fill up the gap in the collection already deciphered in the British Museum.

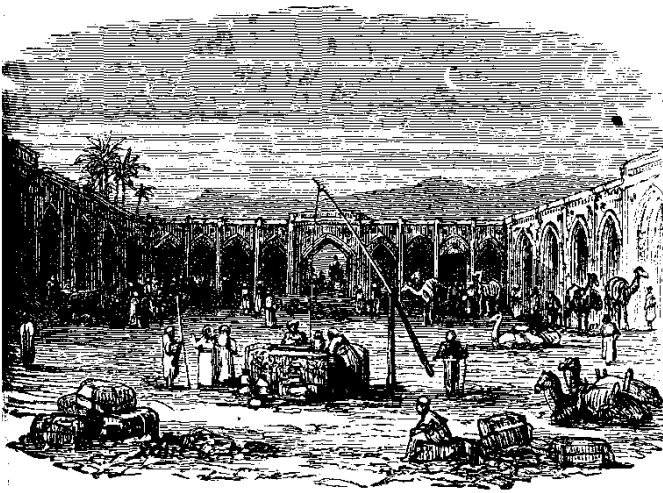
We could not believe that this was a mere matter of chance. Nothing but the hand of God, who in His wisdom had so ordered it that for more than 2000 years these records should lie buried beneath the ruins of these great Assyrian cities, could have so wonderfully controlled and directed the search. Again, to quote Mr. Smith's words:—"On the 14th of May, my friend, Mr.

Charles Kerr, whom I had left at Aleppo, visited me at Mosul, and as I rode into the Khan (an eastern Inn) where I was staying, I met him.

"After mutual congratulations, I sat down to examine the store of fragments of cuneiform inscriptions from the day's digging, taking out and brushing off the earth from the fragments to read their contents. On cleaning one of them I found to my surprise and gratification that it contained the greater portion of seventeen lines of inscription belonging to the first column of the Chaldæan account of the Deluge, and fitting into the only place where there was a serious blank in the story. When I had first published the account of this tablet I had conjectured that there were about fifteen lines wanting in this part of the story, and now with this portion I was enabled to make it nearly complete.

"After communicating to my friend the contents of the fragment, I copied it, and a few days later telegraphed the circumstances to the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph*. Mr. Kerr desired to see the mound at Nimroud, but, as the results from Kouyunjik were so important, I could not leave the site to go with him, so I sent my dragoman to shew him the place, remaining myself to superintend the Kouyunjik excavations."

This remarkable find was nothing short of miraculous, when we consider that several years had elapsed since the



Interior of an Eastern Khan.

discovery of the first pieces, and also that Smith himself had no idea where those pieces had been found, having himself never been in the country before.

Allusion has been made above to the Assyrian *library*. Had these early races any books? Yes, they had, but not printed on paper and bound in cloth like we have. If that had been so they never would have survived the conflagration that consumed the palaces and the whole city of Nineveh. Their books were made of clay, the words being stamped upon these soft tablets by means of metal instruments, and the fire, instead of burning them up, would only have baked them the harder. I shall have something more to tell you some day about these "Deluge Tablets," but I must close this number by quoting a paragraph from an interesting work called *Moses and Geology* :—

"Century after century sceptics and infidels have brought forward allegations against the Scriptural narratives, and good men have not always been able to find suitable answers to their specious objections, but were often obliged to say, 'Though I may not be able to answer you satisfactorily, I still believe in the truth of the Bible, and feel sure that the time will come when its stories will no longer be considered *myths*.' That time has now arrived, and none but those perfectly ignorant of the invaluable treasures in our British Museum, will attempt to

call in question the correctness of the events related in the Old Testament. Prominent among these relics is the 'Deluge Tablet,' which so marvellously confirms the story of the Noachian flood, and serves to strengthen our faith in all the Biblical narratives."

"Thy Word is Truth."

(*To be continued.*)

"THEY THAT WERE READY."

IT was a summer's evening. Two children who had been amusing themselves in different ways for some hours had grown tired of their games, and had sat down to rest. They were brother and sister, and were always together, either at lessons or at play. As I have said, they were tired of playing, and tired too of being alone. Their father and mother were out that evening, they had gone with others to read the Word of God together, and in this way to hear of Jesus, God's own beloved Son, Who had come many years ago to die on the Cross for men, women, and children.

It was growing late, and these children were becoming anxious at their parents being so long away. "I wonder why father and mother do not come home," said the sister to her brother.

"I don't know," said her brother.

WORDS OF LIFE.

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"Do you think the Lord Jesus can have come and taken them away?" the boy asked. Their fears increased, for though these two children had *heard* of Jesus, they did not *know* Him. Do *you* know Jesus, dear young reader? Well, this boy and girl did not.

At last a bright thought struck them, and Emma, for that was the little girl's name, said to her brother, "Harry, let us go over and see if Mrs. H— is at home. You know she loves the Lord Jesus, so that if He has come He will have taken her up to heaven."

So over they went and rang the bell, and when the maid came to the door they asked if Mrs. H— were at home. Great was their relief when they found she was still there, and they went back home with thankful hearts, and soon their father and mother returned, and the children told them how frightened they had been because they thought the Lord had come.

Why were they frightened? Because they *were not ready*. Dear child, are *you*?

I want you to get your Bible, and read for yourself what the Lord Jesus says in the 25th chapter of Matthew and the tenth verse, of those that "were ready." "They that were *ready* went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut." You see, they that were "*ready*" were shut in with Jesus; they were safe and happy for ever. But what about those who were *not ready*? They came *after* "the door was shut," and said, "Lord, Lord, open to us." Did they get in? No,

no, the Lord answered, "I know you not." And they were shut out.

Dear reader, young or old, which will be *your* portion? Shut in, or shut out? Jesus says, "Behold, I come quickly." It is not likely that every one where you or I live will die to-night, or to-morrow, but Christ may come! He has said, "*I will come again.*" He "was *once* offered to bear the sins of many." Jesus came into this world to die "*once.*" *He is coming again* to take all who have put their trust in Him to Himself, and the door will be shut. Where, dear young readers, will *you* be? Outside, or shut in with Jesus? Which? It must be one or the other, and that for eternity. L.

"Some one will enter the pearly gate,

By and by, by and by,

Taste of the glories that there await,

Shall you? Shall I?

Some one will travel the streets of gold,

Beautiful visions there shall behold,

Feast on the pleasures so long foretold:

Shall you? Shall I?

Some one will knock *when the door is shut*,

By and by, by and by,

Hear a voice saying, "I know you not,"

Shall you? Shall I?

Some one will call and shall not be heard,

Vainly will strive when the door is barred,

Some one will fail of the saint's reward:

Shall you! Shall I?

Some one will sing the triumphant song,

By and by, by and by,

Join in the praise of that blood-bought throng.

Shall you? Shall I?

Some one will greet on the golden shore,

Loved ones of earth, who have gone before,

Safe in the glory for evermore:

Shall you? Shall I?

ANSWERED PRAYER.



I WANT to tell you a story, which is quite a true one, about two little boys. I must call them Harry and Frank, as I do not know what their names were, but I know what I am going to tell you about them is perfectly true.

Their father had died, and their mother had to leave them all day and work very hard for a living. It was her custom to put her little boys' dinner in a certain place, where they could always find it when they came home from school. But the day of which I am about to speak, she had for some reason, put it in a different place. When Harry and Frank came home, they went and looked in the usual place for their dinner, but to their surprise it was not there.

"Well," said Harry, "mother has never forgotten to leave our dinner (which was only bread and butter, for they were very poor) and I believe it is here somewhere."

For some time they searched the room, but no dinner could they find. Then said little Frank to his brother, "You know Harry, Jesus knows how very hungry we are, and He knows too where our dinner is, let us ask Him to show us where to look for it."

They both knelt down in simple faith and asked the Lord Jesus to help them. When they rose from their knees, they looked round the room and saw something they had not noticed before, and

that was the lid of a saucepan; they lifted it up and there did the boys see their dinner.

Now dear reader this is just one of many examples of how God answers prayer. Their mother was a Christian, and had taught her two little boys about Jesus, whom they had learned to love, and to know as their Saviour; One whom they could turn to for help, whenever they were in trouble. Dear children, have you learned to love the Lord Jesus, and can you call Him *your* Saviour? Can you say, "He loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*"? If you cannot, come and trust Him *now*. Come just as you are. Do not think it will do when you are older perhaps. It may then be *too late* for you. "*Now* is the accepted time; *Now* is the day of Salvation." He wants you to come and His heart yearns for you. When the soldiers pierced His side, and made the precious blood flow, that was for *you*. Can you not see how much He loved you by all He suffered to make you fit to be with Him?

Nobody ever loved you so much as Jesus, and nobody can wash away your sins but Jesus. Then come now while the door is wide open, for when once the Master of the house has risen up and shut it, it will then be *too late*. That same voice that has often asked you to come, so lovingly and so tenderly, will then say, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." What solemn words! Let it not be said of you, "The summer is ended and *I* am not saved."

All things are ready, Come,
To-morrow may not be !
Oh sinner come, the Saviour waits
This hour to welcome thee. E. E.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS.

1. Yes ; 1 Kings x. 1-10 and 2 Chron. ix. 23.
2. Jesus ; Matt. xii. 42.
3. Luke vii. 35.
4. Chapters ii., iii., iv., viii., ix.
5. 1st—Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Caleb, Joshua, etc. 2nd—Ham, Lot's children, Esau, Balaam, etc.
6. Bezaleel and Aholiab. Ex. xxxi., xxxvi.
7. Christ ; 1 Cor. i. 24.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

A Fool.

THIS is a very solemn character to speak of and yet one often mentioned in the Bible. Solomon wrote, "The father of a fool hath no joy" (xvii. 21), and again, "A fool despiseth his father's instruction" (xv. 5); his own son, Rehoboam, showed these verses to be sadly true, for he forsook the counsel of the aged men, who had known his father, and he suffered the ten tribes to be severed from his kingdom. He acted like a fool in this.

In Prov. i., after speaking of a wise man and the fear of the Lord, the king points out the opposite: "Fools despise wisdom and instruction;" "Fools hate knowledge" (i. 7, 22). A fool is a man who thinks himself wise: "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes" (xii. 15), and, of course, he is not anxious to be taught. The fear of the Lord, the true wisdom of which we

have read, is therefore unknown to him: if he had really seen himself in God's sight, he would say, like Job, "I am vile," "I abhor myself": this, indeed would change a fool into a wise man.

Sometimes boys and girls who have learnt a few lessons begin to think they know a good deal, but, as they study more, they find out what fields of knowledge lie before them, and then they cease from vaunting their own knowledge. Much more is this true in divine things.

There is a solemn verse here: "Fools make a mock at sin" (xiv. 9). Now sin is what shut Adam out from paradise, and what will ever keep man out of God's abode. No one but God can fully estimate sin: He says, "The thought of foolishness is sin" (xxiv. 9), and yet we often turn into a joke that which is so hateful to Him. It would be a terrible thing to be shut out of His presence for ever, would it not? "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (viii. 13). How thankful we are to know that He has made a way for us to come into His presence, even though we are so full of folly and iniquity.

Solomon's father wrote: "The fool hath said in his heart, *no God.*" That is going one step farther than mocking at sin. It is easy to tread a downward road, for Satan is on the look-out to help such. He likes fools. "A prating fool" (x. 8, 10); "The mouth of fools poureth out foolishness" (xv. 2); "A fool's mouth is his destruction" (xviii. 7): such an one may easily

go on in the broad road and find himself "*at his end a fool*" (Jer. xvii. 11).

Children, beware of the beginning of folly, have your hearts right with God, and your lips will not speak foolishness, for "out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts" (Matt. xv. 19). H. H. L.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where does David tell what the fool says in his heart?
2. What does Solomon say about fools in Ecclesiastes?
3. Find other verses in Proverbs about fools.
4. Of what great man in the Old Testament was it said: "folly is with him"?
5. What king owned that he had "played the fool"?
6. Who was burned and stoned because he had "wrought folly in Israel"?

OUR YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS.

WE would encourage all, both young and old, to diligent and regular daily reading of the Scriptures. Let those holy oracles be read in prayerfulness and dependence upon the guidance and teaching of their Divine Author, and blessing to the reader must result. We also note with pleasure that our contributor thinks of others and desires their blessing. Let us each remember that our light has to shine.—ED.

A young friend writes:—

"I was reading John vi. a short time since, and was much struck with those words 'in no wise,' and have written this with the earnest prayer, that if suitable, it may be the means of blessing to some dear soul."

WHAT sweet words! when we think that they were uttered by our Lord Jesus Christ: "Him that cometh unto Me I will in

NO WISE cast out" (John vi. 37).

Dear reader, have you come to Him? If not, you have only to go and tell Him that you want to be one of His, and He will take you just as you are, never mind how bad you may be. Will you not come to Him? He is willing, and waiting to save you and will not *by any means* turn you away. He died for you and wants you to go to Him. He says, "Come unto Me and I will *give* you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). He wants to *give* it to you, you have not to *work* or to *do* anything for it.


Now dear reader, if you truly wish to be a child of God, just go at once into your room, quite alone with Jesus, and come to Him just as you are, and He will take you at the very same moment, and then, Oh! think of it, there will "be joy in the presence of the angels of God" over *you* or over *one* sinner that repents (Luke xv. 10).

And then when Jesus comes—and He is coming very soon—He will take you, with all those who know and love Him, home to be with Him in glory for ever and ever. Just think how blessed that will be, to be "for ever with the Lord."

But dear reader, if *you* do *not* take Him at His word and come to Him you will be *lost* for ever, instead of being for ever with Jesus in heaven.

Do not delay a moment longer, but come *at once* and give yourself to Him, and, once His, you are His for ever, never to perish like those who do not believe in Jesus. He says, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall *not* *perish* but have everlasting life" John iii. 16.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young. 

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XIX.

*"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy ;
when I fall, I shall arise ; when I sit in
darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto
me.*

*... He will bring me forth to the light,
and I shall behold His righteousness."*—
MICAH vii. 8, 9.

IT was Saturday evening, September 23rd, 1559. The sun had set, but there was a stir within the Castle of the Triana at Seville. Lights were moving to and fro, there was a sound of locks being turned, bolts being drawn back, heavy doors swung open, and then the tread of many feet in the stone corridor.

What was it all about ?

It was the eve of a great Auto da fé, preparations were being made, and eighty of the prisoners were being summoned from their cells and assembled, the men in one room and the women in another, to hear their sentences.

Eighty men and women, with faces worn and haggard from long months of imprisonment, bodies weak and wasted from sickness and bad food, and limbs torn and distorted by the pulley and the rack. It was a sad, sad sight to

see, and sadder still when you knew why they were assembled that evening, for they were "penitents"; most of them persons who had heard and believed the Gospel of the grace of God, but who loved their lives better than their Lord, and had given up His truth and His word in order to escape the fire.

It was a sad meeting in those rooms of the "Holy House" that evening. Often and often before those same people had sat side by side in the Cathedral to listen to Constantino's preaching, and in Doña Isabel de Baen's room, had read the Scriptures together. They had thought then that nothing would ever induce them to deny their Lord—and now ? The months that had passed since that dark night in the beginning of the year 1558 had wrought great changes in them all, and as they looked on one another and brothers recognized each other, and sisters ; as fathers saw their sons again, mothers their daughters ; as loving friends stood face to face and knew *why* they were there, what must their feelings have been ? "You here ?" "And you ?" they would say. And their voices would be choked with sobs and they would hardly bear to meet each other's eyes.

Their punishments were, for the most part, confiscation of goods and imprisonment for life, wearing the sanbenito. When each sentence had been announced, the prisoners were taken back to their cells. To-morrow they would stand in the Square of St. Francis and hear their names disgraced before the world for having dared to read the Word of God and believe its teaching, but in the depth of his heart each one of them knew that *this* was not his real disgrace; before the Angels of God his shame would be that he had not been faithful to that Word.

But there were some cells in that dark prison house from which the prisoners had not been called that evening. Many of them had yet long months to wait before they heard what punishment their judges had assigned them, but for others that Saturday night was the last night in the darkness, it was the end of their toiling and suffering, to-morrow would be indeed to them the first day of the week, the Lord's day, the beginning of the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

It was midnight, and they were sleeping, for even in dungeons God can give His beloved sleep, and His angels were beside them silently ministering to those who should be heirs of salvation. But as the clock struck twelve they were awakened by the sound of the opening of their doors. It was not an angel coming as he did to Peter to set him free to speak again in the name of

Jesus, but Dominican friars, sent by the Inquisitors to bid them prepare for death.

To some of them this was not unexpected news. It was not the first time that Maria de Bohorques had been visited in her cell by the friars. Among all their prisoners there was not one whom the Inquisitors had made more efforts to bring back to their Church, by arguments as well as by the most dreadful tortures, than this young girl of noble family and well known for her learning and piety. On this particular night they sent two Jesuits as well as two Dominicans to make one last effort to convert her. She received them courteously, but told them that it was no use for them to take so much trouble about her, for she was far more interested in her soul's salvation than they could possibly be. "If I had any doubt," she said, "as to the truth of what I believe, I would give it up. But I have none. I *know* that it is true, I knew it before I came to this prison, and I am still more sure of it now; for with all your reasons and arguments you have said nothing that I could not easily answer from the Scriptures." The sentence of death was therefore no surprise to Maria.

Cristobal de Losada, too, from the first had boldly confessed his faith, and though put to the torture had firmly refused to give the names of any of his fellow-believers, so he well knew that death must be his portion.

Juan Gonzales, who had once, you

WORDS OF LIFE.

101

remember, been a Mohammedan, had, even when suffering the most terrible tortures, answered all the arguments and threats of his judges with the words of Scripture, telling them that his faith was founded on the Word of God, and therefore could not be shaken. For him, of course, there could be no hope of mercy—from men.

Garci Arias, the white doctor of San Isidro, had found himself at last in the hands of the Inquisitors, in whose favour he had been so anxious to stand, and from whom he had so long and so carefully hidden his true belief. He saw that there was no help, no refuge for him but in God. So in his extremity he fled to that strong tower into which the righteous may run and be safe, and in the name of the Lord he turned upon the Inquisitors, boldly confessed his faith, and proved to them from the Bible that it was indeed the faith of Jesus Christ. He knew therefore that his doom was fixed.

Fernando de San Juan, the school-master, had been arrested together with his wife some months before. At first he had given way to the threats of the Inquisitors, but afterwards he had not only boldly confessed his own faith, but had encouraged and strengthened his fellow prisoner, Morcillo, a young monk of San Isidro, who was in the same cell with him. Morcillo had found the tortures to which he was put too terrible to bear, and fearing that the fire would be still worse, he had

promised to renounce the truth of the Gospel and return to the Romish Church. But afterwards Fernando de San Juan spoke to him gravely and lovingly, reminding him, I doubt not, of what the Lord Jesus Christ had suffered for him, so that Morcillo's heart was touched, and when again he faced his judges, he confessed his Saviour. To him, therefore, and to San Juan, it was no surprise when the friars came that Saturday night to bid them prepare for death on the morrow.

But there were some among the prisoners who had expected a less severe sentence. Don Juan Ponce de Leon was one of them. He had been one of the last Protestants to be arrested; it was not until the beginning of the year 1559 that the officers of the Inquisition carried him off from his home, leaving behind him his wife and five young children. You can fancy how his little boys Manuel, and Pedro, and Rodrigo, must have eagerly watched for his return and wondered day by day why he did not come. And little Blanca, who was only four, would ask her mother over and over again why those strange men had taken Father away? And where had he gone to? And the lady would not dare to tell her, for to those who did not think it an honour to be counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus, the disgrace of being called a "heretic" was too dreadful to be spoken of.

Don Juan must often have thought

of his little ones during those months in prison, and perhaps the hardest part of it all to him was to know that they would not only lose their father's love and care, but would be deprived of their property and be looked upon by all as disgraced on account of their father's deeds. It is far easier to suffer oneself than to bring trouble upon those one really loves. But from the time when he had first decided that it was worth while to follow Christ, Don Juan had fully considered what it would cost. He used often to visit the place where Protestants had been burned to death, in order to accustom himself to the thought of the fire before his time should come to stand there. So it was no unexpected event when the Alguazils took him off to prison.

They took him to the torture chamber and did all that their cruelty could devise to force him to recant and to betray his friends; but in vain. No word passed his lips that could dishonour his Lord or injure one of his fellow Christians. But when force failed the Inquisitors tried deceit, for his high rank and his well known noble character made them especially anxious to be able to boast that they had brought him back to their church. They therefore bribed men to visit him whom he had formerly counted as his friends. They came, not with threats and tortures, but with persuasions, entreaties, and promises. They promised him life and liberty; they im-

plored and urged him to make a full confession of everything concerning himself and others. They spoke so kindly and seemed so truly in earnest for his welfare, that, weak and suffering as he was, he gave way to them, told the Inquisitors all that he and his friends had believed, and begged to be forgiven. Then the traitors left him, sorrowful and alone, to await the fulfilment of their promises.

But instead of life and liberty, on that Saturday night, the friars brought him the message that after all he was to die next day. His first feeling was one of fierce anger at having been deceived, but afterwards he grew calm and told the friars that the faith in which he would die was the faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They wanted him to see a priest that he might confess his sins and be absolved. This was a favour which they offered to all those who were condemned to death. If the prisoner consented, he was said to have returned to the Romish Church, and he was privileged to die by strangling instead of by burning, his dead body only being given to the flames. But Don Juan well knew that one Priest, and one alone, could absolve him. He who had suffered for his sins was the only one Who could say to him: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." So he, like the other prisoners, refused to confess to a man, and was left alone with his Lord.

(To be continued.)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

"NINEVEH, THAT GREAT CITY."

NO BOOK we may safely affirm has been more violently assailed, or more virulently attacked, than the Bible. It has nevertheless stood firm as a rock amidst the storms of the ocean. Shallow-minded and talkative infidels have spoken against it, but still it exists. Volumes have been written against it, but the Bible is still there, and lives while these volumes lie neglected and forgotten.

Every effort has been put forth to prove it wrong on the ground of its morality, science, and history, but in every case the Bible has come forth victorious, while its opponents have been obliged to retire exposed, defeated, and covered with shame.

The Bible was not designed to teach us science, nor to instruct us in history, but nevertheless, God being its Author, where either science or history are touched upon in its pages, its statements are invariably found to be accurate and perfectly in accordance with fact. At this we need not be surprised.

"The law of the Lord is perfect,
converting the soul :

The testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple :

The statutes of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart :

The commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes :

The fear of the Lord is clean,
enduring for ever :

The judgments of the Lord are true,
and righteous altogether :

More to be desired are they than gold,
yea, than much fine gold :

Sweeter also than honey,
and the honey comb :

Moreover, by them is thy servant warned,
and in keeping of them there is
great reward."—PSALM xix. 7-12.

In these beautiful verses we are told some of the objects for which our precious Bibles are given us, and multitudes of people in every rank and condition of life have proved every word of this to be true.

From time to time difficulties have arisen, and apparent inaccuracies have been eagerly caught at as evidences against the Divine inspiration of the Book. Invariably, however, these apparent mistakes have been proved to be due not to the inaccuracy of the Bible but to the ignorance of the opponent.

Of late years a class of men have arisen who have been dignified by the title of "Higher Critics," and with much show of learning and not a little self-confidence, these men have spent their energies and wasted their talents in trying to prove that the historical narratives contained in the Bible are unreliable and deceptive. Their methods of proof were involved and obscure, difficult, too, to follow for the large majority of people. But their conclusions were clear and easily understood. If the Bible were as full

of mistakes as they affirmed it to be, it could not possibly be inspired of God, that was clear, and that was all that Satan troubled himself about, for the Devil who suggested to Adam the question, "Hath God said?" still seeks to fill the mind of man with doubt about the Word of God.

Now, as we have before said, the internal proofs of its divine origin which the Bible contains are perfectly sufficient, and the child of God attaches far more importance to these than to any others. Nevertheless, if God has been pleased in these days of infidelity and doubt to furnish us with others, it is not for us to despise, ignore, or neglect them.

It has been truly said that the trenches of the "excavators" are rapidly becoming the graves of the "critics," for scarcely a week passes but what the spade turns up to the light of day some record of the hoary past which shuts the mouth of unbelief.

There is one striking feature about the Bible, and it is this, the abruptness with which oftentimes some important person or place is introduced into the narrative. Had mere man been the author he would have deemed it necessary to have entered into some explanatory details. The curiosity of the reader would have demanded it. Not so with God, whose object is not to satisfy idle curiosity, but to reach the conscience and to bless the soul. Just so much, then, is told us as to make

plain His ways and unfold His purposes. The fact of the existence of a mighty empire, named Assyria, is taken for granted; its chief city, Nineveh, likewise is referred to by the Sacred historian. But for generations, little, if anything, was known of either beyond what might be gathered from the pages of the Old Testament. "For generations the great oppressing city had slept buried beneath the fragments of its own ruins, its history lost, its very site forgotten."

Was it likely, argued poor rationalism, that if such a mighty empire and city ever really existed, every trace of them should have vanished away? Was not this another of these eagerly-sought-for proofs, that the histories in the Bible were just as fabulous and unreal as the mythical legends of Greece and Rome?

Whilst these self-confident "critics" were thus building up a theory which was to undermine the authority of the Scriptures, the recovery and decipherment of the monuments of ancient Nineveh demolished at one blow their arguments and the whole fabric which they were seeking to erect upon them. As each discovery has caused fresh light to shine upon the history of the past, they have been obliged to retreat from every "advanced" position which they have taken up against the Word of God.

But meanwhile, what shall we say about the multitudes whose faith in the

Scriptures has been wrecked by their wild assertions? "Woe unto the world because of offences! but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh" (Matt. xviii. 7).

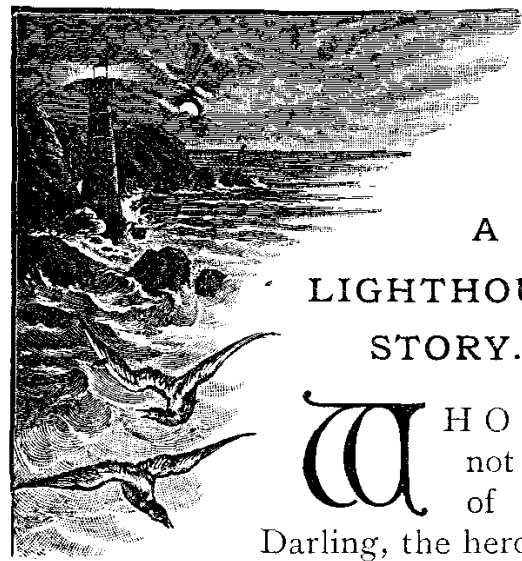
We would counsel all our readers to beware of the assertions of men of science when they touch upon the domain of Scripture. It has been well said that "the facts of science are one thing, but the conclusions which scientific men draw from these facts are quite another." The *facts* are true all the world over, but the *conclusions* are too often false.

We may conclude this article in the words of Professor Sayce, an oriental scholar of high standing, whose conclusions, however, like everybody else's, are not always correct:—

"The Ruins of Nineveh yielded not only sculptures and inscriptions carved in stone, but a whole library of books. True, the books are written upon clay, and not on paper, but they are none the less real books, dealing with all the subjects of knowledge known at the time they were compiled, and presenting us with a clear and truthful reflection of Assyrian thought and belief. It is a strange thing to examine for the first time one of the clay tablets of the old Assyrian library. Usually it has been more or less broken by the catastrophe of that terrible day when Nineveh was captured by its enemies, and the palace and library burnt and destroyed together. But whether it is a fragment or a complete tablet, it is impossible not to handle it reverently when cleaning it from the dirt with which its long sojourn in the earth has encrusted it, and spelling out its words for the first time for more than 2,000 years. When last the characters upon it were read, it was in days when Assyria

was still a name of terror, and the destruction that God's prophets had predicted was still to come. When its last reader laid it aside, Judah had not as yet undergone the chastisement of the Babylonish exile, the Old Testament was an uncompleted volume, the kingdom of the Messiah, a promise of the distant future. We are brought face to face, as it were, with men who were the contemporaries of Isaiah, of Hezekiah, of Ahaz; nay, of men whose names have been familiar to us since we first read the Bible by our mother's side. Tiglath Pileser and Sennacherib can never again be to us mere names. We possess the records which they caused to be written, and in which they told the story of their campaigns in Palestine." *

(To be continued.)



A LIGHTHOUSE STORY.

WHO has not heard of Grace Darling, the heroine of the Longstone Lighthouse? Her picture is to be found in many a home, representing her starting forth in her little cobbler of a boat to rescue some ship-wrecked mariners, wild gusts of wind blowing her hair about her noble face and covering her frail bark with clouds of white spray. She lived with

* "Assyria; its Princes, Priests, and People."

her God-fearing father and mother in the sea girt lighthouse.

"One night (September 7th, 1838) the 'Forfarshire,' with over sixty passengers, struck on Hawker's rock, broke in twain, and all in the hinder part were drowned. The shrieks of the nine left clinging to the wreck were heard by Grace above the storm, though half a mile away. She woke her father and was the first to leap at day break into the boat. Launched by the mother they crossed the awful rush of water, and rescued the perishing; one, a mother, who still clutched her two children, though dead from exposure. For two days and nights they had to stay in the lighthouse and watch the raging sea from which this girl's heroism had saved them. It was not to be wondered at that they spread her fame. Everywhere she was talked of."

If in this story we see a picture, it is but a faint one, aye, a very faint one of our great Redeemer's love. Darker waves than ever broke on Northumbria's wild coast have rolled over His devoted head. At Calvary's Cross a far more terrible storm burst upon Him than ever wrecked a ship on any rock bound shores.

Our Blessed Saviour not only braved that storm, but He bowed His head and died. Such was His love for sinners, that He suffered for their sins, "the just for the unjust."

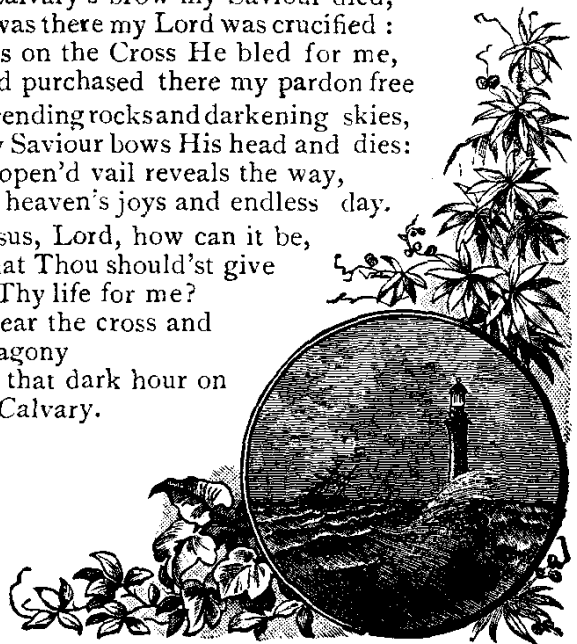
Reader, did He suffer thus for you? Did He bleed and agonize for you?

And is your heart so cold and irresponsible to His love that you never breath His name, nor seek to spread His fame?

Oh, if ever tempted to slight our Saviour or forget His love, let us get back by faith to Calvary's brow and think upon His sufferings when He uttered that bitter cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And this was all for you and me, dear Christian friend.

What days and nights those must have been, when safe on the lighthouse, Grace Darling the rescuer and the nine souls rescued from a watery grave, by her courage and devotion, gazed out upon the wild tempest! Every dash of the waves, and every gust of the storm must have sent a thrill of unspeakable gratitude through their breasts!

On Calvary's brow my Saviour died,
'Twas there my Lord was crucified:
'Twas on the Cross He bled for me,
And purchased there my pardon free
Mid rending rocks and darkening skies,
My Saviour bows His head and dies:
The open'd vail reveals the way,
To heaven's joys and endless day.
O Jesus, Lord, how can it be,
That Thou should'st give
Thy life for me?
To bear the cross and
agon
In that dark hour on
Calvary.



THE LAMP, THE OIL, AND THE WICK.

A LITTLE while ago, I was paying a visit in the house of a Christian friend. Some addresses were then being given in the town on the subject of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is always a happy thing when Christians meet that they should speak together of the things of God" (1 Cor. ii. 2). Those who know the Lord and fear Him should "often" speak "one to another" of Him. The people of God who lived in a time of terrible iniquity and forgetfulness of Him did this, and we read that "the Lord hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Mal. iii. 16). Would you not like to have your name written in that book of remembrance?

If ever there was a day when the children of God needed to carry out this important practice, it is surely the present, and to this we are exhorted in the following words: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20, 21).

On this particular occasion of which I write, the conversation naturally turned on the subjects that were then specially occupying our attention,

namely, the lamp, the oil, and the wick in the parable of the Ten Virgins. I wonder do all my young readers understand the significance of these three things?

In order to illustrate the matter, my friend produced some very pretty, ancient Eastern lamps, resembling, no doubt, in shape and style, the very lamps used at the time when our Lord gave utterance to the parable.

Wicks having been placed in three of these lamps, they were lit, and we all watched the result. One of them very soon began to go out, and the wick commenced to smoulder away. "Ah," we exclaimed, "that is like the mere professor of religion. There is no oil in that lamp. Outwardly it presents the same appearance as the others, but it lacks the inward power."

The second lamp was burning brightly. There was oil within. This was like the true Christian. There was not only the *outward profession*, but there was the *inward possession* by the Holy Ghost of that which constituted true Christianity.

But look at the third lamp! It is not exactly going out, nor is it, on the other hand, burning brightly. What is the matter then? Is there no oil within? Oh yes, there is, but the wick needs to be trimmed.

Now, my dear young friends, remember that it is quite possible to be a mere professor of Christianity without having a saving knowledge of Christ. To be a true Christian you

need to be born of the Spirit and indwelt by the Spirit, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9). This is,

yet possibly there may be very little light shining from you. Remember that the wick needs to be trimmed, so that every hindrance to our shining



Lord, Lord, open unto us.

I believe, referred to in our parable under the figure of the "oil."

But even though you are a true Christian, that is, a real child of God,

forth in testimony for Christ in this world may be removed.

The world is full of darkness, So we must shine,
You in your small corner, And I in mine.

WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

HAVE you ever asked yourself this very solemn, important question? Have you thought that Eternity will have to be spent somewhere? Because if not, we beseech you to stop and ponder, and ask yourself as in the presence of God, "where shall *I* spend *Eternity*?"

Eternity means never, *never* ending. Can you imagine this? A believer will spend Eternity with Christ, and be with Him and like Him forever and ever. But, on the other hand, an unbeliever will be cast into the lake of fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Rev. xx. 10; Matt. xxv. 41), after the last and terrible judgment (Rev. xx. 13.). Which will *you* choose? Just for the sake of a little pleasure down here will you sacrifice the interests of your never-dying soul? "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

If you have the idea that when you die there will be an end of you, you are quite mistaken. If this were the case, why should David have said when his little son died, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me?" (2 Samuel xii. 23.) Did that mean that there was an end of that little boy? Surely not.

If you will only trust in Jesus you will be for ever safe. Just take Him at His word as the jailer did in Acts xvi. 31. "Believe on the Lord Jesus

Christ and thou shalt be saved." *Only believe.* How simple! *you* have *nothing* to do, *Jesus* did it *all*, over 1,800 years ago. Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished" John xix. 30.

"Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet."

Jesus invites all weary sinners to come to Him, He says:—

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

Will you not come to Him? He has been knocking at the door of your heart for a long time. Perhaps He will not give you many more opportunities—

"Open the door, He'll enter in,
And sup with you, and you with Him."

If a fireman had rescued you from a burning house, and if he were to come and knock at your door afterwards, I am sure you would not let him knock twice, but you would run and welcome him and bring him into your house and joyfully entertain him, and yet you let Jesus stand knock, knock, knocking, and reject Him, after He has done *more* for you than *any* fireman ever can; He came to earth, He was rejected—He was spitted upon—He was smitten, and a crown of thorns was put on His head, and lastly He was crucified, in order to save sinners, in order to save *you*, and yet perhaps you have never even said "thank you." But if you will only accept Him now, He is ready and willing to save you.

"Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Do not put it off till to-morrow, for to-morrow's sun may *never* rise on you, before to-morrow comes you may be launched into Eternity. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1).

G. M. B.

"All things are ready—come,
Come to the supper spread;
Come, rich and poor, come—old and young,
Come and be richly fed.
All things are ready—come,
To-morrow may not be;
Oh! sinner come, the Saviour waits,
This hour to welcome thee."

A STUDENT was out walking with his professor, when they noticed a pair of old shoes lying in the path, which belonged to an old man who was working in a field close by. The student said, "Let us play the man a trick; we will hide his shoes." "Nay," said the professor, "you may give yourself much greater pleasure than that. Put some money in each shoe, and then let us hide ourselves." The student did so. The old man was greatly astonished to find the money in his shoes, and was so overcome with joy that he got down on his knees and thanked God. The student whispered to the professor, "Oh! sir, you have taught me a lesson I shall never forget. I feel now how true it is that it is more blessed to give than to receive!"

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS.

1. Ps. xiv., liii.
2. Ecc. ii. 14; iv. 5; vii. 4, 6; ix. 17; x. 2.
3. Prov. x. 21, 23; xii. 23; xiv. 8; xv. ; &c.
4. Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 25.
5. Saul, 1 Sam. xxvi. 21.
6. Achan, Josh. vii. 15.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

THE HEART.

IT would not be easy to count the number of times that Solomon speaks of the heart.

The heart of man is like the works of a clock; if they are in perfect order, the hands tell the time truly, the pendulum swings, and the clock ticks evenly. When the *heart* is right with God, we see external signs of this: the face, the feet, the hands, the eyes, the tongue, all tell us its state, and move according to it. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks; that is, if our hearts are occupied with Jesus, our tongues speak of Him, whereas if they are full of the world, our bodies will be sure to betray it in some way.

When Satan talked to Eve, he influenced her *heart* against God, and very soon she *saw*, and she *took*, and she *ate* of the forbidden fruit (Gen. iii. 6). Now we know that ever since then our hearts have hated God—we have wicked hearts. "His heart fretteth against the Lord" (xix. 3), and we are all alike (xxvii. 19). Yet we cannot

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look into each other's hearts—only God can do that. "He that pondereth the heart" (xxiv. 12) sees every corner, and nothing can be hidden from Him, however well we may keep the secret from each other. He says that the heart devises "wicked imaginations" (vi. 18), but our fellow men only know it when they *see* us doing wrong, whereas God knows it always.

A wise man now is one who has been cleansed from his sins by the blood of Christ, and who knows Him. "The wise in heart shall be called prudent," "the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth" (xvi. 21, 23; see also Eph. i. 17).

Many years ago an old poet, George Herbert, wrote some curious lines which are worth remembering; they show Who he thought worthy of all his heart.

"Jesu is in my heart, His sacred name
Is deeply carved there; but the other week
A great affliction broke the little frame
E'en all to pieces, which I went to seek:
And first I found the corner where was I,
After, where ES, and next where U was
graved.
When I had got these parcels, instantly
I sat me down to spell them, and perceived
That to my broken heart He was "I ease you,"
And to my whole is JESU."

Jesus was "meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. xi. 29), and if we come to Him we receive a new nature like His (or a "clean heart" some may call it, although our hearts remain always wicked) that loves to please Him. Remember what Solomon says:

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart" (iii. 5); "Keep thy heart with all diligence" (iv. 23); Satan will try hard to get in, and the world too, but if Jesus and His word are there, not much room will be left for them.

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. *Can* you count how many times the heart is mentioned in Proverbs?
2. Where in the Gospels do we find a list of what comes out of the heart?
3. To whom did Peter say "thy heart is not right"?
4. What is a man who trusts in his own heart?
5. Find the striking verses in Jeremiah about the heart.
6. What kind of a heart did David ask for?
7. Where does God say He will give a new heart to Israel by and by?

A PUZZLE FOR THE
LITTLE ONES.

THE ANSWER WILL BE GIVEN IN OUR NEXT.

The *first* letter of each *name* will give you one of the titles of the Lord Jesus. Do not send in the answers.

A child who was lent by his mother to serve in the Temple of the Lord.

A king who heard Paul preach, and said: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

A queen whose royal estate was given to another because she refused to obey her husband.

The name given to Jacob by the angel with whom he wrestled at Peniel.

A man who hid a hundred of the Lord's prophets in a cave, and fed them on bread and water.

A king who was smitten with leprosy, because he burnt incense in the house of the Lord.

A woman who hid two spies sent by Joshua to "view the land, even Jericho."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. "Will the Anti-Christ have his time as soon as the Lord Jesus has taken His own redeemed ones away to be with Him for ever? And will the great tribulation for the Jews begin then?"

A. L. H.

A. (1) In 1 Thess. ii. we learn that the manifestation of the "man of sin" (Anti-Christ) is hindered by the presence of some power now on the earth. "Ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time," and "he who now letteth (restrains or hinders) will let, until he be taken out of the way. And THEN (when this power is removed) shall that Wicked be revealed" (2 Thess. ii. 6-8). From this we may conclude that when the Church is removed at the coming of the Lord (1 Thess. iv.) and the Holy Ghost who dwells in the Church (Eph. ii. 22; 1 Cor. iii. 16), and Who is the power on God's side down here, has been taken away from earth to heaven, Anti-Christ will "have his time." He *may* be alive now and awaiting it.

2. There are only a few passages which speak distinctly of the "great tribulation for the Jews." The plainest are Matt. xxiv., Jer. xxx. 7, Dan. xii. 1. By the Jews we mean the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin (commonly spoken of as "Judah," see 2 Chron. x., xi.) who were guilty of the rejection of their Messiah, which the ten tribes did not take part in. After the coming of the Lord, Anti-Christ will, as we have seen, appear. He will at first please and deceive the Jews, and make a covenant with them for seven years (Dan. ix. 27); he will pretend to be their Messiah, and restore the temple worship. But after three and a half years he will change his conduct, cause the sacrifices to cease, and even set up an idol in the temple (Rev. xiii.; 2 Thess. ii.). Then, i.e., in the midst of the seven years, will begin the "great tribulation," such as never was nor ever shall be. This time is described in Rev. xi., xiii., xvii., and other places.

Q. What are the *nail* and *burden* a symbol of? or rather—What do they represent in Isaiah xxii. 25?

A. L. H.

A. In Isaiah xxi. the fall of Babylon is described; in xxii. that of Jerusalem, which helps to make it plain that these chapters relate to a future day, since in the past, Jerusalem was taken before Babylon was. Therefore we may readily conceive Shebna (v. 15) to be a type of Anti-Christ, and Eliakim (v. 20) of the Lord Himself. Anti-Christ will assume power in the House or Temple, but shall be tossed away like a ball by the Lord (vers. 17, 18), and to Eliakim will be given his place (v. 20). "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place" (v. 23), and they, God says, will hang a burden of glory upon Him. In v. 25 the prophet goes back to Shebna; he was the nail that had been fastened (for the Jews will believe a lie and that he is their Messiah), but was now removed and cut down and fallen. The burden would be whatever dignity or power had been given to him. How good of God to allow us thus to enter into His plans for the future; they are all for the glory of His Son to whom we belong!

Q. "In 2 Kings xxiv. 8, it says that Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months. In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, it says that Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days. Will you tell me the reason of the difference; I know it cannot be a mistake."

A. P. G.

A. If we know that figures in Hebrew are expressed by letters it is easy to understand how differences in numbers could creep in. One tiny mark or dot in Hebrew makes it another letter, and a scribe in copying might easily leave out such. It is probable that 2 Kings xxiv. 8 is the correct reading. Jehoiachin was eighteen, and "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Jer. xxii. 24-30 confirms this belief, for a child of eight could hardly have merited so solemn a sentence as God here pronounces against him (called also Jeconiah or Coniah) by the mouth of the prophet.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XX.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."—REVELATION XXI. 23.

AT six o'clock on Sunday morning the bell of the Cathedral began to toll, the bells of the other churches joined in, and the people of Seville awoke to know that the great day had come. Aye, and a terrible day it was for that city, when she cast out the light bearers and extinguished the light which God had sent into her midst.

The prisoners were brought from their cells to the great hall of the castle, and invited to sit down to a sumptuous breakfast, very different from the coarse food on which some of them had been living for nearly two years; but few had any desire to feast on that solemn morning. There were a hundred and one prisoners in all, eighty wore the black garment or the yellow sanbenito with a red cross which showed them to be penitents—the other 21 were appointed to die.

There were five monks from San Isidro among the condemned. One of them had at first succeeded in escaping to Holland, but he with Juan Sanchez was stopped by officers of the Inquisition just as they were embarking for England. They made no resistance, "Let us go with these men," said the monk, "and God will be with us." And He *was* with them, so that in His strength they were able to bear insults and tortures and miseries untold. On that morning of the Auto-da-Fé, this monk stood among those waiting for death, looking so ill and haggard that it moved the pity of all who saw him, except the inquisitors, who insisted on his mouth being gagged lest he should testify to the grace of Him to Whom he belonged.

Beside the monks stood Garci Arias, Cristobal Losada, Don Juan Ponce de Leon, Juan Gonzales, and Fernando de San Juan. How anxiously the schoolmaster must have looked round to see whether his wife was there, and when he saw her not among the doomed with what fear must he have scanned the faces of the penitents! But Anna was not among them. Like her husband she had faithfully kept the word and had not denied the name of Christ.

But whether it was that there was work for her to do for her Master, even in prison, or whether He yet had lessons to teach her which could only be learned on earth amid sorrow and suffering, He did not see fit to call her home that day with her husband. There were fifteen more months of the journey before Anna de Rivera, rough and toilsome and lonely, and then the fire and the joy of her Lord.

But there were several other women led forth to die on that 24th September. Doña Isabel de Baena was among them. She was considered very guilty because she had allowed her house to be used as a meeting place. The building was on that account pulled down, and the spot where it had stood was sown with salt so that nothing might grow there, and everyone who passed by might see that the place had been cursed. But precious seed had been sown there before, and had already sprung up, bearing fruit unto everlasting life. And God had blessed it, so the curse of man was of little avail.

The two sisters of Juan de Gonzales stood with Isabel de Baena, as well as Maria de Bohorques, and two other young girls of noble family, besides five other persons whose names history does not give us. Maria's face was calm and happy, and as they waited in the hall she spoke words of love and cheer to the other women and bade them join with her in singing a Psalm. But she was immediately silenced by the gag.

As the prisoners started on their march through the streets of the City towards the Square, Juan de Gonzales began to sing Psalm cix., "Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise; for the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also without a cause. For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer." The gag was therefore hastily forced into his mouth and his voice stopped.

The long procession wound slowly through the streets with banners waving and choristers chanting; the prisoners marching two and two guarded by armed familiars, and those who were to die accompanied each by two friars who continued urging them to recant. At St. Francis' Square a vast crowd was assembled to see the sight. Among them must have been many friends of the prisoners, come to look for the last time on the faces of those who were dear to them, anxious to see whether the God Whom they served continually was able to sustain them at such a time. But no one would venture to express any sympathy for the sufferers, for servants of the inquisitors were watching, ready to report to their masters if any should shew, even by their faces, that their hearts were more for the persecuted than for the persecutors.

There were the usual ceremonies to

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be gone through: the oath sworn by all the spectators to maintain the Catholic faith and to defend the "Holy Inquisition;" the sermon preached by some high ecclesiastic; the "degrading" of those prisoners who had been priests, stripping them of their priestly vestments and arraying them, like the rest of those appointed to die, in pointed caps and yellow sanbenitos, painted with flames and figures of demons; the reading of the sentences; and the public recantation made by each of the "penitents," solemnly, with his hand on the missal, abjuring the doctrines which he had held, and swearing to do all in his power to persecute heretics. Then followed the act of "relaxing" the impenitent, or giving them over to the magistrates, with the false, smooth words recommending to mercy, to save the credit of the clergy in the eyes of the world; after which the eighty reconciled penitents were taken back to their cells and those twenty one men and women, "of whom the world was not worthy," were led away to the Quemadero.

It was a silent company, for most of them had their tongues fixed in the gag. The inquisitors did not choose that those whom the "Church" saw fit to deliver to the secular arm to be punished as "obstinate and impenitent heretics," should testify that in all these things they were more than conquerors through Him that loved them. But though their voices were silenced,

everyone could see the joy on their faces. And well might they rejoice! They could say like Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." True, they had been through dark days in the past, but the Lord Jesus had stood beside them and had been their light. There was indeed one awful moment of suffering yet before them, but Jesus would stand beside them in the fire—and then they would be with him.

It was no wonder that Garci Arias looked happy as he ascended the scaffold, though his white head was bent with age and his limbs were so feeble that he had to lean heavily on his staff. He had hidden his faith and deceived the inquisitors for a long time, but he had done with falsehood now, and there was no hiding the joy that filled his soul as he, who had once been so fearful of owning his Lord, was allowed the privilege of enduring the fire for His name's sake.

The monks of San Isidro, too, faced death calmly, speaking words of encouragement and cheer to each other as the flames rose around them—all except poor trembling Morcillo, he was thinking of himself instead of his Saviour, and when he saw the fire he

was afraid, like Peter when he saw the waves boisterous. So calling for a priest he confessed his sins, received absolution as a "repentant son of the Church," and was strangled before the flames reached him. Poor Morcillo! Perhaps, when they met, the Lord Jesus said to him, as he said to Peter, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" and Morcillo would be grieved (if there can be grief in His presence) to think that he had missed the last opportunity he would ever have of trusting his Lord. For there is no faith in Heaven, there we shall *see* and *know*. It is only in this world that we can honour Christ by believing when we cannot see.

I do not know what to tell you about Don Juan Ponce de Leon, because the historians do not agree about him. One says that at the last he confessed, like Morcillo, and was strangled; another tells us that unwavering and unfearing he endured the death by fire. We shall know when we meet him in Heaven. It may be that he was relying too much on his own courage, so his Master let him learn, at the last moment, how weak he was, but it seems more worthy of belief that, leaning on the Almighty strength of God, he did endure to the end, and the friars, irritated at not being able to overcome his faith, invented the story of his confession in order to bring disgrace on the truth for which he died.

Cristobal de Losada and Fernando de San Juan were faithful unto death, and Juan Gonzales too. The gag was taken from his mouth at the last, that he might speak to his sisters. The friars were urging them to recant, but the girls replied that they would not do so unless their brother wished it. They well knew what he would bid them do, but the friars thought that perhaps in pity he might advise them to accept the "mercy" of the Church of Rome. But Christ was too precious to Gonzales for him to think that any one could gain anything by denying Him. With his dying breath he encouraged his sisters to stand fast in the faith, and together they entered into rest.

To the last moment the friars kept urging Maria de Bohorques to return to "the Church," though as soon as the gag had been taken from her mouth she had said firmly: "I neither can nor will recant." "This is not the time for arguing," she said, "it were better for us to be thinking of the sufferings which Christ bore for us upon the Cross, for Whose sake we endure these things." They bade her repeat the creed, which she did in a clear voice, but when she began to explain it by the words of Scripture, the friars were so angry that, to stop her mouth, they caused her to be strangled. And so her sufferings ended, but her joys will never end through all the ages of Eternity.

Since the day that Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned outside the walls of Jerusalem, thousands of men and women have followed in his train. They loved not their lives unto the death, but gladly laid them down for Christ. Their sufferings were great, but they could say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" To each one of them there was light in the dark valley, and their Shepherd was with them there. They went through the flood on foot and the waters did not overflow them.

Was it because of their faithfulness that death had lost its terror? Was it because they were true to the last that the river was dry for them?

Oh, no! If they were able to lay down their lives for the Lord Jesus Christ, it was because He had first given His life for them. When He passed through the valley it was dark, and He passed through it alone. The river was indeed deep to Him, and all God's billows and waves passed over Him. Thus He made a way for His people to walk through. He robbed death of its sting, He won the victory over the grave, so that now to the feeblest one who believes in Him there is no such thing as death, it is only falling asleep in Jesus to awake in His presence.

And that is why, when we gather around Him in the glory, even those who have suffered most for Him here, will not be thinking of that light afflic-

tion which was but for a moment, but will cast their crowns, the crowns which He has given them, at His feet, and cry: "Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain."

(To be continued.)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

DIFFICULTIES SOLVED.

THERE are subjects about which we could know absolutely nothing apart from the revelation which God has been pleased to give us. Creation, for instance, in the very nature of the case, is entirely beyond man's power to comprehend and explain unaided by what God has told us in His Word.

"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."—Heb. xi. 3. No man was present when God in the plenitude of His power gave forth the words "Let light be," consequently there was none to hand down to future generations an account of that great work which man has ever sought to fathom by his intellect. For any accurate knowledge of the matter he is dependant upon Scripture.

In like manner the early history of the human race is nowhere so briefly nor so accurately described as in the pages of Holy Writ. Believing as we

do, in the fullest sense possible, that the Bible is inspired of God, we expect to find it perfectly accurate in all its details, and we are not therefore surprised to find that one after another of the objections that have been raised by sceptics have vanished away before the increased knowledge which fuller research has afforded us.

In the Old Testament historical details have from time to time presented difficulties. The improbability of certain occurrences led rash and fearless rationalists to assert their impossibility. By waiting a little the rationalist has always been proved to be wrong and the Bible right, so that the very details that blind infidelity hastily calls up as witnesses against the reliability of the Scriptures are soon found to be fresh witnesses in its favour.

Amongst the many instances of this kind that have just lately come to light we may mention the confirmation which recent discoveries have given of the truth of the statement, which for long seemed impossible, that "the captain of the host of the king of Assyria . . . took Manasseh among the thorns and bound him with fetters and carried him to Babylon."—2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. Here was what seemed to be a glaring mistake. What had the king of Assyria to do with Babylon? Had it been said that he conveyed him to Nineveh the matter would have been simple. *It must be a mistake!*

cried thoughtless rationalism, but now we learn from the decipherment of certain tablets that Assyria had just about that time conquered and subdued the power of Babylon, and that Babylon was used as a joint capital with Nineveh by the kings of Assyria, who held their courts alternately at one and the other.

We would have all our readers, whether young or old, to believe that the Bible may be implicitly relied on. Happy are they whose faith has not been tampered with by the foolish utterances of modern infidelity, and of whom it can be said that "from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2 Tim. iii. 15.

Amongst the many remarkable chapters in the Bible we must not fail to notice the tenth chapter of Genesis. It gives us in thirty-two short verses such a marvellous epitome of the disposition of the human family after the time of the flood as is nowhere else to be found.

Without venturing to determine the exact spot where the garden of Eden lay, we may nevertheless assume from the mention of the four rivers (Gen. ii. 11-14) that it cannot have been very far removed from that stretch of country commonly called Mesopotamia. This piece of land received its name from the fact that it lay

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between the two great rivers Tigris (or Hiddekel), on the east, and Euphrates, on the west. "Known to the Jews as Aram-Naharaim, or 'Syria of the two rivers'; to the Greeks and Romans as Mesopotamia, or 'The between-river country'; to the Arabs as Al-Jezireh, or 'The island,' this district has always taken its name from the streams which constitute its most striking feature, and, to which, in fact, it owes its existence."

This may be truly called the cradle of the human family. Here for a time the sons of Noah lived and multiplied; here, too, in its southern part they sought to erect the Tower of Babel, traces of which are thought by some to have been discovered at a spot called "Birs Nimrud"; and here, too, it was that in consequence of their pride Jehovah confounded their language and scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth.—Gen. xi. 1-10.

It is generally allowed that the race which occupied southern Mesopotamia was Aramaic, or Semitic (from Shem, one of the sons of Noah). But here a difficulty at once arose with regard to the statements in Gen. x, 8-11, that "Cush (a son of *Ham*, not Shem) begat Nimrod," and that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, &c." In the words of Rawlinson: "According to this passage the early Chaldeans should be Hamites, not Semites—Ethiopians, not Aramæans (compare

v. 22); they should present analogies and points of connexion with the inhabitants of Egypt and Abyssinia, &c., not with those of Upper Mesopotamia, Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine." He then proceeds to show that "the Mosaic narrative conveys the exact truth—a truth alike in accordance with the earliest classical traditions and with the latest results of modern comparative philology."

This whole chapter* is well worthy of a careful study by those interested in the matter. We only refer to it now as another instance of the readiness with which rationalism rejects the Scripture on account of some slight difficulty, which eventually is cleared up in conformity with the exact words of the Bible. For Rawlinson goes on to remark that "it can be proved, from the inscriptions of the country, that between the date of the first establishment of a Chaldean kingdom and the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the language of Lower Mesopotamia underwent an entire change. To whatever causes this may have been owing—a subject which will be hereafter investigated—the fact is certain; and it entirely destroys the force of the argument (viz., of the Semitic origin of the early Babylonians) from the language of the Babylonians at the later period."

The readiness with which men give up the Bible which contains such

* Ancient Monarchies, Vol. I., chap. 3.

nnumerable and striking proofs of its divine origin, convincing not only heart and conscience by its moral power but also appealing to the mind that is open to conviction, this readiness, we repeat, is the sad evidence of a heart away from God, and that neither wants Him nor His revelation.

To all our readers we would say—"Hold fast to the Bible, and be assured that whatever difficulties you may find are due to your own ignorance and want of light, and not to any mistakes in it. The time may soon come when those very difficulties will be shewn to be but further evidence that the Spirit of God controlled the hearts of those men whom God chose to be His instruments to convey to us His mind, His purposes, and His plans." To God be the glory! Amen and Amen!

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."—2 Tim. iii. 16; and "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."—2 Peter i. 21.

(To be continued).

OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS IN THE ISLES OF THE PACIFIC.

IN the island of Tongoa, one of the New Hebrides group, lived several thousand heathens, as vile, miserable, and

degraded as any inhabitants of this beautiful earth that God has made.



"Come over to our village and tell us all about it."

Many a dear servant of God, who has gone there to carry to the inhab-

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itants the "Word of Life," has been murdered by the natives of the New Hebrides.

"Why did they go?" said a little boy to his father, shuddering at the thought of landing among cannibals.

"The love of Christ constrained them," said the father.

The boy said no more, but sat still and thought of the wondrous Love of Christ, and he is now himself labouring among the heathen.

Some years ago a Missionary landed on Tongoa so ill that he could not walk alone to the spot where his house was to be built, tho' it was only a short distance from the shore. In nine days a frame and plaster house was put up for him by the sailors and friends who had brought him. He was then left alone, the only white man on the island, a solitary Christian among eleven thousand cannibal heathens. But he was not alone. "Lo I am with you alway," said the Lord Jesus, and His disciple found it true.

Soon the Lord sent him some encouragement. He was still very ill and in great pain when a visitor was announced. As soon as the pain was a little easier, he asked the stranger to come in. On talking with him he found he was a thoughtful man who had passed through much suffering and had lost one eye.

"I am very glad you have come," he said, "a long time ago I had a wonderful dream. I thought I saw a

ladder from earth to heaven and God sitting at the top. When you came I knew you were the man that belonged to that ladder. I should like you to come over to our village as often as you can and tell us all about it." The man had evidently been prepared by the Lord himself to receive the Gospel message.

A chief with a long name, Manambalea, heard of the arrival of the Missionary, but would not venture to see him for himself. He sent, however, some of his people to hear the New Doctrine and report to him. They returned telling him they had heard the story of "The Christ, the King of Glory, waiting at the well." Manambalea then came himself. He was astonished at the good news of salvation. Night came on, he was still asking the Missionary for more of the good news, and when a Gospel hymn was sung, he would say "Sing it again."

Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of life!
Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of life!

He returned to tell his people what he had heard and then came to the Mission House to learn to read. After he had become a Christian he laboured to spread the knowledge of the Lord in the island, and protected the Missionary as much as possible from wicked men who would have killed him.

Karisi also, a boy who had cut his lips badly with a large knife and had come to the Mission House to have it sewn up, heard the good news and believed. One night he knocked at the Missionary's door and begged to be let in, as the chief of his village wished to kill him for being a Christian. He was let in and told he might lie down. Instead of sleeping he was soon heard singing—

"My Jesus I love thee, I know thou art mine."

Then he knelt in prayer asking God to preserve their lives and to touch the heart of his enemy and lead him to a knowledge of Jesus. He also prayed God to banish all heathen darkness and establish His kingdom in Tongoa.

Manambalea and Karisi worked together, sometimes making peace between tribes that were fighting, teaching and helping in every way. They would beat the drum (a tall hollow trunk of a tree) to call the people together to hear the Word of God. There are now no more cannibals on the island, and in many parts at the dawn of day you may hear a song of praise arise from every hut.

One woman had longed for "the Light" (for such is their name for the Gospel) for many years. She had heard about the Gospel preached on other islands. She had often, she said, when a heathen trembled at the thought of her sins, but when she heard of Christ the great Saviour she joined herself to His people.—E.H.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS.

1. *Heart*, 81 times; *hearts*, 4 times.
2. Matt. xv. 19.
3. To Simon, Acts viii. 21.
4. A fool; ch. xxviii. 26.
5. Jer. xvii. 5, 9, 10; xxiv. 7; xxxi. 33.
6. A "clean heart," Psa. li. 10.
7. Ezek. xxxvi. 22-28.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

The Tongue.

THE mouth, the lips, the tongue, are words repeated again and again in Proverbs, especially in ch. x. Their frequency should make us enquire whether we have sufficiently heeded the important advice Solomon gives to us all.

There are two ways of using the tongue: "*Death* and *life* are in the power of the tongue" (xviii. 21). It can be used for Satan or for God, to help on in the path of death or the way of life. The tongue of a little child has often been used by God to turn the feet of an old sinner into the way of peace. The tongue is an index of the mind and heart. If the heart be right with God, the tongue will speak righteously. "The *thoughts* of the righteous are right" (xii. 5), and the Righteous Man (or, Wisdom) says: "Hear, for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is abomination to my lips" (viii. 6, 7). Even when a Child, it was said of

WORDS OF LIFE.

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Him: "All that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers" (Luke ii. 47).

Solomon draws a striking contrast between the tongue of the wise and the wicked.

"The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood." xii. 6. "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright." xv. 2.

"The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips." xii. 13. "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge." xv. 7.

"The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things." xv. 28. "The words of the wise are pure words." xv. 26.

And there are many such verses to be found.

Our tongues speak either truth or falsehood. God says: "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are His delight" (xii. 22). Who would not wish to be among those in whom God can delight? "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17). Now that we are brought into the light we must live and act as under God's eye: His Spirit is truth (1 John v. 6), and from His presence in heaven will He shut out "all liars," and "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15)—so take care, children, of your words. By them you will be justified or condemned (Matt. xii. 37).

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. Write down the verses on this subject from Prov. x.

2. What verse in Proverbs on this subject do you like best?

3. What little child in the Bible was the means of bringing the truth before a great man?

4. Of what solemn punishments for lying do we read in the New Testament?

5. To whom did those who were punished lie?

6. Who made the excuse of a "slow tongue"?

7. Who became his spokesman?

8. Out of what mouths will come spirits of devils to influence against God?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. "Reader" asks: "The expression, 'Holiness by Faith,' is frequently condemned as unscriptural. What would be the Scriptural rendering—Holiness by—what?"

A. "Holiness by Faith" was the watchword of a movement which took place a few years ago, and which, though aiming after a truth much needed by the whole Church of God, was nevertheless a perversion thereof, and most mischievous in its results to souls. It confounded the true Christian state of deliverance with a state of inward purity. A sudden leap by an act of faith into a state attainable down here in this world was substituted for the Scriptural truth of conformity to Christ in glory. Its mischievous effect is the occupation of the soul with *self*, or a state attainable by *self*, instead of with Christ as the sole object, which last is the only way of practical conformity to Him. Read carefully 2 Cor. iii. 18, Rom. viii. 29, 1 John iii. 2, 3.

The movement of which we have spoken was an effort to arouse believers from being satisfied with the state of bondage described in Rom. vii., but it was a perversion of the truths which God had revived for the blessing of the church some fifty years previously. For a full and helpful exposition of the subject, we would refer "Reader" to a pamphlet entitled "Review of R. Pearsall Smith on *Holiness through Faith*," to be found in Vol. xxiii. of "Collected Writings of J. N. Darby." It may also, we believe, be had in separate form. Apply to James Carter.

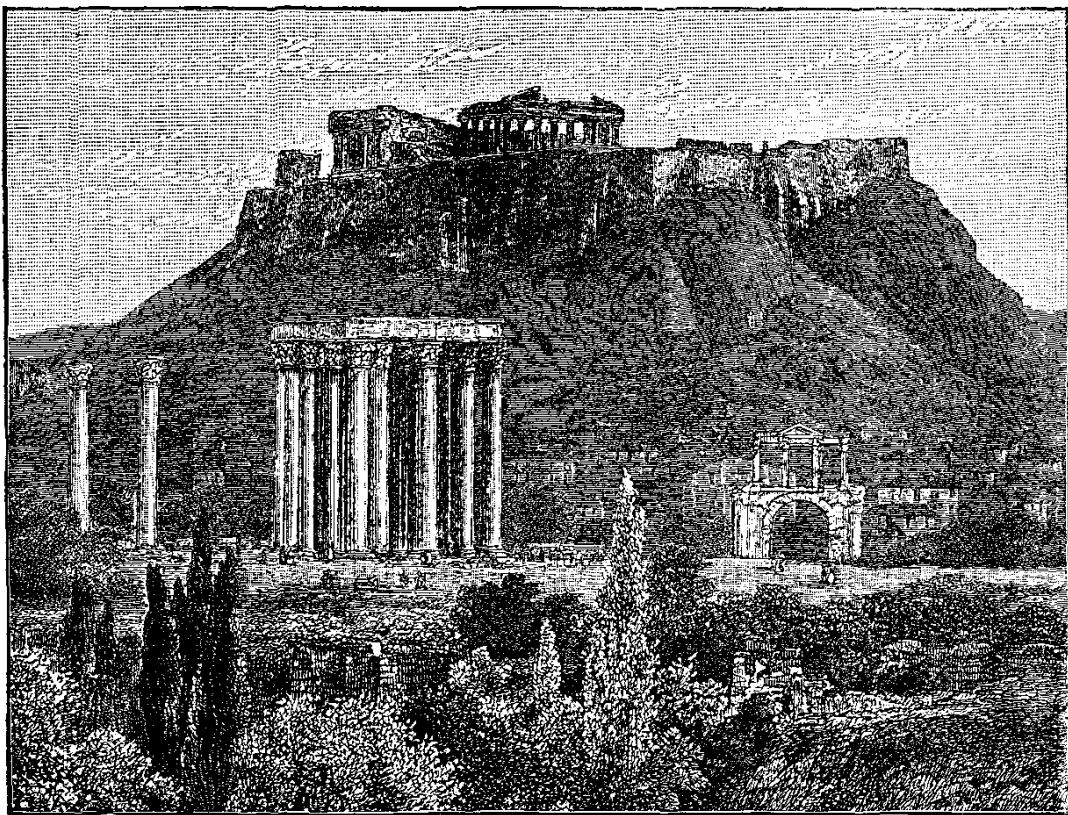
THE GOSPEL IN GREECE.

MANY of our readers will remember a prayer meeting held in Myddleton Hall in the month of February, 1894.

With such a promise as that contained in Matt. xviii. 19, we need not

Much prayer on that occasion ascended on behalf of the Lord's work in Egypt and Greece, and some will like to know a little of what "God hath wrought" in those parts.

All that we saw in Greece has increased our interest in that land a thousand-fold. Many have been truly



THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS.

wait until 600 people join together in prayer to have the assurance of God's readiness to answer. It nevertheless invigorates the heart and stirs the spirit to find oneself in such an atmosphere, as only those who have experienced it can say.

converted to God, and are now in their turn seeking to tell out to others the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

We met with many young men who are thus seeking to serve their Saviour and Lord, and we would commend them and the work in that country to

the continued interest and prayer of our Christian readers. Doors are opening in many parts throughout



Greek Costumes.

the country, and the people, who are wrapped in the grossest superstition, are gladly listening to the "Word of Life." We give an extract from a letter recently received from a beloved brother labouring in that land:—

"The earthquake made no impression what-



Greek Costumes.

ever on these light-hearted children of the sun; nothing will move this nation save a view of Jesus Christ lifted up, and living, and coming

again. Certainly the earthquake frightened a young woman servant, who came to our home through her fears, and our own servant preached to her Jesus, and there seems to be no doubt that this child has since entered the Kingdom. The alteration in her appearance and life is something remarkable, and her brightness under cruel mockings, which always come to Greeks who leave the Greek Church, is most delightful. To use her own words:—"They can call me what names they like; they can beat me (and poor girl, she has been beaten), I don't care, I have Jesus, and Jesus is worth anything to me, and I cannot give up Jesus whatever they say or do."

A PRAISE SONG.

THE following extract is from one out of many similar letters we have lately received. The writer has experienced the joy of restoration. Not restoration to her Saviour's favour, inasmuch as His love was the same all through her time of blackness and coldness; for,

"He, whate'er our changes,
For ever is the same."

"Jesus Christ THE SAME yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). We may change, but He does not. If we wander, we lose the joy of His company, but He loves us just the same, and delights to restore our souls.

"My soul He doth restore
Whene'er I go astray,
He makes my cup of joy run o'er,
From day to day."

We gladly note the request for prayer, that others may not be stumbled by the lack of earnestness and whole-heartedness for Christ. May we

all take this to heart ! Our walk and ways, our lives and conduct either help or hinder others. ED.

"I would like you to know that last evening God blessed your words to my soul. God, in His mercy, melted my heart, which during the past little while has been fast turning to stone. For some time I have been conscious that the Lord Jesus was being rapidly crowded out of my heart. My wretched self being as a millstone round my neck. I was horrified at my blackness, yet there seemed no help for me anywhere. Do pray that my two unconverted brothers may not have been stumbled by my behaviour latterly. Prayer and God's word gave me no comfort, and I have been getting more miserable day by day. Natural reticence and wicked pride hindered me from speaking to any one about myself because I hated to think that I might be discussed. Truly, I was not worth troubling over. I sat crying during the after-meeting, thinking to get away by myself when it was over, but as I was passing out I saw—in the passage and was impelled to ask him if I might speak with him . . . I went home, and the whole matter was put before the Lord. The relief was intense. I have been before God, and have praised Him and thanked Him that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. Again I thank you for what, in God's mercy, has—I don't know how to put it, shall

I say, been the means of saving me over again? But you will gather my meaning I know. Enclosed, are some lines I scribbled when I was glowing one day, sometime since."

My life should be a praise song,
A praise song sweet and true;
Thyself, Oh Lord, the key-note,
Thyself the burden too.

'Tis of Thy grace, Lord Jesus,
That I can sing to Thee,
Unless Thou fill my heart with praise
My lips must silent be.

Mine is the "much forgiven,"
Mine to be "cleansed" and "clothed,"
Mine an inheritance in heaven
And crown of life bestowed.

Once darkness—now made light;
Once distant—now made nigh;
Once alien—now confidingly
Can "Abba, Father" cry.

How can I tell out what Thou art?
How precious in mine eyes!
Thou Bread of God! The Heavenly Bread
That every need supplies.

ANON.

ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE.

S AMUEL.

A GRIPPA.

V ASHTI.

I SRAEL.

O BADIAH.

U ZZIAH.

R AHAB.

Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XXI.

*"They looked unto Him, and were lightened:
and their faces were not ashamed."*—

PSALM xxxiv. 5.

THE castle of the Triana was not yet empty. I do not know what had become of all the eight hundred men and women who had been arrested. Perhaps against some of them there may not have been sufficient proof to convict them of heresy, and being only slightly suspected they may have been allowed to return to their homes, bearing with them the awful recollection of the torture room, and having to endure for the rest of their lives the constant watching of spies of the Inquisition, who were ready to drag them back to prison the moment they should shew the least sign of sympathy with the Lutherans. Others may have died in prison, we know not how or when, but their Master knew, and He cared. Others were reserved to be brought out, a few at a time, at the *Auto-da-fé* which was held year by year at Seville for a long time.

In the year 1560, the *Auto* was cele-

brated three days before Christmas. There were thirty-four penitents and fourteen persons condemned to death, besides several clumsy wooden effigies, and coffins containing the remains of men who had died. One effigy was that of Juan Perez de Pineda, who had escaped to Geneva and was still engaged in the translation of the Spanish Bible, and writing letters of loving consolation to his persecuted brethren. The inquisitors were much disappointed at not being able to burn him, so they indulged in the foolish satisfaction of burning his statue.

Another wooden figure represented Dr. Juan Gil Egidius, the great preacher. The inquisitors had discovered that the spread of the truth in Seville was greatly due to his preaching, and having decided that his three years' imprisonment had not been sufficient punishment for his "heresy," they dug up his bones, which had now been resting for five years under the Cathedral, and committed them to the flames in the *quemadero*, together with his effigy. But they could not harm the happy spirit which was safe with Christ; and the Lord will know where to find his sleeping ashes at the resurrection day.

The body of the monk Fernando,

Constantino's attendant, was also burned with his statue, an ugly, unshaped wooden figure attired in a sanbenito, very different looking from the body of glory in which he will appear with his Lord by and by.

But there was one effigy different from all the others, it was carefully shaped, and dressed in the robes of a doctor of divinity, and was so like Constantino Ponce de la Fuente as he used to stand in the pulpit of the cathedral, with his arm raised as if in the act of preaching, that at sight of it a murmur of grief, regret, and wrath passed through the vast crowd assembled in the square. It was only for a moment; it was not safe at such a time to give expression to any feelings except those of profound hatred for heretics and profound respect for the Holy Office, but that momentary murmur shewed with what love the great preacher was regarded even by many who had not received his words into their hearts. The inquisitors were alarmed, they had the wooden figure carried back to the Triana and hurried over the part of the ceremony that related to Constantino. His heresies, they said, were many and great, but far too horrible to be mentioned in public. It seemed as if Satan did not choose that the preacher's words should be repeated, for containing, as they did, the truth of God, they might even then have entered the hearts of some and have brought them light. It was also reported that

Constantino had put an end to himself in prison to escape the judgment of the Inquisition, and all manner of evil was said against him falsely, for Christ's sake. But he was beyond it all. Another effigy of him, an ugly one in a sanbenito, was produced and burned with his body, and then the inquisitors thought that they had done with him. I wonder if they will recognize Constantino among the ten thousands of saints who will come with the Lord when He returns to this earth to judge His enemies.

Many of those who were brought out as penitents on that 22nd December knew little or nothing about the truth for which the others suffered. Some were condemned to life-long work on the galleys for having used violence towards a servant of the Holy Office. This servant himself, one of the gaolers in the Triana, was appointed a far lighter sentence for having ill-treated the prisoners committed to his care. Two of his own servants were punished for having been too kind to the prisoners, one of them, a young maid-servant, had brought them food and had even allowed friends to see each other. She was flogged and banished from her home for ten years.

There were also among the penitents five monks from San Isidro. For many a year no *Auto* was held at Seville without one or more of that community being present, either as penitents or condemned. We do not know much

about these five, whether they had only professed the faith of Christ because their brethren did, and so having no root in themselves could not stand when the testing-time came, or whether their faith was real in Him Who died for them, though too weak to lead them to die for Him.

young nun, too, from the convent of Santa Elizabeth, faithful to her Lord and Saviour though in the hands of men more cruel than wild beasts. And Anna de Rivera was there, the loving wife of the brave schoolmaster Fernando de San Juan, who had been burned the year before. Her work



On the way to an "Auto-da-Fé" in Valladolid.

One of their brother monks, more true than they, was condemned to the flames that day, and with him thirteen other men and women; among them an Englishman who had been taken prisoner on board his ship in the harbour of Cadiz, and because he would not change his belief was sentenced to death. There was a

was done now, her lessons all learned, it was time to go home, for school-time was over. So the fiery chariot awaited her and carried her into the presence of her Lord.

Beside these there were five women of one family, Maria Gomez, her three daughters and her sister. Maria had some years before very nearly brought

trouble upon the Protestants of Seville. She lived in the house of a Christian man named Zafra, and attended the meetings in Dõna Isabel de Baena's house. But at one time her mind became deranged, and not knowing what she did, she went to the Chief Inquisitor at Seville, and told him the names of three hundred persons who held the Lutheran doctrines. This was before the days of Munebraga, and the inquisitor was not so zealous a persecutor as his successor. However, he wrote down all the names, and would have proceeded to arrest the persons had not Zafra come to him, and persuaded him that it was no use to listen to the story of a mad woman, who really did not know what she was saying. The inquisitor knew Zafra to be a pious man, and as he was not then suspected of being a heretic, he listened to what he said and took no further measures at that time, though it seems probable that the list of names which Maria Gomez had given him was made use of later, for every one of the three hundred was arrested at the beginning of the year 1558. Maria, (who had now recovered her reason), and her family were among them.

It must have been a touching sight to see those five women bidding each other farewell in the great square of St. Francis, before the eyes of the assembled multitude. One of the girls knelt at the feet of her aunt (who it seems had brought up the girls while

their mother was out of her mind), and thanked her for having spoken to her the Word of God, the gospel of salvation. Though it had brought her to the stake, she could rejoice that she had heard and received it, for by it she had learnt to know her Saviour. She also begged her aunt to forgive her for all the trouble which she had given her in her youth. Leonor Gomez lovingly kissed her niece and answered that she had always been a joy and a comfort, not a trouble to her. She encouraged and cheered her and the others, reminding them how soon their sufferings would be over and they would be together with Christ, Who by His death had opened for them the gate of Heaven. Then they all bade each other farewell for a few short moments until they should meet again beyond death, and followed the rest to the quemadero.

And in all that vast crowd of spectators there was not one who dared to speak a word of sympathy or to give even a look of pity to the sufferers. For no such look or word would pass unnoticed or unpunished. So the men and women of Seville gazed on the sight in silent scorn.

But there was another company watching that scene. I wonder how the angels felt as they witnessed the sufferings of those humble servants of their Lord! I wonder whether they envied them the privilege of enduring such things for the sake of Him Whose glory fills the heavens, and before

Whom the angels veil their faces! I think that while the people of Seville looked on in scorn, the angels of Heaven looked on in reverence, and I believe there was not one of them, not even the greatest, who would not have counted it an honour to have been allowed to minister to those poor scorned, despised women. Things look very different when seen from heaven from what they do to the dwellers upon earth.

But the most contemptible person of the fourteen who were delivered over to the secular arm that day (so the Dominican friars thought as they watched the executioners binding the martyrs to the stakes) was a common-looking, little, dwarfish man with nothing at all noble or grand about his appearance. Yes, he was but a muleteer, and if God had only created men to enjoy themselves and to become rich and to be admired in this world, certainly Julianio Hernandez' life had been a failure. And yet as he had stood in the hall of the Triana that morning his face had worn a look of joyful triumph, and he cried to his fellow-martyrs, some of whom perhaps owed their knowledge of Christ to him, "Courage, comrades! This is the hour in which we must show ourselves valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ. Let us now bear testimony to His truth before men, and within a few hours we shall receive the testimony of His approval before angels, and triumph with Him in heaven."

The gag was put into his mouth to silence him, but during the whole long ceremony he continued to encourage the others by his looks and gestures. When he reached the stake he knelt down and kissed the stone from which he would pass into his Master's presence. Then with folded hands, and eyes raised to heaven in silent prayer, he waited the lighting of the fire. A priest who had formerly known him stood near, and, thinking that at the last his constancy must needs fail, he induced the executioner to remove the gag, begging him to recant. But Julianio quietly and simply confessed his faith in Christ and spoke solemn words of warning to the priest, who at one time had professed to believe the truth. Angry at being, as he thought, insulted by a muleteer and a heretic, the churchman exclaimed: "Shall Spain, the conqueror and mistress of nations, have her peace disturbed by a dwarf? Executioner, do your duty."

The flames rose around the faithful servant of Christ, but the soldiers who stood near, exasperated by his fearlessness and his unshaken peace, struck at him with their lances, and thus, before the fire could do its work, they released his happy soul.

So ended Julianio's mortal life.

Toilsome and troublous had been his days: hunted like a partridge on the mountains; taken, tried and tortured; after three long years of imprisonment brought out to be disgraced in public

and burned and pierced at the stake.
Who would have chosen such a life
and such an end?

But was it the end?

To hear the words of welcome and
approval from his Master's lips, to
receive a crown of glory that fadeth
not away from His pierced hand, to
dwell for ever in His presence Whose
loving-kindness is better than life, to
see around him in the glory those to
whom he had brought the word of God,
to hear them join with him in praising
the One of Whom he had spoken to
them at the cost of his life:—was this
good enough for a muleteer?

We saw them in the dungeon's dreary gloom,
Bearing reproach and shame,
Content to suffer torture, pain, and death,
Because they loved His name.

They knew the One that trod that path before,
Who bore for them the cross ;
And they had learned to count His presence gain,
And earthly glory loss.

We see them now around the One they loved,
His joy upon their brow,
And on those faces, of the wrong and shame
There are no traces now.

We wondered as we saw them leaving all
That cheers man's earthly lot,
Choosing instead that rugged, narrow road,
But now we wonder not.

(To be concluded.)



A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

EARLY ASSYRIAN MONARCHS.

IN our last paper we were pointing out the fact that according to the 10th chapter of Genesis, the Assyrians had colonized Mesopotamia from Babylon.

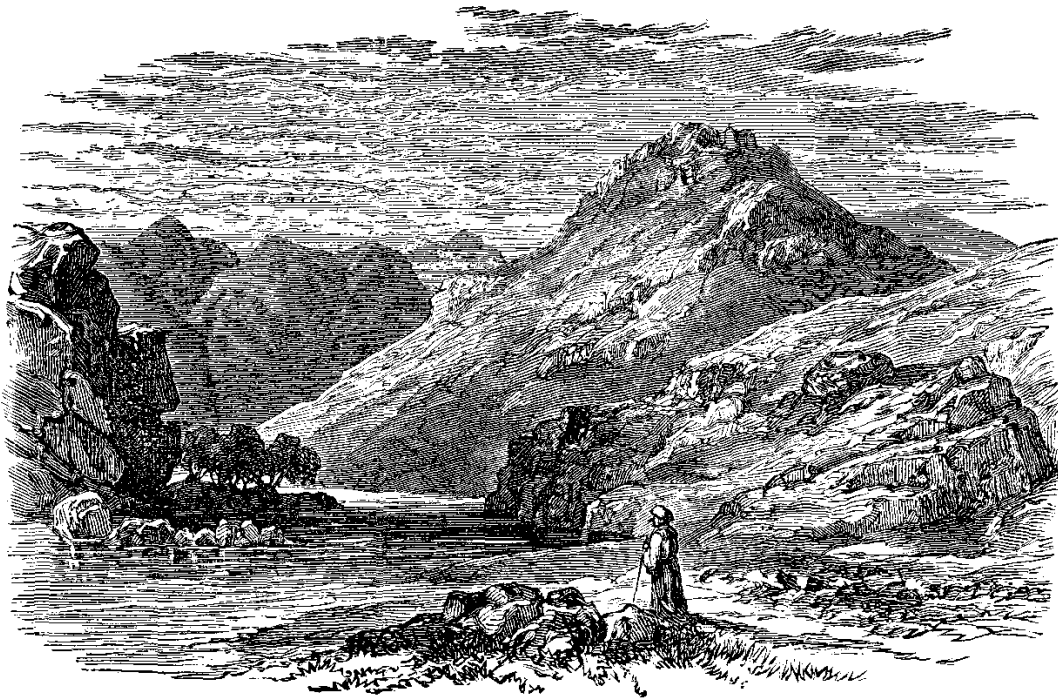
We are dependent at present upon Scripture for this statement. We say "at present," because none of the inscriptions that have hitherto been deciphered give any account of the origin of Assyria. Indirectly, however, they confirm the Bible narrative, inasmuch as they shew that "the religion, literature, method of writing, and science are evidently Babylonian in origin."

The great Assyrian library, which we have before mentioned as consisting of a vast number of clay tablets covered over with cuneiform writing, owes its origin to Assur-bani-pal. He was one of the greatest of the Assyrian monarchs, and also one of the last. "He was known to the Greeks under the name of Sardanapalus, and some have supposed him to be the Asnapper of the Book of Ezra."

A large number of bas-reliefs are to be seen in the British Museum describing his exploits and victories, and many tablets, too, recording the events of his reign (B.C. 686-667). Besides these, however, he collected

together a quantity of tablets which Mr. Pinches, of the British Museum thinks "could not have been inscribed later than 2000 B.C." This Oriental scholar would even place one inscription as far back as 3800 B.C. But here we are treading on uncertain ground, the earliest period of accurate knowledge in connection with Assyrian

peditions in every direction, reaching even to the shores of the Mediterranean in the West. He set up a tablet by the sources of the Tigris, recording some of his conquests, which remains there to this day. He likewise restored with great splendour the before mentioned temple erected by Samsi-Rimmon II. He also raised two towers



Source of Tigris.

history being about the 19th century B.C.

Samsi-Rimmon II., whose date is about 1820 B.C., built the great national temple of Assur at the capital, and his bricks have been found on the site. Tiglath-Pileser I. succeeded to the throne of Assyria about B.C. 1120. His reign was marked by immense success, and victory attended his ex-

in the shape of pyramids, one of which is still standing, and of great elevation.

Tiglath-Pileser I. died about 1100 B.C., and soon after the great Assyrian empire sank into obscurity for a considerable time. It was during this period of decline that the rise of the Hebrew monarchy took place. David, King of Israel, we are told, "went to

stablish his dominion by the River Euphrates" (1 Chron. xviii. 3). "The Lord preserved David whithersoever he went" (v. 6), and it was not until after the death of Solomon that Assyria again began to emerge into the light.

It would appear that the first Assyrian monarch that came in contact with the people of Israel was Shalmaneser II., and as we are principally concerned with that part of the history of the great empire which touches upon, and is referred to in the Biblical narrative, we pass over much that possesses untold interest in the eyes of the historian and the student of archæology. It may nevertheless not be amiss to make some allusion to his father, who immediately preceded him on the throne.

Assur-Nazir-Pal came to the throne in B.C. 885. He was a most warlike monarch, and success attended his arms wherever he went. The walls of the Assyrian galleries in the British Museum are lined with the records of his victories. The cruelties which he perpetrated were indescribable, and some of these have been indelibly portrayed upon these stone tablets by the chisel of the sculptor, and may now be seen by the visitor to the British Museum.

This monster in human form gloried in the atrocities that he committed, and handed down to posterity an account of them. Here is one from amongst the hundreds that might be

quoted. It is a translation of an inscription which was found in the ruins of the temple at the foot of the pyramid at Nimrod (Calah) mentioned above :—

"To the land of Kasgari I proceeded, and to Kinabu the fortified city of the province of Hulai I drew near; with the impetuosity of my formidable attack I besieged and took the town; 600 of their fighting men with my arms I destroyed; 3,000 of their captives I consigned to the flames; as hostages I left not one of them alive. Hulai the Governor of their town, I captured by (my) hand alive; their corpses into piles I built. . . . Hulai, the Governor of their city I flayed; his skin on the walls of Damdamasa I placed in contempt; the city I overthrew, demolished, burnt with fire."

If any one wishes to see how these tortures were inflicted, they have but to examine the Assyrian sculptures preserved on the walls of the British Museum. A good account can also be read in Dr. Kinn's late work "*Graven in the Rock*," where may also be seen excellent plates of these very tablets.

Some of our readers may be comparing in their minds these tortures with those they have read of in connection with the Inquisition in Spain, and may be disposed to class them in the same category, and to label them "Atrocities of Barbarous Ages." But we must not so dismiss the subject. That the cruelties perpetrated by heathen tyrants, men who knew not God, flushed with victory and thirsting for the blood of fallen and helpless foes, should be equalled if not exceeded by men who claimed to be the followers

and witnesses of Christ; that these tortures should be inflicted in the name of Christianity, by that which called itself "the Church"; that the God-fearing men and gentle women and helpless children who suffered, did so for no graver offence than that of presuming to read and believe the Word of God, in spite of the threats and denunciations of carnal and wicked ecclesiastics; that the "Holy (!) Tribunal" under which they suffered, should have sprung into existence after centuries of the profession of Christianity (A.D. 1481), that it was only abolished so recently as A.D. 1808; that *even now ecclesiastics should hint at the advisability of its revival*, these facts, and many others that might be adduced, are sufficient to mark off the Assyrian atrocities of the 18th century B.C., from the ecclesiastical persecutions of the 18th century after Christ with a moral separation more complete than the mere lapse of 36 centuries of time; they are sufficient, too, to raise in the mind of every thoughtful student of Scripture, a serious enquiry into the interpretation of the 17th chapter of Revelation.

What had the Spirit of God in view under the title of BABYLON THE GREAT, "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"?

Assur-Nazir-Pal would seem to have been a warrior of marvellous energy, we find him starting his armies to

almost every point of the compass with extraordinary rapidity. Thus we hear of him at one moment marching westward upon Sadikan on the banks of the Khalna, a tributary of the Euphrates; here he speedily subdued Shalmanuha-sar-ilani. The seal of this monarch's grandson is now in the British Museum, and is one of the most beautiful in the collection.

We next hear of him pushing northward to the sources of the Tigris, where he treated Hulai and his people with such cruelty. On his way he came to the place where stood the inscription of Tiglath-pileser I., and another of Tiglath-ninip II.; by the side of these he carved an image of himself.

Almost immediately after this he is striking to the south-east, and we hear of him marching over the mountains of Nizir. This place is famous in the Chaldean legends of the Deluge as the resting-place of the ark.

He rebuilt the palace of Nineveh, but is best known as the rebuilder of Calah, now represented by the mounds of Nimroud, and from which came some of the best of the Assyrian sculptures in the British Museum.

Calah had been built originally by Shalmaneser I., about B.C. 1300, but was completely in ruins at the time of Assur-Nazir-Pal; he, however, collecting together the captives of his various campaigns, brought them to the site, raised a vast palace mound, fronting

the Tigris, 1,800 feet long, and built a city about five miles in circumference, and peopled it with the captives themselves. He may be looked upon as the founder of the late Assyrian empire, which from his time gradually increased with but little check, until it reached its greatest limits. After a reign of 25 years he was succeeded by his son, Shalmaneser II., B.C. 860.

(To be continued.)

“GOD SO MERCIFUL.”

“Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” PSA. l. 15.

A GOOD many years ago a class of boys was called upon by their master to give an account of what they had been taught the day before. It was Monday morning in the city of Hanover. Each boy remembered something, but when it came to little Augustine's turn, he tried hard, but he could remember nothing but a text: *that* he repeated word for word, “Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”

“That is only a text,” said the master. “I always expect you to remember more than a text.”

The poor boy felt hurt; he thought he had done his best, and it was hard to be reproved. Strange and hard as it seemed to the boy, his heavenly Father, whom he did not then know, had His eye upon him, and the trying

circumstance was the means of fixing that gracious promise in his memory.

Years pass: Augustine Johnson is now a young married man labouring in London along with other German workmen, at a sugar refinery. Food was dear and wages low, he and his wife were strangers in a strange land, and had no friends to go to. Unhappily they did not know their best friend, so that their case was very sad.

One evening he says, “I had nothing to eat, and my wife was lying in bed, crying with hunger; I was also almost naked, and in such misery that I knew not what to do, when suddenly I remembered the verse: “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

But then he felt he was a sinner: “*Me* call upon God!” he thought; “have I not done such things, and committed such sins? and now call upon God to deliver me?” “It was as if a book had been opened, and I had read all the sins I had been guilty of. What shall I do? No earthly prospects, and an angry God! I was in a despairing state.”

In the morning he rose and went to his work, returning home at the breakfast hour, not expecting to get any food, but merely to conceal his poverty from his fellow workmen.

To his surprise his wife met him at the door with a smiling face and told him breakfast was ready. A lady had taken a house next door, and giving

the poor woman some employment, had placed some money in her hands.

"The greatest sinner in the world," said Augustine to himself, and "*God so merciful!*"

His despairing state was a little lightened, but the load of sin was still there. Some time after he heard a German sermon preached by one who knew the Lord. He spoke of the love of Jesus and exclaimed: Is there a sinner here, full of sin? I bid, in the name of Jesus, such an one to come to Him, for He has said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Augustine Johnson believed, and the load of sin was rolled away. His wife, too, after a while believed in the Lord. And now their object was to bring others to know Him "Whom having not seen" they loved.

But the other workmen laughed at Johnson, and he had to learn another lesson: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. . . ."

A few years passed, and he who was once a poor starving mechanic, without God and without hope in the world, is now a much honoured messenger of the Lord to hundreds of poor negroes in Africa. He taught them to read, told them of Jesus, and those who but a short time before were brutal cannibals and naked savages are now sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind.

As you pass down the street in the early morning, you hear the song of praise, first from one hut, then from another, and as one of them joyfully said when he had been brought to know the Lord, "My heart is not here; my heart is up there," pointing to the sky.

E.H.

LIFE SEEN FROM A DEATHBED.

IN a poor cottage alone lay a dying man, helpless by reason of age, yet his wife was obliged to go out as a charwoman, so as to add a little to the "parish relief." He knew that he could not be long here, but seemed very contented and calm.

"I am nearly 80 years of age," he said "and I can no more move in bed than an infant three months old."

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

"Yes," he gladly replied; "*hath*, not *shall* have."

It was cheering to hear the precious words of Scripture thus taken as God means that they should be, so that the living and the dying may alike know a present Saviour, and a full salvation, "*to-day*."

"I suppose your life does not seem long to look back upon, does it?"

"No," he answered "it does not."

"What would you do, if you could live it over again?"

With a solemn and mournful look,

he said : " Ah ! I should not like to live as I have done."

" Then, how would you wish to spend a life-time, if it were yours once more ? "

" Serve my Lord and Master better," was the touching answer, from lips ere long to be sealed in death.

" Thank you ! that is a word for what remains of life for me," and truly, it came like a wholesome lesson from the gates of the grave. I pass it on to you, dear reader, as a needed reminder of the reality of life while we pass along the valley of the shadow of death. Can you say, " I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me " ?

Eighty years of life may not lie before you who read these pages, but whether your life be long or short, you are not sure of any moment but the present. Very soon it becomes the past, and beyond recall, for ever and ever. Does the present moment find you seeking to serve your Lord and Master ? If not, you are either serving Satan, or self. Which is it ?

If you know Christ Jesus the Saviour as " Lord," then you can say " I am His" (Cant. ii. 16). If as " Master," then it will be " That which I see not, teach Thou me " (Job xxxiv. 32). If you are serving, then your happy prayer is, " Lord, what will Thou have me to do ? " (Acts ix. 6).

A faithful servant of Christ, (now with Him in paradise) wrote :

" O Lord, how sweet the thought
That Thou wast mine ;
But brighter still the joy
That I am Thine."

* * *

" Time *past* is gone ; thou canst not it recall ;
Time *present* is ; employ the portion small ;
Time *future* is not, and may never be ;
Time *present* is the only time for thee." G.W.

A CHRISTIAN engineer had his thumb cut off by a saw. I called and found him in great pain, and much depressed in spirits. He said, " I see no use in taking off a man's thumb." I answered him, " Well, George, we may not see the use of it, but it says in Psa. xviii. 30, ' As for God His way is perfect ; ' so we may know that the taking off of your thumb is perfect." He was silent, and evidently much impressed. When I next called, he told me that God's Word had blessed him, and made him content with his misfortune. He also told me he had thought much of a story of passengers on a steamer, who were terrified at the speed at which they were going through a dense fog. At length they sent a deputation to remonstrate with the captain, who was upon the bridge over the deck. His reply was, " Tell the passengers that it is all right ; it is all clear up here." The fog was low down upon the water, and covered the deck, but the captain could see over it " So," said the engineer, " God speaks from the bridge in the 18th Psalm, ' His way is perfect,' and I will trust Him."

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THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS.

1. Prov. x. 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 31, 32.
2. Prov. xxxi. 26.
3. The little maid ; 2 Kings v.
4. Acts v.
5. To the Holy Ghost and to God ; vv. 3, 4.
6. Moses ; Ex. iv. 10.
7. Aaron ; v. 16.
8. Out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet ; Rev. xvi. 13, 14. See also Rev. xiii. 2-6.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

Riches.

SOLOMON was among the richest that this earth ever saw, and yet in his book it is said by Agur, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" (xxx. 8). The king's riches are described in I Kings, x., II Chron. ix., and Ecc. ii. He "exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches," and had great possessions, and increased more and more. Yet he was not satisfied. "All is vanity," he said. "Riches certainly make themselves wings: they fly away" (xxiii. 5), and he advises us, "Labour not to be rich" (xxiii. 4).

In spite of Solomon's experiences recorded in God's word, we find ourselves often longing to be rich, or to possess something belonging to another. "If I were rich," "When I am rich," "I wish I were rich," are words frequently heard, and this in the face of such verses as "He that trusteth in

his riches shall fall" (xi. 28), "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (xxii. 1), "Riches are not for ever" (xxvii. 24), and "Riches profit not in the day of wrath" (xi. 4). This last verse is very true: in Rev. vi. 15 we read that when men will think and say that the so-called "end of the world" has come, the great and the *rich* and the mighty do not find their greatness or riches any protection, but in company with poor slaves will flee to dens and rocks to hide them from the face of Him Who sits on the throne. All the heaped up possessions of the rich man (Luke xii) could not deliver him from death, any more than the wealth of the rich man who had no pity for Lazarus could save him from hell and torment (Luke xvi).

Riches are not bad in themselves, all depends on how they are used; neither are their owners worse than poor men, but riches *may* come in the way of salvation; "How hardly," says Jesus, "shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark x. 23). And Timothy was to charge (1 Tim. vi. 17) the rich not to trust in their uncertain riches but in God, while making use of their riches for others. Those who "*will* be rich" (1 Tim. vi. 9), who make money their object, are quite a different class, and are surrounded by temptations which may end in their destruction. "*The love of money is the root of all evil.*"

If we remember that everything we

have (money, or land, or talents) belongs to the Lord, we shall be happy and safe. Those who have been bought with His blood cannot call anything their own but heavenly things, which are to be found where Jesus is. The rich man's steward (Luke xvi.) was determined to make the best use of the time that remained to him, and we should do the same from another motive; we are to be faithful in using the unrighteous mammon (money) which God has lent to us to spend for Him; by-and-by we shall enter into possession of our *own* (v. 12) heavenly things. H.L.H.

QUESTIONS.

1. How often is the name *God* used in Proverbs?
2. Where are we told that Solomon "set in order many proverbs"?
3. Find some great men in the Old Testament who possessed riches.
4. Which Gospel speaks most often of rich men?
5. What king preserved part of Proverbs for us? and how long after Solomon's time?
6. Is Solomon spoken of in the New Testament?
7. Of how many meetings in Solomon's porch do we read?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. "We always thought the children of Israel when in Goshen were safe from the plagues. Scripture speaks positively of their being free of five only; the flies (Ex. viii. 22, 23), the murrain of beasts (ix. 4), the hail (ix. 26), the darkness (x. 23), the death of the firstborn (xi. 7). In the blood, frogs, lice, boils, and locusts, no exception is stated."—H.T.G.

A. It is evident that at the fourth plague a change occurred. The "division" between "My people


and thy people" (viii. 23) was to be henceforth a kind of extra "sign" to Egypt. This division was maintained *more or less* afterwards, and though not explicitly stated, we gather that the Israelites were exempt from the boils, for (ix. 11) the magicians who were suffering from them could not stand before Moses, who apparently was unharmed by them. The locusts is the least clear. Supposing, however, that the land of Goshen was over-run by them (and Goshen had been Israel's abode from the first, Gen. xlvii.) and the grass devoured, would it much signify, when in a few days Israel was to quit Egypt, with flocks and herds? Ps. lxxviii. 41-53 seems to point to plagues on Egypt, but deliverance and mercy to "His own people." Any way we must be content with Ex. viii. 21, 23, without details such as a human historian would have given.

God is able to interpret His Own Word unto thee. Indeed, none can enter into the knowledge thereof but he must be beholden unto His Spirit to unlock the door. . . . The Pharisees were no little conversant in the Scriptures, yet even these missed that truth which lay before them almost in every leaf of Moses and the Prophets, whom they were, in their everyday study, tumbling over—I mean that grand truth concerning Christ of whom both Moses and the Prophets speak.

I HAVE many books that I cannot sit down to read; they are indeed good and sound, but, like halfpence, there goes a great quantity to a small amount. There are silver books, and a very few golden books; but I have one Book worth them all, called the Bible.

J. Newton.

ords of Life,

For Old and Young. 

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Where is the way where light dwelleth?"

JOB xxxviii. 19.

*"The entrance of Thy words giveth light ;
it giveth understanding unto the simple."*

PSALM cxix. 130.

YOU have heard now of the four great *Autos-de-fé* of the reign of Philip II., but there were many others beside these. For some time, not only at Seville and Valladolid, but in several other towns, especially in Toledo, Autos were celebrated every year, and though at none of them were so many Lutherans burned as at those of which I have told you, yet many and many a true child of God went home to the Father's house by fire, and hundreds of others, less faithful, were sent to the galleys, imprisoned for life, or otherwise punished.

The Inquisition was also very diligent in suppressing books, and learned men complained that often ignorant familiars visited their libraries, carrying off their most valuable works, many of which contained nothing that could possibly be called heresy ; for the

Inquisitors considered any new ideas in science, or philosophy, or history, to be dangerous to "the Church."

The sea-ports and frontiers were carefully guarded by servants of the Holy Office, and yet, in spite of their precautions, a number of copies of the Spanish Bible, translated by Juan Perez and Cypriano de Valera, one of the monks of San Isidro, who had escaped to England, were brought in and distributed about the country. It seems that there must still have been persons who dared to read the Word of God. Perhaps the friends of those who had suffered death longed to know what there was in that Book that had made their loved ones value it even more than life, and thus the sufferings of the martyrs may have been the means of bringing others to Christ. But if the Bible was read, it was read more secretly than ever : never again was its simple truth preached in the Churches of Spain, none could dare to meet to read it together, however quietly, nor to speak of it even to their nearest and dearest. For wherever the least little glimmer of light appeared, the iron hand of the Inquisition was ready to quench it. Numbers of bishops and learned men, who were suspected of holding the truth, were

imprisoned and forced to recant, especially all those who had spoken in favour of Archbishop Carranza and had not considered him a heretic. Thus the darkness settled down on Spain. Before many years had passed the light was entirely stamped out, and it was only very rarely indeed that a "Lutheran heretic" could be found to bear his punishment with the Jews and Moors and other offenders against "the Church," whom the Inquisition continued to persecute.

It was at the beginning of the present century that the Spanish Inquisition seized its last "Lutheran" victim. His name was Solano, parish priest of a little village called Esco. He had always been an active man, and had busied himself with teaching his parishioners better ways of tilling their fields and gardens than they had known before. But God laid him aside by illness, so that he might have time to learn something better and more useful than agriculture. Unable to continue his usual occupations he looked among his books for something worth reading to while away the hours, and he found a Bible. I suppose it was a Latin one, but it seemed a very wonderful book to him, and, taught by the Spirit of God, he found in it the Light of Life.

I do not know whether he had ever heard of Luther or of the Protestants, or whether he thought himself the first person who had found out that the

doctrines of the Church of Rome were contrary to those of the Bible, but at all events, he desired to let others know of his discovery, so he wrote to his bishop and told him what he had learned. The bishop at first took no notice of his letter, but as he persisted in his protestations he was at last given over to the Inquisition.

It was then so very many years since the Inquisitors had had a Lutheran to deal with that they hardly knew what to do with their prisoner, and he succeeded in escaping from their hands and reaching France in safety. But afterwards he began to think that if he forsook Spain there would be no one left to put the truth before his countrymen. He considered the matter and resolved to go back and shew them that what he had discovered in the Bible was really the truth of God. So he returned and gave himself up to the Inquisitors.

They had him up before their tribunal, thoroughly investigated his case, and proved without a doubt that he was an "obstinate and impenitent Lutheran," who, according to the canons of the Church and the rules of the Inquisition, must be burned. More than twenty years had then elapsed since any one had been burned in Spain, and it was still longer than that since a Lutheran had been brought to the stake, and the Inquisitor-General, who was a kind-hearted man and not a very bigoted churchman, was loath to condemn

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Solano to death. Still the laws of the Church are unchangeable and the inquisitor's duty was to carry them out. However, he made a way for himself out of his difficulty. He asked some doctors to go and visit the heretic and pronounce him mad. The doctors were quite willing to please the inquisitor, and without any hesitation declared that the prisoner must certainly be out of his mind since he said things that nobody else ever thought of. The inquisitor decided that there was no need to trouble about burning a mad man, so Solano was saved from the fire and ere long he died quietly in prison.

* * * * *

There is no Inquisition now in Spain: it was abolished about thirty years ago, and here and there, in that dark land, the Bible once more sheds the light of truth where parched souls are thirsting for the living water, and blind eyes are longing for the light of life. Indeed, there is no country at present in which the Pope or the priests have power openly to cause men to be put to death for not believing the teaching of the Romish Church, though in lands where that Church is established, persons who refuse to continue in its errors, have often to endure hatred and contempt, and sometimes even real persecution, for no laws, however wise, can change the hatred with which those in darkness always hate the light. But open persecution is forbidden by the laws of almost every civilized nation.

Possibly also, the man who is now pope has no desire to kindle again the martyr fires, and many kind-hearted priests of Rome assure us that such things shall never be done again. Nevertheless it must be remembered that the laws framed by popes and councils of old have never been abolished, neither can they be, seeing that they are held to be infallible, like the law of the Medes and Persians "which altereth not," and Roman Catholics are bound, where possible, to carry them out. We should therefore thank God that in these days no nation allows those cruel laws to be enforced; and thus, though the lions are not dead, at least they are chained.

We should thank Him too that He has allowed us to have the Bible, His own Holy Word. By it alone we can escape the errors either of Rome or of any other system which are being taught in these days on every hand, and it alone can guide us into "the way which leadeth unto life."

Let us then read it diligently and earnestly for ourselves, not relying on the interpretations of that which calls itself "the Church" (which is, after all, but human and fallible, and too often teaches for doctrines the commandments of men), nor expecting by our own finite reason to be able to comprehend the infinite things of God, but looking to Him Who gave us the Word, and Who by His Spirit will guide us, if we will be guided, into all

truth. He only can open our eyes to behold wondrous things out of His law, and reveal to us, as He did to the martyrs of Spain, Him of Whom the Scriptures testify, Jesus, the Son of God, Who said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." M. M.

(To be concluded.)

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM. No. 10.

THE MONOLITH OF SHALMANESER II.

HISTORICALLY, the reign of Shalmaneser II., King of Assyria, presents a special interest, inasmuch as it was then that for the first time the Assyrians came in contact with the people of Israel. No mention of this fact is recorded in the Bible, but the monuments and inscriptions which this king caused to be erected confirm in many particulars the accuracy of the historical statements of Scripture: and this, in an age of scepticism, is of immense importance.

The contention of rationalists for many years has been that, whatever else may be said of the Bible, its historical details are at any rate untrustworthy.

The next step in the argument was quickly taken: "If untrustworthy in its history, it must be unreliable every-

where," for if mistakes could be proved in one direction they might be found at all points. If its historical narrative were faulty, then its doctrinal and moral instruction could not be faultless.

The more the Assyrian monuments are examined, to say nothing of the multitudes of Babylonian, Hittite, and Egyptian, and the more their inscriptions are deciphered, the more fully it is proved that in the direction of historical accuracy the Bible is unimpeachable. This, while creating no surprise in the mind of the devout student of Scripture, yet fills his heart with praise.

Possessing such a volume, the child of God may well be filled with gratitude to his God and Father, Who not only gave the Lord Jesus to be his Saviour and Deliverer from the wrath to come, by dying on Calvary's cross for his sins, but gave him, too, these precious oracles to feed his soul with the good things that belong to the heavenly land whither he is bound, to be his lamp and guide amidst the darkness and the dangers of his journey home, and to make known to him the present and the coming glories of His Saviour and Lord, both in connection with the earth, and the heavens where He is gone, and where He is set down at God's right hand, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this

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world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i. 21).

Dear reader, are *you* a child of God? Is your future one of blessedness, bound up with Christ and His glory? or, are you one of those "who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day"? (2 Thess. i. 9, 10).

In other words: Are you a believer or an unbeliever?

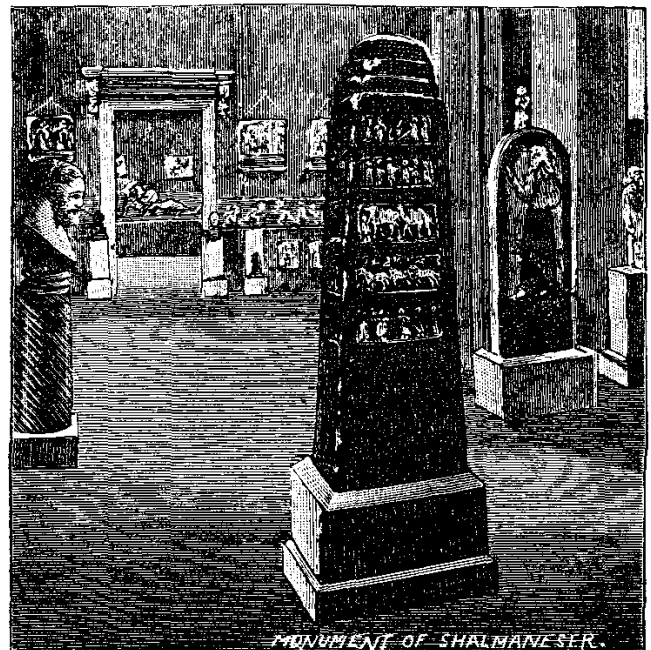
We will now ask our readers to accompany us in fancy into the Assyrian Hall of the British Museum, and as soon as possible hereafter we would recommend them to pay an actual visit to these interesting galleries.

Many of these huge blocks of sculptured stone are between two and three thousand years old. Notice the excellence of their execution, and how wonderfully well preserved. Look at the cuneiform inscriptions, how finely chiselled! The hands that worked on those stones have lain for centuries motionless in the grave. The bodies of the men who first handled them and moved them into their places have long since crumbled into dust. Little did they think that the God whom they knew not was preparing by their very hands answers so conclusive to the unbelief of a generation that was to come into existence ages after they

had passed from time into eternity.

Here is a block of grey-looking stone. It is called a "Monolith." This is a word of Greek origin, and simply means, "one stone," inasmuch as it is made of one solid block of rock, some 8 ft. high.

It was a common method, among these arrogant Assyrian kings, of perpetuating their memories, and more than one monolith may now be seen in the British Museum. The one that we are now occupied with is that of Shalmaneser II. In our engraving it is seen on the right, somewhat of the shape of a grave-stone; the big figure in the foreground is the "black obelisk" of Shalmaneser II., of which we shall speak further on.



The front of the monolith has a full-

length sculpture of Shalmaneser himself. The front, back, and sides are covered over with cuneiform inscriptions, all of which have been deciphered. We have before remarked that there is no record in the Bible of this monarch, the Shalmaneser mentioned in 2 Kings xvii. 3 being of later date. This was Shalmaneser III. But though the Bible is silent as to the monarch whose monolith we are examining, yet the records on this monument entirely coincide with the Scripture narrative of this date.

From these inscriptions we gather that Shalmaneser left Nineveh in the year B.C. 854. City after city fell before him on his westward journey. Notwithstanding that the Euphrates was in flood, he and his followers crossed it on inflated skins—by no means an easy operation for a large army.

Passing Pethor, famous as the city where Balaam lived, but which has now been entirely swept away, he exacted a heavy tribute from them. These tributes, which were levied in every direction, went by the pleasing name of “presents”—a reference to 2 Kings xvii. 4 will show us what was the penalty for any tardiness in their bestowal.

The first serious check that Shalmaneser met with on this expedition was from the army of Benhadad, King of Syria. We must carefully distinguish Syria from Assyria. Though Assyria

had not up to now been mentioned in the Bible in connection with the history of these times, yet we constantly hear of the King of Syria, who was a powerful neighbour of the King of Israel, indeed these two powers were almost continually at war. The accuracy, therefore, of the record on this monolith might almost have been questioned, had it not been for the statement in 1 Kings xx. 34, that Ahab, King of Israel, “made a covenant with” Benhadad, King of Syria, “and sent him away.”

From this verse it appears that for a short time at any rate hostilities ceased between these two kingdoms, and so it became possible for Israel to join the great Syrian league which sought, though ineffectually, to resist the advance of the King of Assyria. The monolith has the following:—

“Aroer (or Karkar), I pulled down, destroyed, and in the fire I burnt 1,200 chariots, 1,200 carriages, and 20,000 men of Benhadad, of Syria; 700 chariots, and 10,000 men of Irhuleni, of Hamath; 2,000 chariots, and 10,000 men of Ahab, of Sirhala (Israel), &c., &c. These 12 kings led their troops to its help, and came to make war and fighting against me. By the supreme help which Assur, the Lord, gave me, with the mighty weapons which the great defender who went before me lent (to me), I fought with them, &c., &c.”

Though defeated, there is no record on this monument of Benhadad having been slain in the Battle of Karkar. Indeed another inscription tells us of a great battle:—

“In my fourteenth year the whole of the country without number I collected; with 120,000

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of my warriors the river Euphrates I crossed. In those days Benhadad, of Syria, Irhuleni, of Hamath, and the kings beside the sea, above and below, their warriors without number collected, to my presence they came. With them I fought, their overthrow I accomplished, their chariots and their carriages I brought out, their weapons of war I took from them. To save their lives they fled."

When we consider the awful horrors of such campaigns, and the losses, sufferings, and fatigues connected with them, we need not be surprised to hear that Benhadad, who had fled to Damascus, the capital of Syria, lay sick and ill (2 Kings viii. 7). The Bible narrative and that of the monuments are here in perfect agreement, for it appears from the annals of Shalmaneser that Benhadad did not live to meet him in battle again, and so we find his death recorded at Damascus in 2 Kings viii. 15.

From the same chapter we learn that Hazael, the servant of Benhadad, succeeded his master on the throne, and with this another inscription entirely accords:—

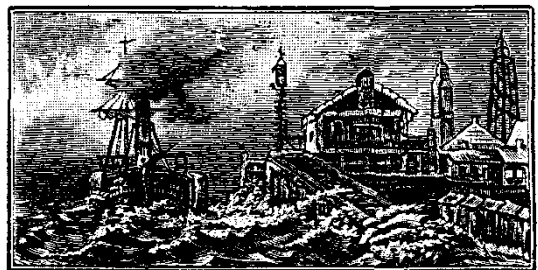
"In the 18th year, the 16th time the river Euphrates I crossed, Hazael of Syria to the might of his warriors trusted, and his warriors in numbers he gathered . . . with him I fought. His overthrow I accomplished, 18,000 of his army with weapons I destroyed, 1,121 of his chariots, 470 of his carriages, with his camp I took from him. To save his life he fled. After him I pursued. In Damascus, his royal city, I besieged him. His plantations I cut down. To the mountains of Hamath I went. Cities without number I pulled down, destroyed, and in the fire I burnt. Their spoil, without number, I carried off. To the mountains of Bahlirasi, which are at the

head of the sea, I went. An image of my majesty in the midst I made. In those days the tribute of Tyre and Sidon, and of Jehu, son of Omri, I received."

This inscription is of great interest, confirming as it does the accuracy of the Bible history in the matters of the succession both of the Kings of Syria and Israel. In the inscription Jehu is said to be the son of Omri, whereas from 2 Kings ix. 2, we learn that he was the son of Nimshi. In this the Assyrian king was mistaken, and not Scripture. Shalmaneser, doubtless, had heard nothing of the revolution that had extirpated the house of Omri, still less of the governmental judgment that had fallen upon the house of Ahab, who "did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up" (1 Kings xxi. 25).

The "image of my majesty" spoken of above is still visible, though somewhat obliterated, carved on the face of the rock at the mouth of the Dog River (Nahr-el-kelb) near Beyrût, which every visitor to Palestine has seen.

(To be continued.)



THE FIRST-FRUIITS OF HUPEH.

IN the interior of China is a large province named Hupeh, where dwell hun-

dreds of thousands of heathen, but also, thank God, a few Christians. The first Christian in that province was a *leper*. Listen while I tell you his story.

Wong-keh-shang, still a young man,



A Chinese Mission School.

was sitting begging in the city of Wuchang. Few were the words of pity he heard, and fewer still the coins upon his mat. He held up a wasted hand, and cried, "Ma fung!" a leper. The surging, busy crowd did not heed him. The leper outside the camp could not go to the Temple, or to the high priest. That priest must come to the leper before he could examine him and pronounce him clean.

Wong-keh-shang could not go to Jesus for help, for he knew Him not; but Jesus Himself sent one of His servants, with something of His Spirit, and he stands before the leper.

"Are you a leper?"

"Alas! alas! I am."

"Can't you cure yourself?"

"I? cure myself? No, the more I do the worse I am."

"True! You are quite helpless?"

"Yes; no one cares and no one knows. I am hungry and no one feeds; I am sad, and the people only laugh."

"Some One cares."

"Who is He?"

"Let me tell you"; and, sitting down, the man of God tells the leper of One Who cares, of the deeper leprosy of sin, of the cleansing fountain for sin and uncleanness. The disease of leprosy makes the person who has it very offensive, so that it was no pleasure for the Missionary to sit by the poor leper; but he thought that the leper was not so offensive to him as

the pride of our hearts is to God.

"Does Jesus care?" said the leper.

"Jesus loves you," was the answer.

"Will He bless *me*?"

"Only trust Him."

"Where can I find Him?"

"Come; I will show you."

"Come? where? I have to beg."

"Jesus will provide. Come with me." And the Missionary took him to his own house, washed the leper, fed him, took care of him. They knelt together, and the leper learned the love of Christ.

* * *

In a little schoolroom on the city wall sits Wong-keh-shang. His leprous hand is wrapped in a white bandage. A Christian physician has eased the pain, if he cannot cure the disease. Wong has had his head shaved, he is dressed in a clean white summer gown, and looks contented and happy. He is teaching the little mission school, telling the story of his own conversion, and urging the children to faith in Christ. Nor was the story told in vain.

* * *

In the far away province of Shensi a little band of Chinese converts and missionaries are weeping round an open grave. Wong-keh-shang has done his work. Leper as he was, with increasing pain and weakness, he accompanied a band of workers to the far interior, begging only to be allowed to testify of the love of the Lord, of salvation, Jesus Christ. His prayer

was granted, and around his grave wept men and women whom he had brought to Christ. Then the leprosy did its fatal work, and he went to be in heaven with the Saviour "Who cared" for him.

"And he was clean."

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

BIBLE PICTURES.—No. 2.

ON the banks of a great river, which is first mentioned in one of the earliest chapters of Genesis, we see a group of men sitting. The only one among them whose name we know, and in whom we are especially interested, is an old Hebrew, a descendant of King David's.

In his childhood he was taken to a land far away from his home, and, with three of his friends, was brought to the court of a Gentile monarch, where they were educated by some of the cleverest men of that day; he made good progress, and soon learned the language, and before long he outstripped his instructors, because God gave him knowledge, and the king said that he knew ten times more than any of the learned men of his realm.

After many long years, and very varied experiences, he was made chief president of the kingdom. He was always about this court, and, being a believer in the true God, it was his

high privilege to testify of Him in the immediate circle, even of royalty itself.

Judging from his appearance as he now sits with some other men on the river's brink, we should say he must be in some affliction. He looks unkempt, and his face is thin and sad. Suddenly he raises his eyes and sees a vision which he can accurately describe. None of his companions see it, and yet, strange to say, they are horror-stricken, and, in terror, they all run away and seek out a hiding place for themselves. Left thus alone with the vision, fear deprives him of his strength; and with his face down on the ground, he falls into a sound sleep. He is soon awaked from his slumber, and set tottering on his feet and hands by a touch from some one who tells him to stand up and not be afraid, and who gives him a message by which he is greatly comforted.

What was the name of this old Hebrew?

EDITOR'S NOTE.

WE regret that through an oversight a mistake was made in our July issue (p. 112). The covenant in Dan. ix. 27 is not made with the Jews by Antichrist, but by the Prince that shall come, who is no doubt the chief of the Roman empire. These two, though distinct, will, nevertheless, be in league one with the other. The first beast in Rev. xiii. doubtless represents the latter, while the second beast in the same chapter represents the former. A very clear and correct exposition of the important prophecy of the "Seventy weeks" of Daniel may be read in a work entitled, *Notes on Daniel*, to be had of James Carter, price 1/6. See also a pamphlet entitled, *An Enquiry as to the Antichrist of Prophecy*, James Carter, price 2d.

WHERE TO FIND TREASURE.

EVERY attentive reader of the Bible will probably know that each verse of Psalm cxix. makes some allusion to the word of God. In some verses it is mentioned as *the law*, in others as *statutes*, *judgments*, or *testimonies*, but in every case it is what we call Holy Scripture.

In looking carefully through this Psalm you will find that in no fewer than twenty-one verses God's word is spoken of as a delight or source of joy to the Psalmist. Now this is just what God intends it to be, and any who have a different thought about this precious Book only show how little they know about the heart of Him who inspired His servants to write it.

Many children, and grown-up people too, read it as a task, and fancy that to be much occupied with its contents might make them gloomy. Well, dear young friends, this is just one of the suggestions of Satan, the enemy of souls. He was a liar from the beginning, and ever since the days when he deceived Eve in Paradise, he has been *telling lies about God*. He will tempt you, perhaps, to think that God wishes to take something from you, and to deprive you of certain enjoyments on which your hearts are bent.

Now let me ask you one question—Is this like His character as we find it pictured in John iii. 16? “God

so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. . . .” Do you think that He who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up from love to sinners (*rebels* against Himself) would withhold anything really good from you? We cannot understand such love as this, it is so far beyond anything that our hearts can feel, but perhaps the nearest approach to it is the love of a mother for her child.

We sometimes read of a mother risking, or even sacrificing, her own life for her little one: but does that love prompt her to fulfil its every wish? No, indeed, she may have to refuse her darling that bunch of bright berries in the hedge, for which the tiny hand is stretched out. This is because *she* knows what he does *not* know, that the berries are poisonous. In the same way, God the Father refuses His children many a treasure they long for, because *He* knows that its possession would harm them.

Now let us turn once more to the experience of the Psalmist. “I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, *as much as in all riches*” (Psalm cxix. 14). Again, in Psalm i. we get a lovely picture of the man who delights in God's word, so that it is his meditation day and night. He is like a tree whose roots are continually refreshed by the water near which it is planted: it not only bears fruit, but its leaves *never wither*.

A, R. V. A.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS.

1. Six times; Prov. ii. 5, 17; iii. 4; xxv. 2 (xxvi. 10, see margin and italics); xxx. 5, 9.
2. Eccles. xii. 9.
3. Abram and Lot, Gen. xiii.; Isaac, xxvi.; Jacob, xxx.; Esau, xxxvi.; Nabal, i Sam. xxv.; Ahasuerus and Haman, Esth. iv., &c.
4. Luke.
5. Hezekiah, nearly 300 years after, Prov. xxv. 1.
6. Yes, Matt. i. 6, 7; vi. 29; xii. 42; Luke xi. 31; xii. 27; John x. 23; Acts iii. 11; v. 12; vii. 47.
7. Three, John x. 23; Acts iii. 11; v. 12.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

Poverty.

WHEN we remember Who was poor in this world for our sake (2 Cor. viii. 9), we shall never be ashamed of poverty or the poor. He had indeed been "rich in glory," and yet He came to this earth, had not even where to lay His head; and then at His death was dependent on another for a tomb (Luke xxiii.)! Rich men in that country used to prepare sepulchres for themselves, hewn in the rock, during their lifetime, but the Lord had none. In Isa. liii. 9, the more correct reading is, "They gave Him a grave with the wicked, but He was with the rich at His death," *i.e.*, a grave would have been assigned to Him with the criminals crucified beside Him, had not Joseph intervened and laid

Him in his own tomb among the rich.

It was to the poor that Jesus generally preached, and to them we can often speak of Him most freely.

Solomon was not poor, but as he knew not only the cedar-tree but the humble hyssop, so had he knowledge of the poor and their ways. His parable of the little city and the poor wise man (Eccles. ix.), shows that he did not think wisdom dwelt only with the rich. The parable may remind us of many things: Jesus was like the poor wise man, and the remnant in the latter day in Jerusalem will resemble him also; moreover, great kings in succession will besiege the city.

We must always recollect that stinginess does not tend to riches: indeed, "He becometh *poor* that dealeth with a slack hand" (x. 4), and "He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, shall surely come to want" (xxii. 16), while "The liberal soul shall be made fat" (xi. 25), and "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth" (xi. 24). These verses show God's thoughts of the use of money. On the other hand, those who have means are not to squander them: "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man" (xxi. 17), and as the r.v. reads, "He that maketh many friends doeth it to his own destruction" (xviii. 24).

Especially during this year of want and misery for so many, we ought to have been led to prove that "he that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto

WORDS OF LIFE.

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the Lord" (xix. 17), and it is solemn to read, "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (xxi. 13).

Do any of you who have plenty of toys and pleasures, try to give of your abundance to the needy? Even those who have little to give away, may find *something* to spare for those who have still less, and the Lord who pleads the cause of the poor (xxii. 23) will not pass over a cup of cold water given in His name.

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who are "happy" in Proverbs?
2. Find "The poor have the Gospel preached to them."
3. Find some more verses which speak of the *poor* or *poverty* in Proverbs.
4. What Old Testament parable tells of two men in one city, one rich, the other poor?
5. What is said of the poor in a Psalm for Solomon?
6. What great one in the future will bring "rich and poor" into bondage?
7. What provision were the Jews to make for their poor under the law?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. Will you kindly make Exod. xxxiv. 27, 28, and Deut. x. 1, 2, 4 clear to us? It seems that the difference between the first and the second two tables is this:—The first were given by God, and "written with the finger of God" (Ex. xxxi. 18); the second were hewed by Moses and written by Moses by the Lord's dictation (Ex. xxxiv. 1, 4, 27, 28). Then Deut. x. 2, 4, puzzles us.—H.T.G.

A. You are right as to the difference between the first and the second writing of the tables. Deut. x. need not be a difficulty; here Moses says, "I made an ark of shittim wood, and (I) hewed two tables of stone," but in reality Bezaleel

made the ark (Ex. xxxvii. 1), and Moses probably *caused* the tables to be hewn. Speaking *generally*, Moses made all, he was the moving spirit; as to *detail*, he employed others. In like manner God wrote the law. He was the Author of all, though only the *broken* tables were written with His finger. Deuteronomy is the recapitulated account of what is more fully related in Exodus, proved by the fact that in chap. x. 5 it seems as if Moses came straight down from the mount and put the tables in the ark, which had not at that time been constructed.

NOT YET.

IN a little magazine that had been found amongst a heap of old papers, I read the following incident; and may the Lord Jesus Christ use it as a warning to any unconverted reader!

"A boy, playing with his toys, was asked if he would trust in the Lord Jesus, and thus become a child of God while he was young. 'Not yet,' he said, 'when I grow older I will think about it.' This boy grew to be a young man. Still he said, 'Not yet; I am about to enter a trade, when I see my business prosper, then I shall have more time than now.'

"His business did prosper.

"'Not yet,' said the man of business, 'My children must now have my care; when they are settled in life I shall better be able to attend to religion.' He lived to be a grey-headed old man, and still he cried 'Not yet, I shall soon retire from business, and then I shall have nothing else to do but read and pray.' And so he died as he had

lived, putting off the Lord from the time of his childhood to his old age. He lived without hope, and he died without hope."

Oh! dear unconverted reader, we do beseech you not to put off God's offer of salvation, "*Now* is the accepted time, *Now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2). Perhaps you think you must be very good, and pray and do good deeds, but no! that is not it. "There is none righteous, no *not one*." (Rom. iii. 10). Jesus is the only One who never sinned. On the other hand you may think you are too great a sinner, but for whom did the Lord Jesus die? *Sinners*. "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*." (1 Tim. i. 15). Oh! believe Him and receive Him, and you will find peace. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and *thou shalt* be saved." (Acts xvi. 31).

You have nothing whatever to do, Jesus has done *all* that can be done. *You* have only to believe, and when you do believe on Him, then I am sure you will *work* for Him. Think what He has done for *you*. He went to that dreadful cross, and died for *you*, that *you* might have everlasting life. Oh! why cannot you trust Him and take Him at His word, when He says "He that believeth on Me, *hath* everlasting life." (John vi. 47). Not "will have" at some future time, but *hath* it now, the very moment you believe.

"The sinner who believes is free,
Can say, 'The Saviour died for ME.'"

Can point to the atoning blood,
And say, 'This made my peace with God.'"

E. G.

REGIONS BEYOND.

SHANGHAI is a great, worldly city, and many Europeans are to be found there; but, as many of these are not true Christians, they are more a hindrance than a help to the missionaries.

How sad this is! It is like what the Bible says of the Jews, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you" (Rom. ii. 24).

More than three hundred years ago, a decree was issued in Japan threatening any Christian who came into the country, with death. Thus, until 1859, Japan was quite shut against the Gospel, but then a few American missionaries ventured in, and as the law was becoming less strict, they were allowed to keep schools. As years went on, God opened the door more and more, and they began to preach the Gospel. Now the door is wide open and missionaries are welcomed.

Let us who cannot go to Japan ourselves to point these dear souls to the Lord Jesus Christ, always bear up on our hearts in prayer those who are labouring in that fruitful field. A great work is now going on there, and the day of Christ alone will declare the full results there, even as here in England, of the faithful preaching of the Gospel.

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Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

"SAFE IN CHRIST."

"I thank Thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Matt. xi. 25, 26).

DEAR CHILDREN,—

I WISH just to tell you about Harry S., a dear lad whom I lately visited. Perhaps most of the young people who read these lines are strong both in body and mind, and if so, how much you have to thank God for, have you not? But this one, of whom I speak, is neither strong in mind nor body, having been afflicted for a long time. The last five years he has not been able to dress himself, but he has a kind, loving, Christian mother, who, seeing her son grow more feeble in mind day by day, was much troubled lest her boy should quite lose his reason before he knew the Lord as his Saviour.

She earnestly sought the Lord in prayer about him, and sometimes took him to Gospel meetings, looking to the Lord for him.

I wonder how many of the dear girls

and boys who read this have praying parents — I trust many. Ah, dear children, many times, when you are fast asleep in bed, and perhaps know nothing about it, your father and mother are crying to God that their children might believe on Jesus while they are young and be saved for ever. Well, this mother had been asking this for her son. One night, while putting him to bed, she was startled by him saying :

"Mother! *Safe in Christ.*"

She said: "*How* do you know, Harry?"

"*Washed whiter than snow,*" he replied.

"*What* makes you whiter than snow?" his mother again asked.

"*Jesus' precious blood,*" was his reply.

"But, Harry, there must be something before *that*, what were you *before*?"

"*A lost sinner,*" came the wonderful answer.

"Then, if you are saved, we must thank God for it," said Harry's mother.

Ever since, there has been no doubt that her son is washed in the precious blood of Christ. He does not understand much that is said to him, except when Jesus is mentioned. He is most patient, never murmuring. When

asked if he would like to be with Jesus, he replies : " When He comes." Though sometimes troublesome in times past, he is never so now, but has often rebuked his brother when naughty. He is very fond of some hymns ; one is—

" Precious, precious blood of Jesus."

Another—

" Safe in Christ."

He will not part with the hymn-sheet, but holds it firmly in his hand in bed.

Dear Harry is very ill now, and cannot talk much, but his face brightens when he hears the name of his Saviour. It may be only a few days before he departs to be with Christ.

What a bright example Harry is, although his intellect is impaired. Yet he has heard God speaking to him in His word, and has received it in his heart by faith in Christ Jesus. Now he is saved by the blood he loved to sing about. It is a sweet little hymn :

" Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Shed on Calvary ;
Shed for rebels ; shed for sinners ;
Shed for me."

Dear children, it was for lost sinners Jesus died. Do you see yourselves as lost ? God is speaking to *you* in His word now. Will you not trust in the blood that makes whiter than snow, and fits you for the presence of a holy God, with not a spot on the beautiful white robe which He will put upon all who are made white in the blood of the Lamb ? For Jesus will be your robe of righteousness, then, when God

looks at you ; He will see " Jesus only," and there is *no spot in Him*. Harry will soon be with Jesus and like Him, but if any of my little readers were to die without believing in God's beloved Son, they would never, *no never*, see His face.

If you have come to Jesus, then, you will be able to say with Harry :—
" Safe in Christ."

" Safe in Christ, the *weakest* child
Stands in all God's favour ;
All in Christ are reconciled
Through that only Saviour.
Safe in Christ, safe in Christ,
He's their glory ever,
None can pluck them from His hand,
They shall perish never."

Since writing the above, Harry has left this scene. He often said to his father : " Jesus, tender Shepherd, *hears* me, doesn't He ?" The last words he said to his mother were : " *Safe in Christ.*" That the Lord may bless this simple but *true* story of dear Harry to some of my little readers is the earnest prayer of—

S. R. F.

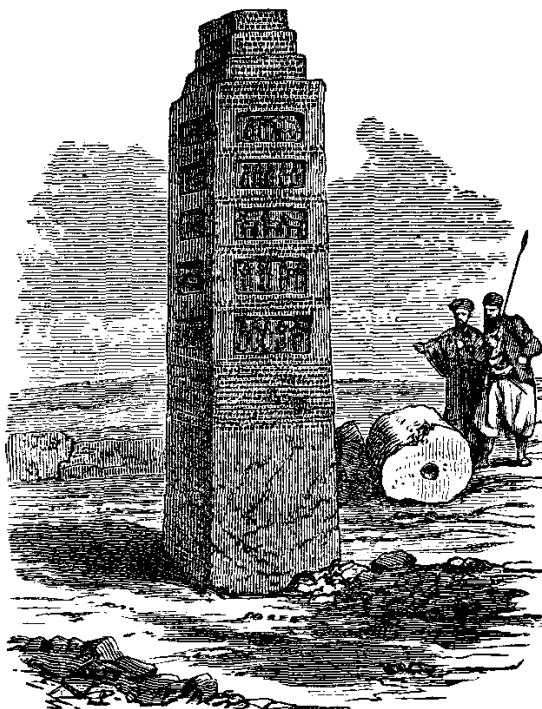
A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM. No. II.

SHALMANESER'S BLACK OBELISK.

A FEW yards from the monolith described in our last, there now stands in the Assyrian Hall of our British Museum, a monument of extreme interest to the Bible student. It is known as the *Black Obelisk*. It consists of one solid block

of polished black stone, nearly seven feet high, and its four sides are covered over with cuneiform inscriptions, giving the account of the wars and victories of Shalmaneser II.

Besides these inscriptions, which are in a perfect state of preservation, it has five lines of bas-reliefs running right round.



The Black Obelisk.

The story of the discovery of this valuable monument may be best told in the words of Layard himself:—

“About this time a most remarkable discovery was made in the centre of the mound, where, as I have already mentioned, a pair of gigantic winged bulls * appeared to form the entrance to a building. The inscriptions upon them contained a royal name, differing from that of the king of the N. W. palace.

* These immense bulls may now be seen standing in the British Museum.

On digging further I found a brick, on which was a genealogy, the new name occurring first, as that of the son of Sardanapalus, the founder of the earlier edifice.

“I dug round these sculptures, expecting to find the remains of walls, but there were no other traces of building. As the backs of the slabs were completely covered with inscriptions, in large and well-formed characters, it was possible that these bulls might originally have stood alone. Suspecting that there must have been other sculptures near there, I directed a deep trench to be opened, at right angles, behind the northern bull. After digging to the distance of about ten feet, the workmen came upon a colossal winged deity or priest in low relief, lying flat on the brick pavement. Beyond was a similar figure, still more gigantic in its proportions, being about fourteen feet high. The beard and part of the legs of a winged bull, in yellow limestone, were next found. The trench was carried in the same direction to the distance of fifty feet, but without any other discoveries being made. I had business in Mosul, and was giving directions to the workmen to guide them during my absence. Standing on the edge of the hitherto unprofitable trench, I doubted whether I should carry it any further; but made up my mind at last not to abandon it until my return, which would be on the following day. I mounted my horse, but had scarcely left the mound, when the corner of an object in black marble was uncovered ten feet below the surface.

“An Arab was sent after me without delay, to announce the discovery; and on my return I found, completely exposed to view, and lying on its side, an obelisk, about six feet six inches in height, terminated by three steps or gradines, and flat on the top. I descended eagerly into the trench, and was immediately struck by the singular appearance, and evident antiquity, of the remarkable monument before me. We raised it and speedily dragged it out of the ruins. On each of the four faces were fine small bas-reliefs, and above, below, and between them, was carved an inscription two hundred and ten lines in length, the whole in the most perfect preservation. . . .

"It would appear that the inscription on the obelisk records, in brief and terse phraseology, the annals of thirty-two years of his (Shalmaneser's) reign, and twenty-five successful campaigns against the nations and tribes bordering on the Assyrian Empire, including the Babylonians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Hittites, and the people of Damascus, and other parts of Syria; and the monarch claims to have received tribute from the cities of Tyre and Sidon, and from the Israelites. Amongst the royal names belonging to this period, which are familiar to us from their mention in the Bible, two are found in the inscription—that of Hazael, King of Syria, and of Jehu, King of Samaria. . . . Jehu is declared to have sent tribute consisting principally of gold and silver in bars, and vessels in the precious metals, to Shalmaneser; and two of the bas-reliefs on the obelisk are believed to represent the chief ambassador of Jehu prostrating himself before the Assyrian King, and Israelites bearing the various objects of tribute sent by him to Nineveh." *

This obelisk, like the monolith before described, is chiefly interesting for the confirmation that it gives us of the accuracy of the Scripture history of the times. We know from 2 Kings viii. that Benhadad, King of Syria, was not slain in battle. We are told (*v.* 7) that "Benhadad, King of Syria, was sick" at Damascus, the capital of his kingdom. When we consider the awful hardships of these Assyrian campaigns, and the barbarous cruelties that were inflicted by the conquerors upon their fallen adversaries, we need not be surprised to hear of Benhadad's sickness. But at any rate he was not slain in battle, and with this, the inscriptions on the obelisk entirely agree:—

* Nineveh and its remains; by Sir Henry Austen Layard.

"In my sixth year I approached the cities which are on the bank of the river Balikhi. I killed Giammu, lord of their cities. . . . I crossed the Euphrates [when it was at its flood]. I received the tribute of the kings of the land of Khatti (Hit) [and] their [presents]. In those days Addu-idri (Benhadad) of Imeri-su (the name given by the Assyrians to the country of which Damascus was the capital), Irkhulina, of the land of Hamathites, with the kings of the land of Khatti (Hit) and the sea-coast, trusted to each other's forces, and came against me to make fighting and battle. By command of Assur, the great Lord, my Lord, I fought with them. I accomplished their defeat. . . . I slew with the sword 20,500 of their fighting men."

Five years later, and for the last time, Shalmaneser again came into conflict with Benhadad. It was, doubtless, after the hardships of this campaign that Benhadad returned sick and ill to Damascus.

"In my eleventh year, the ninth time, I crossed the Euphrates. Cities without number I captured. I descended to the cities of the Hamathites. I captured 89 cities. Benhadad of Damascus (Sa-Imeri-su) [and] 12 kings of Hit had allied themselves together. I accomplished their overthrow."

Knowing the love of these Assyrian monarchs for self-glorification, as every line of the above inscription testifies, we may take it for granted that Benhadad was not killed in battle, otherwise it would most certainly have been mentioned. For the simple believer, 2 Kings viii. puts this beyond a question. He receives with implicit confidence all that God has caused to be written, knowing that God can make no mistake, either in history or in anything else. Consequently, though these Assyrian records are of extreme

interest, to him they add not the weight of a feather to the authority of Holy Scripture. He can say, "I believe the Scriptures, not because the Assyrian records prove them to be true, but because God inspired His servants to write them" (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 21).

Returning to 2 Kings viii. we there learn that after the murder of Ben-hadad by his servant Hazael, he succeeded him on the throne of Syria, and this fact the inscription on the obelisk likewise confirms:—

"In my 18th year, the 16th time, I crossed the Euphrates. Khaza-ilu (Hazael), of the land of Imeri-su (Damascus) came to battle; 1,121 of his chariots, . . . with his camp, I captured."

Again, in his 21st year, Shalmaneser crossed the Euphrates, and attacked Hazael.

Great interest attaches to this obelisk, from the mention of Jehu. The second set of pictures, running right round, is evidently intended to represent the Jewish captives bringing their presents or tribute to Shalmaneser. The type of countenance, quite different from the other pictures on the monument, is strikingly Jewish, and just above them the inscription reads thus:—

"The tribute of Yana (Jehu), son of Humri, (Omri): silver, gold, a golden cup, golden vases, golden vessels, golden buckets, lead, a staff for the hand of the king, and sceptres, I received."

In the above, Jehu is said to be the son of Omri; but here the monument is at fault, and not Scripture. He was in reality the son of Nimshi; but Ahab, his predecessor, being the son of Omri, no doubt Shalmaneser thought Jehu

was a descendant of the same line.

Frequent mention is also made in these inscriptions of the Hittites. The Bible, too, constantly refers to them, and implies that they must have been a powerful nation. But as all trace of them had been swept away, poor rationalism, ever ready to find fault with the Bible, incautiously jumped to the conclusion that they never had any existence, and were simply a mythical race. Of late years, however, monuments have come to light of Hittite origin, which have silenced for ever this objection of the sceptics.

In closing this article we would advise all our readers to pay a visit to the British Museum, and to see for themselves these interesting remains, and while there they should not miss a sight of the great bronze plates preserved in a glass case in the basement floor of the Assyrian galleries.

These were discovered in 1877 by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam on the site of ancient Nineveh. They evidently formed the covering of an enormous pair of folding-doors or gates about twenty-six feet high, the entire breadth being twelve feet high. They are known as the *Gates of Balawat*. As a work of art they are remarkable for their beauty and finish. The various incidents depicted upon them contain information supplemental to the Black Obelisk and the monolith, with especial reference to Shalmaneser's expeditions into Babylonia.

A MODERN AUTO DA FE.

A CORRESPONDENT takes exception to some of the pictures illustrating the Inquisition papers, adding that the horror with which they had seen similar drawings as a child had

Rome of to-day would act differently from the Rome of yesterday—if she had but the power—we append the following extracts. Similar sentiments have been expressed, to our certain knowledge, not only by Romanists but also by Ritualists. A lady, not long since, avowed that she would like all



Burning Bibles at Barcelona.

never been forgotten. We are glad to hear it, and trust that all who have read these articles and seen the prints, may never forget them either. Word-painting and electro-typing come infinitely short of the actual horrors of the Inquisitional torture-room.

Lest any should suppose that the

heretics to be burned at the stake! We see in Babylon the "Great" of Rev. xvii. a true description of ecclesiastical Rome, upon which we may have a word or two to say later on, but meanwhile let us never forget that the page of inspiration has recorded that she is "drunken with the

blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. xviii. 6).—ED.

"In these days of pseudo-liberalism, it is just as well that we have actual proof supplied by herself that Rome is unaltered and unalterable, drunk with and thirsting for the blood of God's saints. The following is translated from a Roman Catholic periodical, entitled *La Bandera Catolica* (The Catholic Banner), printed in Barcelona, and bearing the date of July 29th, 1883. It has reference to the burning of a large number of Gospels, by order of the Government, in Barcelona:—

" UN AUTO DA FÉ.

" 'Thank God, at last we have turned towards the times when heretical doctrines were persecuted as they should be, and when those who propagated them were punished with exemplary punishment.

" 'Under the pretext of falsely-called religious tolerance, which revolutionary winds brought to this classic country of Catholicism, the irreconcilable enemies of our most holy religion have been carrying out their plans, and have scandalised the world with the propagation of their impious writings. Fortunately, the cry of indignation which such scandalous conduct drew from the hearts of all good Catholics, has found an echo in the consciences of our rulers; who, although late, have now listened to the voice of duty, giving full satisfaction to good Catholics by a wise and opportune order for the burning of a number of Protestant books, which evil disposed persons were introducing into the country in spite of the vigilance of sincere Catholics.

" 'But Catholic Barcelona, the country of St. Eulalia, and of Blessed Oriol, has had the very great pleasure of witnessing an 'Auto da Fé' in the last part of this 19th century. On the 25th inst., the festival of the Apostle James, in the Custom House yard of this city, one of the most glorious traditions of the Catholic Religion, was carried out

by the burning of Protestant books, destined to pervert the tender heart of our children.

" 'It is in vain that the sons of Satan lift up their voice and cry out against this most righteous act, which is but the beginning of a glorious era, of a new epoch, in which the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness, with its purest light, will dispel the darkness of ignorance and error. There is but a step between this event which we now record, and the setting up of the Holy Inquisition. What we now want is the good will and united efforts of pure and true Catholics. It seems that the Government is disposed to carry out our desires; and it is only right that we should take advantage of this new turn of affairs, in order to reach as soon as possible the goal of our aspirations.

* * * *

" 'Onward, then, good and sincere Catholics! The happy day of our social and religious regeneration is not far off. The 'Auto da Fé,' with which we are now occupied, is a clear and evident proof of the certainty of our indications. The re-establishment of the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition must soon take place. Its reign will be more glorious and and fruitful in results than in the past, and the number of those who will be called to suffer under it will exceed the number of the past. Our Catholic heart overflows with faith and enthusiasm, and the immense joy which we experience as we begin to reap the fruit of our present campaign, exceeds all imagination. What a day of pleasure will that be for us when we see freemasons, spiritualists, free-thinkers, and anti-clericals, writhing in the flames of the Inquisition!'

" 'That Roman Catholics may not be ignorant of the deeds of the Inquisition in the past, there is the following in another column of *La Bandera Catolica*:—

" 'We judge our esteemed subscribers will read with great pleasure the statistics respecting those who suffered under the Holy Tribunal from the year 1481 to 1808, when this so venerable an institution was abolished. As our readers will see, it refers to Spain only; we are unable to give the numbers of those who suffered in other countries. We have believed it right also to publish the names of those

holy men under whose hands so many sinners suffered, that good Catholics may venerate their memory:—

“*By Torquemada—*

Men and women burnt alive	10,220
Burnt in effigy.....	6,840
Condemned to other punishments.....	97,371

“*By Diego Deza—*

Men and women burnt alive	2,592
Burnt in effigy.....	829
Condemned to other punishments.....	32,952

“*By Cardinal Jimenez de Cisneros—*

Men and women burnt alive	3,564
Burnt in effigy.....	2,232
Condemned to other punishments.....	48,059

“*By Adrian de Florencia—*

Men and women burnt alive	1,620
Burnt in effigy.....	560
Condemned to other punishments.....	21,835

“This Inquisitor established the holy office in America, and in 1522, as a reward for the same, he was elected Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth; but so did he love his former ministry, that he did not transfer it to another until the second year of his pontificate. He burnt during this time 324 persons, and condemned to various punishments short of death 4,081.”

A LETTER FROM NEW ZEALAND.

DEAR CHILDREN,

IN these days when travelling is so common, there is probably not one among you who has not gone on a journey.

You can remember quite well how excited you were when preparations were being made for a visit to the sea-side or into the country; and how you rushed about, collecting your dolls, marbles, balls, and favourite books which you wanted to have packed to

take with you. How joyful you felt when, at last, the happy moment arrived, and you found yourself on board the train or steamboat with your mother and brothers and sisters!

Well, I want to tell you about a little boy—a very little fellow—who is at this moment on a longer journey than most of you have ever taken.

Four weeks ago a young friend, who had come abroad for his health, was returning to his home in London, and some of us went to see him off.

While we were waiting for the tug to start, which was to take the passengers and their luggage to the great big ocean steamer lying out in the harbour, I noticed a child, with a most winsome little face, busily engaged in eating a pear, and quite unconscious of everybody and everything around him, his whole attention being taken up with the juicy fruit.

About a quarter of an hour's steaming brought us to the vessel's side. As soon as the gangway was thrown across we hastened on board, being anxious to see as much as possible of the ship, which was to be our young friend's home for six weeks. We soon found out his cabin; and as we stood inspecting it, and wondering who Master A. (who we discovered by a ticket on the door was to be the other occupant) could be, and what he was like, a lady came into the small passage, holding by the hand the darling little child I had seen on the tug. She asked which

of our party had a berth in the cabin we were looking at, and being told, she turned to him and said, "Then this is your cabin-mate. I hope you'll be kind to him, he is only four years old, a poor little motherless boy, and he is going to England alone to his grandmother. His mother died a year ago, and his father can't leave to go with him."

Our hearts were greatly touched at this pitiful story, and it was not hard for our friend to promise to be kind to the little lonely child.

Very soon a bell rang to warn those who were not passengers to leave for the shore, and we had to hurry back to the tug. Many sad "Good-byes" were spoken that day, and some bitter tears shed; but the little child was quite unconcerned, and did not cry, even when he saw the tug moving away from the steamer with the lady who had brought him on board.

The last sight we had of him he was in the stewardess' arms, and she was making him wave his tiny white silk handkerchief with a yellow border. It was quite clear that he did not in the least realize that he was alone and amongst strangers on that large ship, or think of the dangers to which he would be exposed while crossing the trackless ocean.

How would you feel if you were in such a position? or if you had to part with your dear little four-year-old brother and see him go off *alone*

on a voyage of thousands and thousands of miles across the watery waste?

Ah! I think I hear you saying, "Oh! we should not like it at all." Some of you may say, "It would be very nice, indeed, to go on a fine big ship, and sail away to a fresh country, and see places and things which we have only read about; but we should not like to go all alone, we should like to have a *friend* with us."

Now, dear children, let us ever remember that *we* are travelling on a voyage through life from Time to Eternity; and just as every turn of the screw of that steamer brings that little boy nearer to England, so every hour brings us nearer to the unseen land whither we are bound. But this journey of ours is full of dangers and temptations; and though we have not to fear the winds and seas, we have to fear our great enemy Satan, "who goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

How glad we should be that we have not to take this perilous journey *alone*. We have a Friend who is able and willing to go with us, and who promises never to leave nor forsake us. And what a Friend! One who came down into this world and died for us, and who is now in the bright world above, gone to prepare a home for us.

Dear children, shall we meet each other there? Think of the welcome which awaits the wee traveller I have been telling you about; how his grand-

mother will press him to her heart, weep over him, and cover him with kisses! But that welcome is as nothing, compared to the welcome which awaits all those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour—who are trusting Him as their Friend, and who are watching for His return to take His blood-bought people to be with Him for ever.

I am, yours affectionately,

H. S. T.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS.

1. Prov. iii. 13; xiv. 21; xvi. 20; xxviii. 14; xxix. 18.
2. Matt. xi. 5.
3. Ch. x. 15; xiii. 7, 23; xiv. 20, 31; xviii. 23; xix. 17, 22, and many more.
4. 2 Sam. xii.
5. Ps. lxxii. 2, 4, 12, 13, 14.
6. The second beast, Antichrist, Rev. xiii. 16.
7. Ex. xxiii. 10, 11; Lev. xxiii. 22; xxv. Deut. xxiv. 12-22.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

The Future.

THAT man would have to do with God after death, was, in measure, generally known in all ages (see Job xix. 25; Num. xxiv. 17), but we only who read the New Testament can explain how it is that believers will never be judged for their sins, nor indeed those who looked forward in faith to God's Lamb to be slain for them (Rom. iii. 25). This David did (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2), and surely

his son, too, knew the value of sacrifice (1 Kings viii. 63, 64) which he, however, refers to only vaguely in Proverbs. But of the future, he is full of thought. He knew that the way of life and the way of death must end each in its own place, and that the judgment of every man would come from the Lord (xxix. 26): also that destruction is to be the portion of fools and workers of iniquity and the proud; it will come as a whirlwind, too, (i. 27) on those who have refused when God called, and who have set at naught His counsel. This is very solemn, and quite as true now as then. We read (2 Thess. i. 8) that those who know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, will be punished with everlasting destruction when He comes in judgment, and it will be "sudden" (1 Thess. v. 3), just like a whirlwind. Oh, be careful that *you* do not stop your ears from hearing God's voice!

Hell (Hades or the grave) we read of too (xv. 11; xxvii. 20). Solomon knew that hades would not be happiness for *all* (xiv. 27, 32), and he sets this forth more plainly in Ecclesiastes. A righteous man dies and finds life, and a wicked man inherits death and destruction (see Prov. viii. 35, 36; x. 25, 28, 30; xvi. 25, etc.). *We* know much more, and can thank God that we have a full revelation of His counsels; what Solomon taught was *true*, but not all the truth for us.

When Solomon speaks of heaven, he

WORDS OF LIFE.

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mostly means the firmanent above us, though in Ecc. v. 2 he says, "God is in heaven." He was expecting, as every Jew does, blessing on earth; we are looking for heavenly blessings for ever with Christ, and even now we have begun to enjoy them, because we are in Christ (Eph. i. 3). We shall reign with Him by-and-by, and rule over the Jews who will be in the enjoyment of the earth.

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. Find some proverbs occurring more than once in our book.
2. Where is Solomon's genealogy found?
3. Who was the first Hebrew (or Jew)?
4. What sect among the Jews denied the resurrection?
5. Where are Solomon's brothers named?
6. What did Abraham look for?
7. Solomon "spake also of *beasts*" (1 Kings iv.); which does he mention in Proverbs?
8. Would you like the Questions to be harder or easier.

"ONE THING THOU
LACKEST."

THE boy I am going to tell you about was what people call one of the best of boys. At home he was dutiful and affectionate to his parents, and always kindly considerate towards his younger brothers. At school there was never a complaint to be made against him; his lessons were always well prepared, and he continually kept his place as first in his class. All this was a great pleasure to those about him, for it is well to see

the young diligent in their work, and careful to obey those who are over them; and surely it is pleasing to God to see all this, for has He not said—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," and that "the slothful shall be under tribute"?

Yet more than this is required to fit a soul to meet God and go to that happy home in heaven where all so much wish to be.

The boy of whom I am telling you knew this, and I will tell you what first made him feel it. A children's meeting was held in the large schoolroom to which he went for his daily studies, and there he heard the Gospel of God brought out in a way he had never heard it before.

It was God's voice to him, and sank deeply into his young heart, shewing him that he had to stand in the presence of a holy God, and that all that looked so outwardly fair in the eyes of men, would not do to meet the eye of Him who reads even the very thoughts of our hearts. Yes, dear children, He knows the thoughts of each one; and, as you read this story, He can tell you whether you are trusting to any goodness of your own, or if you have been brought, as this dear boy was, to see your own utter unfitness for His holy presence.

A few days after the meeting of which I have told you, when one of his teachers was speaking to him about Jesus, and his need of a Saviour, he

exclaimed, "I am going to hell, and I know it."

God had shewed him that he was a sinner, and he felt that he had nothing in himself that he could *bring* to God, and that it was "not by works of righteousness which we have done" that he could *come* to God. His good conduct did not blind him to this, and he knew that he was on "the broad road that leadeth to destruction."

But, oh, what a happy thought that God does not *ask* anything from us! He says, "*I* have found a ransom." That ransom is the precious blood of the Lord Jesus which He shed on the cross, that all those who believe in Him might have their sins washed away, and be "whiter than snow."

Then instead of only looking forward to a day of judgment, we can look up to God without a fear, knowing that Christ has done all, and that God is satisfied.

Have you, dear children, learned to trust this loving Saviour? or, are you still on that broad road? If the latter do not go any further, but own your own helplessness, as did this dear boy. Come by simple faith to the Lord Jesus, and as certainly as you were lost, so certainly will you know that He has found you.

"Christ hath the ransom paid,
The wondrous work is done;
On Him our help is laid,
The victory is won.
Captivity is captive led
Since Jesus liveth that was dead."

M. V. H.

BIBLE PICTURES.—No. III.

THE subject of this picture is a Galilean prophet; he was born in a town not far from Phœnicia. God has just told him to undertake a mission to the capital of a great empire, a large and populous city, which was then in the height of its glory, being sole mistress of the East, and exercising sovereignty over the surrounding nations.

Unwilling to obey this command, the prophet left his home and travelled in exactly the opposite direction, until he came to the sea-coast of Syria, to a town which then was, and still is, renowned for its beauty. A place, moreover, round which much interest clings, for it was here that the cedars of Tyre were floated for the building of Solomon's Temple, also because we read of it in the New Testament; and it was, during the Crusades, the principal landing-place of the Warriors of Christendom. But this was not where the prophet meant to tarry; he had previously planned to go to a town in Spain, so finding a vessel, which was probably going to convey merchandise for the Phœnicians to that very town, he paid his fare and embarked. Owing, however, to untoward circumstances, he never reached his destination. And now we find God giving him another chance of fulfilling his mission to the eastern city, and this time he obeyed the voice of the Lord. On the second day after his arrival, he proceeded to deliver the message with which he had

been entrusted, and his words produced so great an effect, that the inhabitants turned to God in repentance, and His judgment was, in consequence, delayed a considerable time.

What was the name of this prophet? and what was the city to which he was sent?

Dear children, this world, like that ancient city, is doomed, and judgment is coming upon its inhabitants; and, like the prophet of old, God's servants now are calling upon men everywhere to repent, and to flee from the wrath to come. The message they are entrusted with by the Lord Jesus is this: "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."

How have *you* treated this message?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. Will you please explain the meaning of the verse in Amos iii. 12: "Thus saith the Lord: 'As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch.'"

A. There was cause for the Lord to intervene in judgment on Israel. Samaria had been the capital of the nation about to be punished for her iniquities: so terrible would the judgment be that there should be left but a few morsels, such as a shepherd might gather up after a lamb had been devoured. See also Isa. xvii. 4-6; xxiv. 13: a remnant only will escape. The verse is more easily understood in the R.V.: "As the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the child-

ren of Israel be rescued that sit in Samaria in the corner of a couch, and on the silken cushions of a bed, (or, damask of a divan)."

Q. Also, in Ezekiel xlviii. it gives the names of the twelve tribes, including those of Dan and Ephraim. In Revelation vii. the tribes are given without Dan and Ephraim being mentioned, but with Levi and Joseph. Why is this?

A. *Gen. xlix.* Jacob's twelve sons are blessed. *Num. i. &c.* Levi is left out, having been chosen for the service of the sanctuary; and Manasseh and Ephraim are substituted for Joseph, to make up the twelve. *Deut. xxxiii.* Simeon is left out, and Joseph's two sons are included with him, so there are only eleven tribes blessed. Simeon may have been left out for his sin (*Gen. xlix. 5*; *Num. xxv.*), whereas Levi is mentioned for his faithfulness (*Ex. xxxii. 26*). *Ezek. xlviii.* In the division of the land in the future day Joseph is to have two portions (*xlvi. 13*), and these he inherits in his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Thirteen tribes are here mentioned, but in the case of Levi his portion is a special offering to the Lord (*xlvi. 1*). In the gates the twelve sons of Jacob only are named. *Rev. vii.* Dan and Ephraim are omitted, and Joseph and Manasseh make up the twelve. From Dan it is believed by some that the Anti-Christ will spring (*Gen. xlix. 16, 17*; *Deut. xxxiii. 22*; *Dan. xi. 37, 38*), and if this is so the omission of his name here can be understood.

"I'LL JUST LEAVE IT TO HIM."

THESE words fell from the lips of an aged woman, after hearing that God knew her better than she did herself. With much brain weakness in common with her companions in a workhouse ward, yet like many who are not mentally afflicted, she had considered her own opinion sufficient.

With wild excitement she had been trying hard to undo the strip of calico which bound her to an armchair, and seeing two visitors enter she had hoped to be set free at her request. But no, my friend was afraid to go near her, and I told her that I dared not unfasten it without the nurse's leave.

"Come, come," she cried, "and I will give you money!"

With a—"No thank you. I do not wish for money," I approached as near as seemed safe, looking straight into those wild eyes, while she asked in amazement, "Don't ye?"

Then I told her a very little about God's best and greatest Gift—Jesus, His beloved Son, and gradually but steadily she calmed down, and listened to as much as she seemed able to understand.

"I knows you!" she exclaimed, feeling the interest in her which God had given.

"And God knows you," I answered.

"Does He?" she enquired, with a look of wonder.

"Yes; and He has known you all your life, and has seen all that you have done. Have you done what was right in the past?"

"Well," she began, in a tone of apology, "I have not done anything very wicked."

"Oh, yes you have, and it was because of the sins you have committed, that Jesus died."

"Well, she went on, in a half-con-

vinced tone, "I know I have committed sins, but I have not been a wicked sinner."

"Ah, but it is not what you think," I was forced to tell her, as I should to my own soul, "but what God has written about you. He calls you a 'sinner,' and He speaks of your doing wrong as 'wickedness.'"

The poor woman wonderfully quieted down as the fact slowly dawned upon her that forgiveness depended on what God had said and done, instead of her foolish thoughts. So, with a changed manner, yielding and restful, like a little child, she gently murmured: "Well, well, I'll just leave it to Him!"

We who looked on could only say to each other how like the language of faith it seemed, to leave all to God, but He alone knows the heart, and to His tender care we could safely leave those spoken words, and that needy soul.

We need to learn the meaning of what God has written for our profit in Romans iii.: "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."

Will you, my young reader, look up the chapter and find out the verse? and it would be a very helpful thing to commit it to memory also. Listen to what God has to say about *you*: that is the dark side. But do you also hear what He has to say about His Son? That is *all* brightness, and His heart desires that you should trust Him.

"God's house is filling fast,
Yet there is room."

G. W.

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Words of Life,

For Old and Young.

SEEKERS.

AT the present time there are many who are seeking the Lord in all parts of the world. They are seeking because they have not heard of Jesus, nor read

Be ye reconciled to God." But it is beautiful to see how the Lord brings His truth to the honest seekers.

Many years ago a negro was sitting weeping near the sea-shore, on the coast of Africa. A merry gang of

English sailors landed to get water. Seeing the man weeping, one of them asked him what was the matter.

The negro told him, in broken English, that his sins were the cause of his trouble.

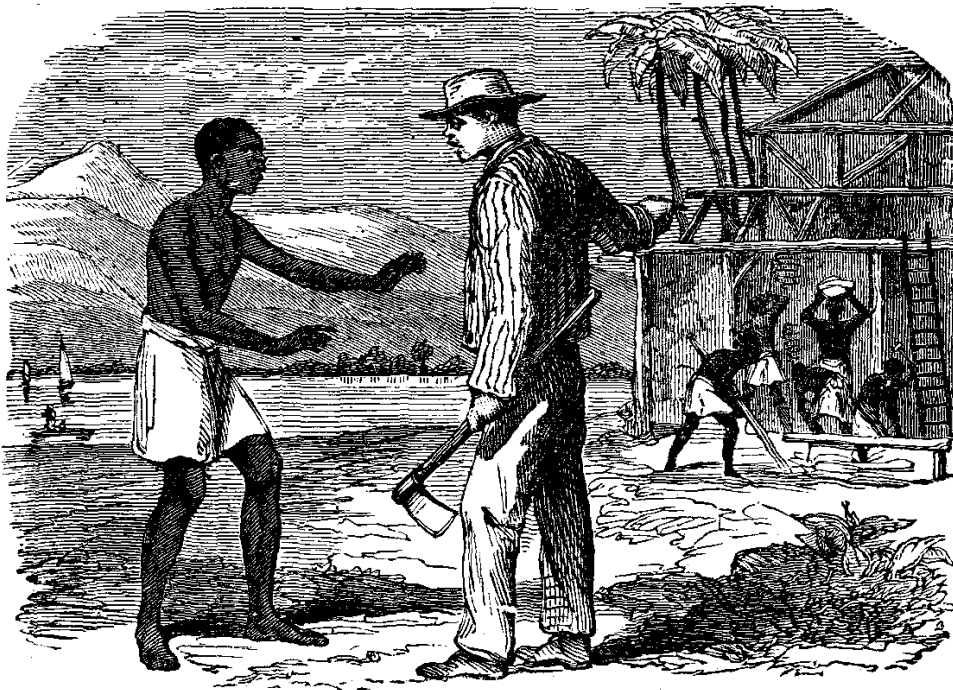
"Oh," said the sailor in a careless manner, "if that is what ails you, you should

go to England and hear about the Christian's God who paid the debt."

The words so carelessly spoken made a deep impression on the broken-hearted negro. A "God who paid the debt!" What could that mean? The heathen never think of their gods otherwise than as cruel and revengeful, and

the precious Word of God. Their case is very different from that of those who hold the Bible in their hands, hear the Gospel preached, and yet talk of seeking, as if we had to seek what a friend is holding out to us, and entreating us to accept!

"We pray you in Christ's stead:



their idea in prayer is to avert their anger.

Some Christians once asked the villagers around them about their gods, and, as they recounted their names and their crimes, they said: "But have you not heard of a God who is good?"

"Oh, yes!" said the villagers, "we think there is a good God."

"But why do you not pray to Him?"

"Why should we? He will not hurt us," said they.

So true is it "that the Gentiles sacrifice to devils and not to God," as the apostle tells us (1 Cor. x. 20).

But God's gracious promise remains true: "Seek, and ye shall find," and so our poor negro found out. He worked his passage to England, looking for the "God who paid the debt." But alas! in the so-called Christian country he was paid off and sent adrift, no man caring for his soul! Before long he was penniless and friendless, and near despair. But there was an eye that saw his tears, an ear that heard his groans, and He led one of His servants

One man in India was so anxious to find out what he must do to be saved that he spent the greater part of his life, over forty years, in seeking salvation. He tried all the various religions of India, went through every form of penance, visited every shrine, and at last enlisted in the English army, hoping that, possibly, he should find the truth in the religion of the English.

For a long time he was disappointed, and had made up his mind that, of all religions, Christianity was the worst, when, by God's grace, a fellow-soldier, who was a true Christian, pointed him to Christ. After hearing his story, one can appreciate the deep feeling with which the poor Hindu coolie, resting his burden for a few minutes on a stone placed for that purpose by the side of the road, looked up to heaven: "Christ is my Rest Stone," said he.

* * * *

A young Jewish boy, who lived in the East of Europe, had been told that there were people who worshipped



to him, who heard his tale and told him of Christ. The man believed, and was saved.

Jesus Christ, and that the countries where they lived were happy. So what should he do but collect all the boys of

the village where he lived, get his father's cart and horse, and they all started out to find the country where Jesus was worshipped! They were out for two or three days, but finally were brought home and punished. But, though he had *sought* in a wrong way then, and so was checked, yet the Lord whom he sought knew the thought of his heart, and, through great persecution and loss of all things, he has now found Christ, and preaches His blessed Gospel.

Dear young friends, may these true stories make some of you more thoughtful; you who, with the Word of God in your hands, are thinking of other things and longing for the Bible class to be over!

"Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom seeing he hath no heart to it?" (Prov. xvii. 16).

E. H.

A VISIT TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

ASSYRIAN CHRONOLOGY.

WERE we merely engaged in writing a history of Assyria and its kings, much of a most interesting character might be narrated as taking place after the death of Shalmaneser II.

The object of these articles, however, is to dwell upon those parts of the monumental history of Assyria which have special reference to the Biblical narrative.

There is a slab containing some record of the reign of Rimmon-Nirari III., which, however, need not detain us long. Amongst the various expeditions enumerated, we are told that, towards the west, the land of the Hittites was conquered. Speaking generally, "the land of the Hittites" is that region which extended westward from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean. On this slab the kingdom of Israel is mentioned as one of those which was made tributary.

Rimmon-Nirari III. was reigning at Nineveh during the time of Amaziah, king of Judah, and Joash, king of Israel. Our readers may, perhaps, wonder how the dates can be so accurately determined. The subject of chronology would be too large and intricate to be gone into in our pages, but we may here mention what is known as the *Assyrian Eponym Canon*, which has been of great assistance in determining the dates in Assyrian history. According to these annals, each year had its name, or *eponym*, instead of number, the name being that of the governor of a certain district for that particular year. The principal event of the year is attached to the name of the governor of that year.

It is really marvellous what a literary people the Assyrians were, and, as the subject is of such interest and importance, we purpose, later on, devoting one article to a more detailed account of the matter. We say this, for it is

often a matter of surprise to those unacquainted with the subject, how archæologists can speak of the productions of these ancient races in the same way as we are accustomed to do in reference to standard works of modern times, such as Hume's, or Macaulay's, histories of England.

Astronomy, likewise, tenders its assistance in this field. The Assyrian annals record the fact that a remarkable eclipse of the sun took place :—

“In the eponym of Pur-sagale prefect (governor) of Gozan, the city of Assur revolted, and in the month of Sivan the sun was eclipsed.”

With reference to this, the late Mr. George Smith writes :—

“This eclipse is a most important event in several ways ; as it is recorded in the Assyrian chronological canon, under the year which corresponds to B.C. 763, it formed an excellent test of the accuracy of the Assyrian record. The eclipse has been calculated by Mr. Hind, and found to have passed over Assyria at the date indicated in the Assyrian records, June 15, B.C. 763.

“In addition to this, Mr. J. W. Bosanquet has pointed out a remarkable allusion, apparently to this eclipse, in Amos viii. 9, where we read : ‘I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and will darken the earth in the clear day.’”

No doubt there may have been a partial fulfilment of the prophecy of Amos at that time, though we know that similar signs will precede the great and terrible day of the Lord, when He will come to execute His righteous and long-delayed judgment on this earth (see Joel ii. 30, 31).

Certain it is, however, that an eclipse passed over Palestine, and across Syria and Assyria. It was visible in the latter country when the great city of Assur was in revolt, and it was there looked upon as an evil omen.

We have now arrived at that part of Assyrian history which records the same events that are mentioned in the Bible, and we are thus enabled to compare the two accounts. Any one who would put these two accounts side by side cannot but be struck with the stamp of absolute veracity possessed by the Bible, as compared with the cuneiform inscriptions. In the one case an arrogant man is boastfully describing his own exploits ; in the other God is giving the unvarnished history of His people, and of His dealings with them.

Hence we need not be surprised to find that the monuments pass over in silence the disasters that overtook the Assyrian host under Sennacherib. It would not have been at all in accordance with their love of self-glorification to have handed down to posterity the fact that, in one night, 185,000 of their mighty men became dead corpses (2 Kings xix. ; Isa. xxxvi., xxxvii.).

With the Bible, however, it is not so. God records the faults and failures of His people. He describes, too, the calamities that overtook them, pointing out, moreover, that those very calamities were His chastisement, because of those very faults. God loves His children

too well to allow them to continue in paths of disobedience and wilfulness.

The first Assyrian king that is named in the Bible is Tiglath-Pileser, and it is now known, from recent discoveries, that Pul was another name of the same monarch. This discovery was a heavy blow to the rationalists. No trace of such a name having been found amongst the inscriptions, what was more natural for the sceptical critic than to assume that Pul never had had any existence, except in the imagination of the Hebrew historian.* When will rationalism learn caution?

We would, in closing our subject for this year, advise all our readers to be very slow to accept the arguments of men whose effort is to weaken the hold that Scripture has over heart, mind, and conscience. We gladly welcome all *the facts* of science. Facts are facts all the world over, and this no man in his senses would deny. But the moment men of science begin to draw their conclusions from these facts, we have passed into the region of speculation. Their conclusions may be true or they may be false. Let us not be in too great a hurry to part with the Bible; it has stood its ground well through ages past, and has come out victorious in every conflict.

(To be continued.)

* "Recently discovered inscriptions inform us that Tiglath-Pileser was called Pulu (Pul) in Babylonia."
George Smith.

"ARE YOU AFRAID OF THIS FURNACE OF FIRE?"

THIS was the question given a few months ago to the members of a Bible Class: the answers were to be in writing. The tares cast into a furnace of fire, and the contrast between them and the wheat (Matt. xiii.), had been the subject.

Let us read some of these answers. Many children simply write, "No," without further explanation. In 1 Peter iii. 15, it is written, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a *reason* of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

A boy says, "No, because Jesus died for me on the Cross." Then indeed he has a right to say he is not afraid, for John tells us (ch. i. 12), "As many as received Him, to them gave He power (or right), to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." Sons of God go to heaven.

Another little boy writes: "No, because Jesus said whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. I know Jesus died for me." That is good. "I know," belongs to those for whom Jesus died: they have no uncertain hope, *they know* they have passed from death unto life (1 John iii. 14), *they know* that they have eternal life (v. 13). If you search 1 John you will find how certain it all is, and that *we know* is the proper language of a believer; there are no

doubts and fears there, and though there may be verses you do not understand, at all events you can *believe* what God says.

A little girl writes, "Yes. If you are not saved there is cause to be afraid, but if you are saved, Jesus can keep you from it." Perhaps this child is not *quite* sure to which class she belongs: what she says is true: any furnace of fire kindled by God would indeed make one afraid, but only those who die unsaved will ever have their portion in it. If you are not saved, seek *now* to escape from having to go there. "If you are saved" (as she says) Jesus will not *need* to "keep you from it" by-and-bye, for *already now* (if saved), you *are* delivered from it. To the Thessalonians who were only *just converted*, Paul wrote to let them know that they were already delivered from the wrath to come (ch. i. 10), and that includes the furnace of fire, the lake of fire, or what you would call *hell*. And John says (iv. 17), that those who are saved may be *bold* in the day of judgment, and are not to be in fear or torment. Of course, Jesus *can* keep from anything, because God has given Him *all* power, but still it will not be necessary for Him to keep believers from hell after they die. God will love to have around Him in heaven all who, however feeble their faith, have looked from self to Jesus, and He will be just and yet the justifier of such (Rom. iii. 26). He could not break His word to Jesus or to us.

Another girl replies: "No, thank

God, who has not only surrounded me with those who are His own, but has brought me to Him, so that now instead of Matt. xiii. 42, John xiv. 2, is my future. Never can I thank God enough for His loving-kindness toward me." It is very right that we should praise the One who has done so much for us. If men had not praised Him when He was here, the stones would have spoken (Luke xix. 40). How much more reason for adoration have we who have traced His pathway till it ended in death on the Cross for us, which the disciples had not then seen! It is His death which brings us to God and puts away sin (1 Pet. iii. 18). He went through a furnace of wrath and fire for us, and we are delivered from both through His death and brought to God in peace, and as an older girl expresses it, "Christ has prepared a home for me in His Father's house." Think of what it cost Him to do that! Some one said lately when speaking of some young people who were not always careful of their conduct, "If we *realized* what it cost Christ to bear our sins on the Cross, we should not think so lightly of daily sins." *Each* sin of ours must have cost Him the hiding of God's face, *every* sin needed the shedding of His precious blood, and before a home could be prepared for sinners, *all* sins of which they had been guilty must have been put away for ever. This, and far more, Jesus did. Thank God for all who have been

delivered from the furnace of fire by Him, and who will enter instead into the Father's House to praise Him! "Yet there is room."

JESUS CAN DO ANYTHING.

PERHAPS, with God's blessing, it might be helpful to some to relate a little incident which took place a short time ago.

A little boy was staying with us, and when going up to bed one night he heard a noise which frightened him. "Auntie, I don't like that noise," he said.

"It will soon leave off, dear," I answered, but as I spoke I felt his little hand grasp mine tighter and tighter. Seeing the little fellow was really frightened, I said: "Darling, shall we ask Jesus to stop that nasty noise and not let you be frightened?"

"Oh! yes, Auntie," and the dear child scrambled off the bed on which I had placed him, and we knelt down together.

I asked the Lord, simply, to stop the noise, and not let little E—— be frightened any more.

Wethen rose and the little fellow said:

"Auntie, I aren't frightened now, 'cause *Jesus can do anything*, and He won't let little E—— be frightened."

A few minutes afterwards the dear little boy was in bed and fast asleep, without the least fear.

Reader, can we not all learn a lesson from this dear child's simple faith? Surely *Jesus can do anything*. Do you not believe on Him? He saved the chiefest

of sinners, as Paul owned in 1 Tim. i. 15, where it says:—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Never mind how wicked you have been, Jesus *can*, and is quite willing to, save you.

Jesus is coming soon to call His own away to be with Him for ever, all those who believe on Him; are you ready? If not, what a solemn position you are in, nothing but *judgment* awaits you. Oh! turn to Jesus, He has *died* to save you. How many times have you turned a deaf ear to the words of Jesus? How many times have you been to a Gospel preaching? and have you still refused Him? Perhaps you will not have many more chances. Oh! let me warn you, the *time is shortening*, Jesus will *soon* be here, and if you do not own yourself a lost sinner and trust in the Lord Jesus, and receive Him as your own Saviour, you will be *lost for eternity*.

Return like the prodigal in Luke xv. and Jesus *will* receive you. He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

Jesus *can* and will save you if you trust in Him like a little child (Matt. xviii. 3). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

G. M. B.

"The heavenly Bridegroom SOON will come,
To claim His bride, and take her home,
To be with Him on high."

"Oh! sinner, ere it be *too late*,
Flee thou to mercy's open gate,
And join Christ's waiting band."

"Trim your lamps and be ready,
For the Bridegroom's nigh."

Everlasting Glory.

(P. M.)

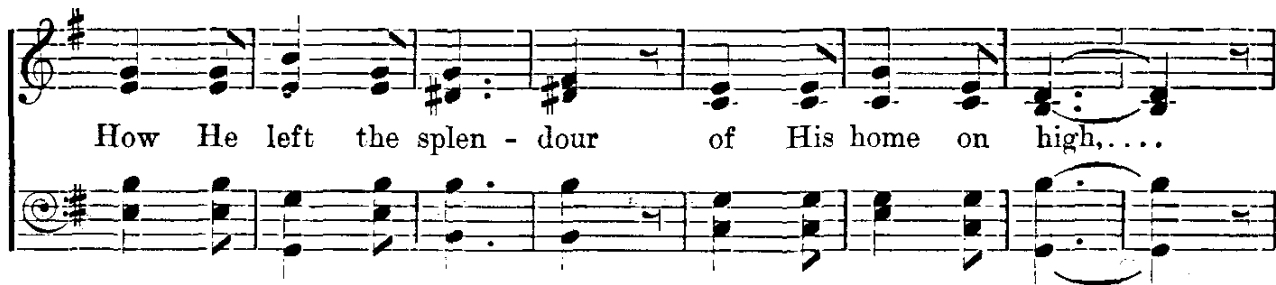
L. C. W.



1. Ev - er - last - ing glo - ry un - to Je - sus be!.....



Sing a - loud the sto - ry of His vic - to - ry!.....



How He left the splen - dour of His home on high,....



Came, in love so ten - der, on the cross to die.....

2. Yes, He came from heaven, suffered in our stead;
Praise to Him be given, our exalted Head!
Jesus, meek and lowly, came the lost to save;
He, the victim holy, triumphed o'er the grave.
3. We in death were lying, lost in hopeless gloom,
Jesus, by His dying, vanquished e'en the tomb!
Burst its iron portal, rolled away the stone,
Rose in life immortal to the Father's throne.
4. Christ the Lord is risen, sing we now to-day!
Freed are we from prison, Christ our debt did pay;
Sing aloud, and never cease to spread His fame;
Triumph, triumph ever, in the Saviour's name.

WORDS OF LIFE.

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THE BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS.

1. Chap. xix. 5 and 9 ; xv. 33 and xviii. 12 ; vi. 10, 11 and xxiv. 33, 34 ; x. 1 and xv. 20 ; x. 8 and 10 ; ix. 4 and 16 ; xi. 14 and xxiv. 6 ; xxi. 9 and xxv. 24.
2. 1 Chron. iii. ; Matt. i.
3. Abram, Gen. xii. 1-3 ; xiv. 13.
4. The Sadducees, Matt. xxii. 23 ; Acts xxiii. 8.
5. 2 Sam. v. ; 1 Chron. iii. ; xiv.
6. A divine city, Heb. xi. 10.
7. Hind, v. 19 ; roe, vi. 5 ; swine, xi. 22 ; oxen, xiv. 4 ; bear, xvii. 12 ; lion, xix. 12 ; horse, xxi. 31 ; ass, dog, xxvi. 3, 11 ; lambs, goats, xxvii. 26 ; conies, xxx. 26.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

"*A virtuous woman*" (xxx. 10-31).

"The wisdom of women builds their house, but folly plucketh it down with her own hands."

THIS verse may fitly head our chapter : it is a better reading of xiv. 1.

The initial letters of the twenty-two verses before us are in alphabetical order in the Hebrew Bible. They are on one subject : the life, or house-building of an honest woman ; the folly that plucks down is absent, so the hands are free to be used in good ways.

But where is her husband ? He is a public man. He is probably (verse 23) a God-fearing Hebrew, and occupied among the elders of the city in hearing causes of dispute. The gate of the city seems to have been the place of judgment and honour for such. He has no need to be anxious about what is occurring at home, nor to be desirous

of interrupting his calling to acquire spoil (verse 11), nor to be afraid that his numerous servants are idle, or his children neglected. No, his heart can trust his wife, and he can praise her (11, 28). She is a good wife, mother (28), daughter (29) and mistress (15, 21, 27). *She* does not sit in the gate, which would be something like having a seat in Parliament or being a member of the County Council. Women now-a-days are desiring public places, and talk about their rights and equality with men and so on ; these thoughts are not learnt from the Bible, where we find that even in Old Testament days women were occupied generally in domestic matters, setting their husbands free (as, much more, Christian women should) for public service, whether in Israel or the Church. This woman could prepare food, spin and make clothes, besides which she had enough to spare for the poor. The fear of God governed her (30), so what her hands found to do she did for Him, and though *she* was not known in the gates, her *works* were (31), which is far better. You see, little girls, how many useful things you may learn to do ! It is sad to think that Solomon's wives (1 Kings xi.) were not like this woman, and comparatively few women in the Bible resembled her.

But surely this has some higher meaning ? Most likely. Christians, at all events, may take it that until Christ the heavenly Bridegroom appears, they

should be occupied in His service here as this woman was. Even in the night her candle burned (18), so should ours (Luke xi. 33-36). She was caring for the interests of her absent lord, and doing good to all around her, so we may be (Luke xix. 12, 13). She traded with her lord's goods, so should we (Matt. xxv. 14-17). Then we shall be glad to see Him when He comes.

H. L. H.

QUESTIONS.

1. How often are this woman's *hands* named?
2. Find instances of noted men sitting in the gates.
3. Can you find any women who sought to exercise a good influence over their husbands?
4. And how many who did the contrary?
5. What woman in Scripture do you admire most?
6. What books of the Bible are called after women?
7. And what other book is mostly about a woman?
8. And which one is written to a woman?

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

LITTLE children, do you know what sympathy is? Suppose you fall in the street and get yourself into a wretched mess, but your mother finds you in that condition and feels for you, that would be sympathy. But if she does more than that, if she takes away the dirty garment, washes you, and substitutes a clean one, that would be more than sympathy; it would be the work of love.

Now I wish to press upon each child who reads this paper, that you (unless

your sins have been washed away by the blood of Jesus) are in a condition much more pitiable than that which I have described. The condition I mean is that of sin. You know you have done many very naughty things, and the thought of having to answer to God for them fills you with terror. If you should be called to answer for one of them, the result could not but be "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." How fearful a thing this is!

If it had not been for the work of Christ, not even children dying in infancy (what people call *innocent*) could ever be in God's presence. They are lost by nature. But the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost; so the work of Christ avails for them. But how is it to be with you who are not only lost by nature, but have done those many sinful things?

Now I wish to tell you of the One who loved you in this lost and pitiable condition. Who do you think this was? Think of this world which, in its daily journey round the sun, flies through space at a speed almost incredible. Think of those mighty orbs, countless in number, which you see suspended in space on any starlight night. Then think of the One who made all these, whose "handiwork" they are. He it was who pitied *you*, a poor sinful child upon this sin-stained earth, and in order that He might have you without your sins in His home of glory, He came down into this sinful

world and died for you on Calvary's cross.

I sometimes think of a verse of a hymn which has been fixed upon my memory from earliest childhood, and which speaks of this sympathy and this labour of love. It is this :

"He knew how wicked men had been,
He knew that God must punish sin ;
So out of pity Jesus said,
He'd bear the punishment instead."

How true this is ! When we think of who Jesus is it makes His love very, very wonderful. And this same Jesus, who, when here, took little children in His arms and blessed them, is now seated at the right of God, has the same loving heart, and is now inviting you to share that beautiful home with Him.

But before you can be there you must be cleansed from your sins ; so if you have not already been to Jesus go to Him now, my child, and He will forgive you and let you know that your sins were washed away in His blood, and you will be one of the blessed redeemed who will praise this Jesus through all eternity.

R. H.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. Will you tell me if 2 Chron. xix. 2 means that we are not to love those of our friends who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ ?

A. You are quite right to love your friends. To be "without natural affection" is one of the signs of the last days (2 Tim. iii. 2). We ought even to love our enemies (Matt. v. 43-48). The

young ruler (Mark x. 17-24) was naturally a lovable character, though we know he turned his back on Christ. Yet it says, "Jesus beholding him, loved him." But while this is all true and important in its place, we must never allow natural affection to interfere with our allegiance to Christ. If the nearest and dearest would come between me and Christ, there should be no hesitation which I should choose (Luke xiv. 26).

If you really love a person, you will desire for them the best thing possible, and that is that they may be brought to Christ, and surely we need great wisdom and grace to commend the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

If they want to drag you into the world, that word, "Love not the world, &c." (1 John ii.) would stop you, and you will find that a consistent walk, and a kind, obliging, and unselfish behaviour will often win confidence, and inspire respect for the things of God, and readiness to listen when the fit opportunity presents itself.

Never cease to pray for those you love, that they may be saved (Rom. ix. 3 ; x. 1).

THE FOUR CALLS OF THE SPIRIT.

WE have reached the last month of another year. How quickly the years roll by ! How many, who entered upon this year with buoyant spirits and elastic step, are now lying cold and stiff in the grave, awaiting that moment when "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth !" (John v. 29).

Not all at the same point of time, we know ; for 1000 years elapse between the first resurrection, or the resurrection of life, and the resurrection of

judgment (John v. 28, 29; Rev. xx). Of course it is the body only that is dead in the grave; the spirit is alive, awaiting the resurrection, when body and spirit will be re-united for eternity. But, meanwhile, the spirits of all the departed are conscious; some of perfect happiness, like the thief who died at Calvary; others of misery, like the rich man, of whom we read in Luke xvi.

How does the end of this year find you, my dear young friends? Is your heart still closed against the blessed Saviour? If so, open the door *at once*.

1

The Spirit came in childhood,
And pleaded, "Let me in!"
But, oh! the door was bolted
By heedlessness and sin.
"Oh! I'm too young," the child said,
"My heart is closed to-day!"
Sadly the Spirit listened,
Then turned and went away.

2

Again he came and pleaded
In youth's bright happy hour;
He called, but found no answer;
For, fettered by sin's power,
The youth lay idly dreaming:
"Go, Spirit; not to-day;
Wait till I've tried life's pleasures."—
Again He went away.

3

Once more He came in mercy,
In manhood's vigorous prime;
He knocked, but found no entrance;
"The merchant had no time:"
"No time for true repentance;"
"No time to think or pray."—
And so, repulsed and saddened,
Again He turned away.

4

Yet once again He pleaded—
The man was old and ill;
He hardly heard the whisper,
His heart was sore and chill:
"Go, leave me! when I want Thee
I'll send for Thee," he cried;
Then, turning on his pillow,
Without a hope he died!

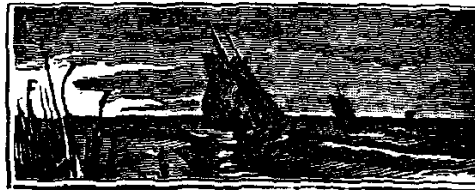
A THOUGHT ON THE SEA-SHORE.

In every object here I see
Something, O Lord, that leads to Thee;
Firm as the rocks, Thy promise stands,
Thy mercies countless as the sands,
Thy love a sea immensely wide,
Thy grace an ever-flowing tide.

In every object here I see
Something, my heart, that points at thee;
Hard as the rocks that bound the strand,
Unfruitful as the barren sand,
Deep and deceitful as the ocean,
And, like the tides, in constant motion.

Olney Hymns.

COWPER.



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