A MESSAGE FROM GOD

EDITED BY
HEYMAN WREFORD

1911

LONDON
T. WESTON, 53, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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T. WESTON, 53, Paternoster Row, E.C.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I HAD been suffering for some months (off and on) the agonies of gall-stone, and on August 9th, 1909, the doctor said I must have an operation as soon as possible. I had always had a sort of dread of such an eventuality, but the moment he said it, all fear was gone. On the morning of August 16th the operation was to take place, and knowing how likely it was that I should not survive it, I wrote my obituary notice as follows :—

"On August 16th, —— —— underwent an operation, which, through God's infinite grace, has been made the means of his departure to be with Christ, by whose precious blood he was redeemed.

"A sinner greater e'en than Saul,
But should there ever be
An even greater sinner still
Be sure the Saviour can and will
My soul set free."

I handed the above to the matron, who promised to see that it was used if needful. I went into the operating-room, and lay down on the table; and as I began to inhale the anæsthetic, calmly committed everything to God; and then———no! it was not the glory of His presence, but the grey wall of my room.

Thus it pleased God to raise me up, and I now record the experience of a believer in view of death, to the praise of the One who has for ever taken away the sting.

On the morning of August 16th a friend sent me, among other quotations, the first line of Psalm lxii., "Only in God is my soul silent," and as I lay awake at 2 a.m. on August 23rd, after being very ill for a week, those words came home to me with such sweetness that I put together the following verses, and got the nurse to come in and write them down.

PSALM LXII. 1.

My soul has reached the secret source
Of praise and joy and perfect rest,
For in the everlasting God
I'm fully and for ever blest—
In God is my soul silent.
What wonders has He made me prove
Of love and joy and perfect light,
Of grace and mercy infinite!
For God is Love, and God is Light--
In God is my soul silent.
I have no care, or wish, or prayer,
Rejoicing that His will is best;
And in the bosom of my God
As babe on mother's arm, I rest—
In God is my soul silent.
I shall not always silent be;
He'll open yet my lips in praise:
Here (as I trust) and soon in heaven
The everlasting song I'll raise—
In God is my soul silent.

"Unto him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

G. M.

THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

THE question of the government of this country has fully occupied the minds of many into whose hands this little book will fall. Time, money, and energy have all been freely given. Party feeling has run high; leaders and their followers have known the bitterness of defeat as well as the exhilarations of victory.

And this for earthly honour—a corruptible crown.

Soon those who at this present moment are in the first flush and joy of victory will have passed for ever from the scenes of their conflict, for governments, thrones, empires and kingdoms, as well as those who make and compose them, must all pass away until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of God and His Christ.

Has it ever occurred to you that in God's word questions of far graver import are asked; questions which from the serious consequences at issue, call for very deliberate thought and decision. And in these *you* are vitally concerned. In Job xiv. three such questions are asked.

(1) WHO CAN BRING A CLEAN THING OUT OF AN UNCLEAN? (ver. 4). God who asks the question answers, "NOT ONE." Who is unclean? Isaiah lxiv. 6 says, "WE are ALL as an *unclean thing*," made unclean by *sin* in the sight of a holy God, and no human effort, however well directed, can cleanse us from that defilement. Have you ever felt like Peter, who cried out, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man"?

If so, there is cleansing virtue in the precious blood of Jesus (1 John i. 7). It alone can fit you for His presence, therefore what man cannot do, God can and God will, and *for you*. Just own your uncleanness, then plead the blood.

(2) MAN DIETH AND WASTETH AWAY. WHERE IS HE? (ver. 10). The first question God answered. YOU must answer this. Think of it, and before doing so, quietly read and consider Luke xvi. 30, 31.

(3) IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN? (ver. 14). Beyond any question you know the answer is "YES." *Man may say* "NO." *God says* "YES." Rev. xx. 12, "And I saw the dead small and great stand before God." What for? JUDGMENT. The Lord Jesus Himself speaks of the resurrection of dead men (John v. 28, 29). Some to go forth into life eternal, others into unutterable woe. Rev. xx. 12 is the fulfilment of the latter.

Reader, YOU will live again—BUT WHERE? In heaven or hell (Luke xvi. 20, 31).

If unclean—HELL. If cleansed by the blood of Jesus—HEAVEN. Which shall it be? YOU *only can answer.*

A. C.

A MESSAGE FROM GOD

SENT BY A FRIEND

Here's the feast for you both:—

"And Aaron shall bear *their names* before the Lord upon his two SHOULDERS for a memorial" (Exod. xxviii. 12).

"And Aaron shall bear the names . . . upon his HEART . . . before the Lord *continually*" (Exod. xxviii. 29, 30).

"Holiness to the Lord . . . on his *forehead,* that *they may be accepted*" (Exod. xxviii. 36, 38).

Isn't it lovely to know our great High Priest has *our* names on his shoulders, heart, and forehead continually? So we are "ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED" (Eph. i. 6).

So fear not, *He* will strengthen you for every trial and contingency.

E. L.

AFTER MANY DAYS

THE late Mr. J. Russell, of Bradford, England, in the prime of his manhood was a capital open-air speaker. He had a fine commanding presence, and a full, round, musical voice, which could be heard on a quiet evening upwards of half a mile distant.

In the neighbourhood of Mr. Russell's early labours lived Joe Braley, a rough man of unenviable notoriety; often in prison for poaching, wife-beating, house-breaking, etc.; nearly always "wanted" by the police.

Having "spotted" a likely house for his midnight work, at some distance from town, he bent his steps along a river-bank, with his bag of burglaring tools. Suddenly a distant voice fell distinctly on his ears. Curiosity prompted him to follow the sound for half a mile along the river-side until he found himself on the outskirts of a crowd, listening to earnest words of Gospel appeal.

An hour later, as the preacher was sitting at his evening meal, a knock was heard at the front door, and the servant announced that Joe Braley wanted to see Mr. Russell. At once he went to the door, whilst Mrs. Russell, naturally timid and knowing Joe's character, crept quietly behind her husband in the darkness.

There at the open doorway stood the sturdy figure, and a gruff voice asked, "Are you Mr. Russell?"

"Yes, I am."

"Do you know me?"

"Yes, Joe, I do."

"I want you to come for a walk with me."

Then Mrs. Russell made known her presence by laying hold of her husband and beseeching him not to venture at that late hour into the dark night. Remonstrance was in vain.

Together the preacher and poacher walked in silence, Mr. Russell wondering meantime what could be Joe's errand. On, on, until out of the town and up a lonely lane between two high hedge-rows. Then Joe came to a sudden halt, and said:

"You know what my life has been. I started out on an errand of burglary this evening. As I crept along the river-bank a voice fell on my ears. Scarcely knowing what I did, I walked on until I came to a crowd and heard you preaching. I afterwards inquired your name and address, that I might see you. I want to know whether all you said is true."

"Yes, Joe, every word."

"Then do you think there is any hope for me? Can Jesus save such a sinner as I am?"

"Yes, Joe; I have no doubt about it whatever, seeing He can save to the uttermost."

"But though you know much of my life, you don't know all. There is hardly a sin under the sun I have not committed; I should not like to swear that these hands have not been stained with blood. Can there be mercy for such a deep-dyed sinner?"

"Yes, Joe; the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

"Then I want you to see me bury these things, and kneel with me upon their grave."

Cutting the turf carefully he dug a little grave, and deposited there his revolver, jemmy, skeleton-keys, and sundry housebreaking appliances. Then treading the earth down, he relaid the turf, and he and the preacher knelt in the darkness, crying to God for mercy. As they rose, Joe left Mr. Russell, and was heard of in the neighbourhood no more. What had befallen him was a secret; if living, it was evident he had put distance between himself and his old associates as his only chance of a better life.

To his children growing up around him the preacher often

told the tale of his midnight adventure, though now far removed from the scene, and wondered what had become of Joe.

Thirty years passed by, and the United Kingdom was *en fete* with the Sunday-school Centenary celebrations. Of these the gathering in Peel Park, Bradford, was by far the largest; some thirty thousand scholars, besides many thousands of parents and friends, meeting on that occasion.

Mr. Russell, now in "the sere and yellow leaf," was present with his family. A well-built and neatly dressed gentleman gripped his hand. "Why, Mr. Russell, I am delighted to see you."

"You have the advantage of me," said Mr. Russell.

"Don't you know me? I know you, and have reason to know you. I should have known you a hundred years hence. Don't you remember Joe Braley?"

"You are not Joe Braley, are you?"

"I am; but, praise God, I am not Joe Braley as you knew him. I love the Lord, and have been preaching His gospel for years; and (turning to a lady at his side) this is Mrs. Braley. She also loves the Lord; and my three daughters here are all believers. Forget you, never! We must for ever praise God that we knew you."

Among the many glad hearts that returned from that immense gathering, we venture to believe not one thrilled with truer joy than did that of this dear old servant of God as he told the tale of the long lost found, and testified once more to the truth of the divine promise, "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."

W. W. C.

MR. BLATCHFORD, AND THE REV. R. J. CAMPBELL

THE self-confessed infidel, Mr. Blatchford, waxes jubilant over Mr. Campbell's book. He says : " *The New Theology* is *God and My Neighbour,* with the soft pedal on. It is Thomas Paine in a white tie. It is the Ingersoll fist, muffled in a boxing glove. It is *The Clarion* rue, worn with a difference. As an Agnostic Socialist, I am naturally pleased with the book. Mr. Campbell is a Christian minister and I am an infidel editor; and the difference between his religion and mine is too small to argue about. But I sail under the Jolly Roger. Mr. Campbell rejects the doctrines of the Fall and the Atonement. He denies the Divinity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, and the resurrection. He denies the Inspiration and Infallibility of the Bible; and he rejects the idea of divine punishment and everlasting hell. So do I. Mr. Campbell abandons the orthodox theory of sin, and says that selfishness is sin, and that unselfishness is morality and salvation. So do I." Such blasphemers of our Divine Redeemer make us think of the words in Jude, " Clouds without water . . . trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

IMPORTANT NOTICE

YOU may go to Church, take the Sacrament, say Prayers, sing Psalms, teach in the Sunday School, distribute tracts, and go through many other religious duties, but remember: "Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire" (Rev. xx. 15).

Reader! Is your name written in the Book of Life? If not, you are travelling on—oh! how solemn—travelling on to devouring fires and the everlasting burnings!!

" Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos iv. 12).

"HALLELUJAH!" OR, A NEW YEAR'S GREETING

YES, that's the word, "Hallelujah!" which means, "Praise the Lord." This word is used several times by David in the Book of Psalms, who was the sweet Psalmist of Israel. But before I proceed further, I desire to bring my readers face to face with a grand verse of poetry, as follows:—

"One there is above all others,
Oh, how He loves!
His is love beyond a brother's,
Oh, how He loves!
Earthly friends may fail or leave us,
One day soothe, the next day grieve us;
But this Friend will ne'er deceive us—
Oh, how He loves!"

This Friend is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever—the Friend of sinners. And if all my readers knew the preciousness of Christ and the love of God, they would, I am sure, join with me very heartily, and say again and again, "Hallelujah!"

To every reader of this Gospel magazine we wish you most heartily, a happy New Year. To every unsaved reader, we give some of the best advice at the beginning of another year—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things (necessary things) shall be added unto you" (see Matt. vi. 33).

As we look back over the past year, with all its favours and privileges, we have much to thank God for. And the writer of this short article would say, and wishes all readers to say as well

with him, this one word very heartily, "Hallelujah!" which reminds us of that well-known verse which says:—

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Furthermore, there are the daily benefits of health, and strength, and food, and clothing. And the goodness of God leads to repentance. But, best of all, and greatest of all, there is the full manifestation of God's great and perfect love in giving His beloved Son to take our place in death.

This is the divine Substitute whom John the Baptist spake of, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). "Hallelujah!"

Then there is this fact, that many have been called away from this world by death, whilst we have been spared; and many have passed through deep sorrow, and pain, and trial.

But for a few moments I would ask my readers kindly to go back with me in thought, and remember this precious truth, that Christ became the willing victim, who was crucified and slain at Calvary.

The apostle Peter, in his First Epistle, says, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). "Hallelujah!"

But what does all this mean to us? It means two things. That man was so wicked, and so cruel that he put to death the Lord Jesus Christ, the spotless Son of God. But it also means that God, out of pure love for sinners, gave up His beloved Son to suffer and to die upon the cross, knowing full well all He would have to pass through. Oh, praise our God! praise the Lord!

Truly we can say, and rightly say, that "God is light," and "God is love." For Christ has died for the ungodly. "Hallelujah!" Christ not only came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, but was made sin by God on the cross. And surely 'twas this that caused Him to cry out that bitter cry, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Oh the wonders of redeeming love! Cannot you now see, dear reader, that Christ was the sin bearer? Put your whole trust in Him. Christ having died and risen again, lives for evermore. And therefore I say again, "Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord."

Now He is risen, and crowned, and exalted, and glorified at God's right hand. And the grand result is, that thousands of thousands are saved. Missionaries and workers are very busy on every hand; and many homes and institutions are a standing witness for God, testifying also to the power of the gospel of Christ.

Now let every reader say, "Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord!" All glory be to God. Christ is risen, and Christ has triumphed gloriously. Jesus settled everything for the poor lost sinner, when He died and rose again. "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed."

For "the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord!"

May God by the mighty power of His Spirit bless these few lines. And may every believer walk worthy of Christ. Amen.

R. S.

A STRIKING TESTIMONY

The following lines, written by an infidel, were found in his desk after his death :—

I've tried in vain a thousand ways
My fears to quell, my hopes to raise;
But all I need, the Bible says,
Is JESUS.

My soul is night, my heart is steel,
I cannot see, I cannot feel;
For light, for heat, I must appeal
To JESUS.

He died, He lives, He reigns, He pleads.
There's love in all His acts and deeds;
All, all a guilty sinner needs
Is JESUS.

Though some will mock, and some will blame;
In spite of fear, in spite of shame,
I'll go to Him because His name
Is JESUS.

MAN A FREE AGENT

LOOK upon that dripping, limp and helpless body that they have just taken from the water. Is he dead? "No," says the physician. He is lying just on the verge of death and life. A single respiration will save him. And then how you work over him for dear life—shouting in his ear, chafing him and turning him over with quick and half-frantic haste. And in your intense anxiety that he should breathe, you find your own lungs labouring—breathing for him with all the power which they can command. But it is useless. He must breathe for himself or he is *dead*.

So I hear the Son of God say, "I am come that they might have life." "He that believeth on the Son hath life." And I see men in scores lying just on the edge of life eternal, where a single act of faith would save them; and I find myself trying to believe for them, and by a tremendous grasp of sympathetic faith to lay hold of eternal life on their behalf. But in vain. They must believe for themselves. God can become incarnate to save men; He can suffer and shed redeeming blood and die to save them. He can do anything and everything but *choose* for them. That is man's inalienable prerogative. It is the crown jewel of his manhood. God will not take it from him. And from the first man that was placed in Eden to the last that shall be born on earth, the same message comes—"Choose ye."

A. J. G.

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NEWS OF THE WORLD

All the *world is guilty* before God (Rom. iii. 19).

The whole *world lieth in wickedness* (1 John v. 19).

The *God of this world hath blinded* the minds of them which believe not (on Christ) (2 Cor. iv. 4).

The *world knows not God* (1 Cor. i. 21).

Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself that He might *deliver us from this present evil world* (Gal. i. 4).

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

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LINES COMPOSED BY A CHRISTIAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD

SENT BY A FRIEND.

They call it "going down the hill"
When we are growing old,
And speak in mournful accents
When our tale is nearly told;
They sigh when talking of the past,
Those "days that used to be,"
As if the future were not bright
With immortality.

But oh! it is not going down,
'Tis climbing higher, higher!
Until we almost see the home
Our longing souls desire;
For if the natural eye grows dim,
It is but dim to earth,
While the eye of faith grows keener
To perceive the Saviour's worth.

Those "bygone days," though days of joy,
We wish them not again;
Were there not also stormy days
Of sorrow and of pain?
But in these days awaiting us,
Those days beyond the tomb,
Sorrow shall never find a place,
But joys eternal bloom.

For though in truth the outward man
Must perish and decay,
The inward man shall be renewed
By grace from day to day.
They who are "planted" by the Lord,
Unshaken in the root,
E'en to old age "shall flourish still,"
And ever "bring forth fruit."

It is not years that make men old,
The spirit may be young,
Although for threescore years and ten
The wheels of time have run.
We know God has recorded in
The blessed book of truth,
That they who "wait upon the Lord"
They shall renew their youth.

And when the eyes now dim with age
Behold His blessed face,
We then shall know as we are known
And magnify His grace;
And when our ears now dull with years
Shall hear His heavenly voice,
How will the heart o'erflow with praise,
And evermore rejoice!

The head now hoary-turned shall wear
An everlasting crown,
The gift of Him who trod this earth
And claims it for His own.
Who can describe the blessedness
Of joys with Him untold?
The pathway ended here for that
Of never growing old!

"But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

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T. WESTON, 53, Paternoster Row, E.C.

ANOTHER IN HEAVEN

AFTER our first Sunday evening's preaching in the Royal Public Rooms, Exeter, December, 1884, a young girl was seen weeping outside when everyone had left the hall. She was anxious about her soul and unwilling to leave until she had found salvation. She did find it, and went home to tell the story of her new found joy. Her father saw her crying when she came home, and asked her why she cried, and where she had been. She said, " You would cry too if you had been where I have been, and heard what I have heard."

The father, of whom I wish to speak now, was the slave of drink. Night after night he would come home from the public house intoxicated. His saved daughter prayed for him earnestly and continually. One day he said to her," Lucy, pray for me." She would often say to her mother, " Mother, he will be different." The wife used often to answer in her despair, " He never will."

I used to speak to him, but the wife would say to me, " It is no good, Mr. W—— for you to speak to him, he is too hard."

The daughter said, " I am sure he will be saved." I could but reply, " Go on praying, the Lord honours faith, and answers prayer."

In his endeavours after better things, he would sometimes sign the pledge and bring it home, and nail it over the fireplace, proud of it—but in a day or two he was as bad as ever.

But God was going to save his soul in His own way and time, and so give him a power over sin by the knowledge of its forgive-

ness. He was converted about six months after his daughter's conversion at the Royal Public Rooms. All his companions said he would never stick to it, he had signed the pledge so often before, etc., but he replied, " Yes, I shall stick to it, for I have the grace of God in my heart now. Satan comes and tempts me, but the Lord helps me." He was always speaking about Christ to his mates—for twenty-five years he served the Lord and never turned back. He always had his Bible and hymn book by his bedside, and the Bible was soiled with the marks of his fingers when he read it in his work. His Bible was the voice of God to him.

Ah! those dear old Public Rooms days, when God was with us in such power and blessing! When, week after week, men like the one of whom I am writing came to Christ. Hundreds of them have gone to be with Christ who found the Lord in those grand happy days of fruitful service. Yes, well do I remember how my faith was often tried about dear W., of whom I am writing. After many a loving appeal to him to come to Christ, I have been disheartened at his answer, and have said to his wife—

" Oh! Mrs. W——, I'm afraid it's no good speaking to your husband. I have just met him, and talked to him, and he tells me he must have one more pint and then he will give it up."

The one more pint was often repeated, but many were praying for him, and the daughter still prayed and said, *"Mother, he will be different, I am sure he will be saved."*

God honours faith and answers prayer. The testimony of his mates, unconverted men, was that he was a different man altogether.

So he lived among us his quiet, happy life for Christ. Five years ago he had an affection of the brain, which kept him a prisoner in his bed, and drew a veil of silence over his life. He would often smile as he lay, as if happy thoughts were passing through his mind. Sometimes when the word of God was read to

him, his face would brighten, as if the poor numbed brain responded to the voice of God.

And when he passed away from earth to heaven to be with Christ, and we buried him in the Higher Cemetery, it was meet to recall the old days, twenty-five years ago, when Thomas Western came to Christ. We could look from his open grave to the open heaven, and realise a little what the power of that salvation must be that could change a slave of Satan into a servant of God. Yes, one by one they are leaving us to be with Christ, but what a glad reunion that will be, when we, too, pass into the presence of our Lord to meet the ones that have gone before. May the Lord bless the reader of this article, as he blessed the subject of it, for Christ's sake.

H. W.

JOHN CASSIDY AND THE PRIEST

ANYONE who has sailed past the New Mole into Gibraltar Bay will have noticed the long yellow-washed building standing high upon the south front, and have been told that it is the military and naval hospital. In one of the wards of this hospital, about a year before the commencement of the Crimean War, there lay a private of the Thirty-third Regiment, John Cassidy by name, who had been seized by a fatal attack of dysentery. He felt that death was near; and calling to the hospital sergeant, he said, "Morris, I shan't be long, and I want to make my peace before I go. Will you send for the priest?"

"There's no need to send for him, Cassidy," replied Morris, who was an earnest Christian; "haven't I told you that Jesus, the blessed Saviour, is ready to receive you just now, and make you fit for heaven, if you'll only ask Him?"

"But I'm so weak, I haven't got any strength to pray," said the poor fellow; "it's far easier to let the priest do it; and he only

charges five shillings. You must go to the paymaster, Morris, to get the money, and give it to him as soon as he comes; and don't be long about it; for I feel that I haven't many hours before me. I'd like to die in my own religion; and you'll see how comfortable I shall be when the priest has performed the offices."

The sergeant thought it best for John to prove for himself what a broken reed he was leaning on, and accordingly sent at once for the priest. He came, received the money, and directed four candles to be brought; these he lighted, and placed two at the head, and two at the foot of the bed. He then took some "sacred oil," and put it on the brow and cheeks and lips of the dying man, and on various parts of his body. Afterwards he sprinkled him very freely with "holy water," and then, waving a censer over the bed, until the air was heavy with the perfume, he pronounced absolution, and solemnly declared that John Cassidy was ready for death.

"But I don't feel ready, sir," said John, looking up piteously into his face. "I don't feel a bit different after all that you've done."

"But you ought to feel different," replied the priest angrily. "You must trust the Church; and I tell you, in her name, that you are now a saved man."

"Well, sir," persisted John, "yet men that are saved, and are ready for heaven, feel happy, and I don't. There was a man that Sergeant Morris talked to in this ward. He died the other day, and he was so happy! He said he saw angels coming to take him away, and he wasn't afraid to die; and I thought you'd make me feel like that; but I'm quite frightened."

Strange language for a priest to hear, and most unwelcome. Straightening himself to his fullest height, he stood over the bed, and extending his hand in a threatening manner toward the dying

man, he exclaimed, " I give you this warning, John Cassidy, that if you listen to that heretic sergeant you will be damned."

John quailed for a moment before the fearful words; and then as the weight of unforgiven sin pressed upon his heart and he felt that the priest had no power—as he once believed—to cleanse it away, he cried out in the bitterness of his soul, " I cannot be worse than I am, sir; that's certain; so please go away, and let me take my chance." And as the priest seemed still inclined to linger, and to remonstrate, he raised himself partially on his pillow, and with strange energy persisted, " Don't stay any longer, sir! I haven't many minutes left, and I can't afford to lose any of them in argufying; so have pity on a dying man, and go at once."

The priest merely said on leaving the room, " John Cassidy, I warn you! you are forsaking your own mercy."

John was almost exhausted by the agitation and disappointment of the interview; but as he lay quite still, too weak for words, the sergeant came and sat by his bedside, and read to him such passages as the following:—

" There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." " Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" " By him all that believe are justified from all things." " Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." " The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

The sergeant added no words of his own, but sat by the dying man, silently praying that the entrance of this Divine word might give light to lighten the darkness of that departing soul. In a little while a low murmur caused him to bend his ear close to the lips of his dying comrade; and he caught the words as they came in faint, gasping utterance—" No other name! It was a mistake —to think any priest could get me to heaven—but Jesus Christ

can—and I think he will—I'm happy—I'm not frightened now—good-bye, Morris—tell—all the poor fellows—about—the blood—cleanseth." No more words, only a shiver and a sigh, and then a look of calm on the tired, worn face; and Sergeant Morris gently closed the eyes of the dead soldier; murmuring as he did so, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

NO ROOM FOR YOU!

ONE cold winter's night, a poor, shivering, half-starved child was drawn to the steps of a large house by the frequent opening and shutting of the front door. Every time it opened, happy voices were heard, and a flood of light streamed into the street. Every now and then people ran up the steps, the door flew open, and they entered to the beautiful light and happy voices within. "Might there not be room for her there?" she thought. She ventured up the steps, and sank wearily down on the cold stone, and listened to the soft music that stole upon her ear, and she blindly wondered if heaven was there.

"Oh, would not that door open and let her in?" She watched the door, and wished and waited, and waited and wondered, and wished and waited.

"Would the door open at her knock?" At last she knocked. What answer? A rough voice said, "Be off!" Two persons brushed past her, and, as the door opened wide to them, the sight of the beautiful light filled her with desire, and she strove to follow after.

"No room for you here," cried the voice, and a rough grasp shoved her back into the pitiless night, and, shivering and frightened, she ran down the dark, frozen street.

That night a policeman found a child by the roadside, perishing with hunger and cold. Poor thing! Was there no friendly door for her? Yes, one; the best in all the world—better than the great house door; and whoever knocks will never knock in vain. It opens as quickly to the faint knock of the humblest child as to a king on his throne. It says, "Knock, and it shall be opened." Do not be afraid; you will not be rudely sent away; only knock. This door is Jesus Christ. He tells us, "I am the Door." Through Him we enter into the beautiful light of our sins forgiven. Through Him we come to the happy voices of hope, love, and joy, and all the good. Through Him we go to heaven.

There is no other door for us out from this cold, dark world of sin.

Jesus Christ came to us. He has suffered for us; He has borne our punishment; He has pleaded in our behalf, and has opened a home for us in heaven. Go to Him; pray to Him; believe in Him; love Him. This is the way to enter the open door of His great and blessed salvation.

SOUL-WINNING

To win one precious soul for Christ,
One jewel for His crown,
One trophy of His cross to bring,
And at His feet lay down;
Lord, if this be my heart's desire,
Touch Thou my lips with altar-fire.

The worth of one immortal soul,
What human tongue can tell?
Who measure its redemption cost,
To save from death and hell?
'Tis God alone can answer make,
He saves, thro' blood, for Jesu's sake.

To cause the sightless eyes to see,
To rouse the careless soul;
Restore the wanderer, wake the dead,
And make the sin-sick whole;
This work, O Lord, is wholly Thine,
Yet use me by Thy power divine.

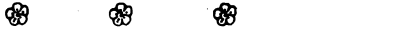
To breathe one sympathising word
To hearts by care opprest,
To work for Him who for me died,
While resting on His breast;
Just passive in His hand I'd be,
Content to speak, or silent be.

To catch the music of His voice,
The sunshine of His smile;
To preach the virtues of His blood,
To sinners lost and vile;
For this, Lord, let my life be spent,
For this, Time's fetters all be rent.

The world, with all its boasted stores,
Of pleasure, wealth, and fame,
Is nought when with one soul compared,
Who trusts Christ's precious Name;
Since were it gained, 'twould prove but loss,
Or, in exchange, but dung and dross.

The fields are ripe; the harvest sheaves
Will soon be gathered in;
Sower and reaper both rejoice
When heaven is entered in;
Love's labour then shall end in day;
The Master's heart be glad for aye.

S. T.



THE POWER OF THE CROSS

" We preach Christ crucified. . . . . the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

" SWING shut the city gates; run and tell the sentinels to stand guard, and let no one pass in or out till we have made away with these preachers of other gods."

It was in the walled city of some twenty thousand inhabitants in the kingdom of Hyderabad, within twenty miles of its capital, as we were on a gospel preaching tour, the first ever made through the kingdom of the Nizam, years ago.

We had been travelling since early morning, preaching in all the towns and villages on our way, and arrived before the gates of the city during the heat of the day, and camped outside of its walls.

About 3 p.m. my four native assistants went into the city to offer Scriptures and tracts for sale, I promising to join them when the heat should be a little less.

Just after entering the gate, I met my native assistants returning, with a hooting rabble following them. Speaking to them in the Tamil language, not understood by those people, they told me that it was not safe to attempt to do any work within the city. They had sold a few Gospels and tracts to both Mohammedans and Hindus.

Some of the Gospels were bound in yellowish buff bookbinder's muslin. The Mohammedans sent messengers running through the streets saying that they were bound in hog skin, and warning the faithful not to touch them. The Brahmins sent messengers to tell the Hindus that they were bound in calf skin, and skin of the sacred cow, and telling them not to be polluted by them. They had not only prevented the people from buying, but had incited the rabble to drive the preachers out of the city.

" Have you preached to the people? " said I. " Have you proclaimed the gospel message? "

" No; we have only sold a few books and tracts."

" Then we must do so now. I, at least, must go to the market place and preach. You need not accompany me unless you think it best."

" We will go with you," said they.

The rabble had halted and quieted as they heard the foreigner talking in a strange tongue, waiting to see what would come of it. We walked with slow and firm step up the street to the market. The crowd followed, increasing by the way. Seeing a foreigner boldly walking up the street, the Brahmin and Mohammedan zealots joined the throng.

We reached the centre of the town where the main streets crossed, and where was the market place, with a roof supported upon large masonry pillars. Stepping up the steps, I said in Tamil to my assistants, " Place your backs against these pillars, so that no one can attack you from behind, and keep a sharp watch on all, but show no signs of fear. The Master is with us; His promise is good."

As we stood there we could see three of the four city gates open, with the armed gatekeepers sitting under the arch of the gateway. Turning, I spoke politely to the people in Telegu, which was understood by all.

" Leave this place at once," was the angry response.

" Friends," said I, " I have come from afar to tell you some good news. I will tell that to you, and then will immediately go."

" No," said some, who were evidently leaders, " we will not hear you."

We had seen the angry mob tearing up the cobble paving-stones and gathering them in the skirts of their garments to stone us with.

" We have no desire to abuse your gods," said I, " but have come to deliver a message."

Then came the order, " Swing shut the gates; make way with the preachers of other gods."

I saw one nudge another, saying, " You throw the first stone and I will throw the second." But all who had stones to throw were in my vision, and they quailed a little under my keen glance, and hesitated. I seemed to feel the presence of the Lord as though He were standing by my side with His hand on my shoulder, saying, " I am with you: I will tell you what to say." I was not conscious of any anxiety about my personal safety. My whole soul was wrapped in the thought, " How shall I get God's offer of salvation before this people? "

" Brothers," said I, " it is not to revile your gods that I have come this long way; far from it. I have come to you with a royal message from a King far higher than your Nizam; I have come to tell a story sweeter than mortal ear has ever heard. But it is evident that this multitude does not wish to hear it." They thought that I was weakening, and quieted down to see what was going to happen.

" But," said I, " I see five men before me who do wish to hear my story. Will you all please step back a little? I will tell these five who want to know why I have come here and what is my message, and then you may stone me. I will make no resistance then." I had been carefully scanning the crowd and had selected my men, for I had seen five honest countenances who had shown no sympathy with the abuse that had been heaped upon us.

" Brother with the red-bordered turban," said I, addressing a venerable Brahmin who stood among the people at the right, "You would like to hear what my wonderful story is before they stone me, would you not? Be frank and say so, for there are four others like you who wish to hear."

" I would like to hear what your story is," said he, speaking up courageously and kindly.

" Brother with the gold-bordered turban at my left, you, too, would like to hear, and you with the yellow turban, and you with the brown-bordered, and you with the pink."

I had rightly judged these men, for each assented. They were curious to know what I had to say.

" Now will you five men please come forward, and I will tell you alone. All you others step back! Step back! As soon as I have told these five the story you may come forward and throw your stones."

The five came forward, the rest reluctantly stepped back a little. I had purposely chosen Brahmins, as I thought I could win them the better.

" Brothers," said I, in a subdued tone, " what is it you chant as you go to the river for your daily ablutions? Is it not this?

' Papoham, papakarmahan, papatma, papa sambhavaha,
Trahi mam, Krupaya Deva, Sharana gata vatsala,' "

said I, chanting it in Sanskrit; " and is not this its meaning? " said I in Telegu:—

" I am a sinner, my actions are sinful. My soul is sinful. All that pertains to me is polluted with sin. Do Thou, O God, that hast mercy on those who seek Thy refuge, do Thou take away my sin."

These five Brahmins at once became my friends. One who correctly chants their Vedas and their mantras they always look up to with respect.

" Now do you know how God can do what you ask? how He can take away the burden of our sin, and give us relief? "

" We do not know. Would that we knew."

" I know; I have learned the secret. Shall I tell you? "

" Yes, tell us."

The multitude seeing the Brahmins conversing with the foreigner with evident respect, quieted still more and pressed forward to listen.

" Step back! step back! " said I, " it is only these five to whom I am to tell my story. If the rest of you listen it is on your own responsibility. Step back! and let me tell these five alone." This only increased their desire to hear, as I went on:

" Brothers, is it possible for us by our own acts to expiate our sins? Can we, by painful journeys to the holiest of all your holy places, change those sinful natures that you bemoan? Does not your own Telegu poet, Vemana, say:—

> ' The Muslim who to Tirupati goes, on pilgrimage,
> Does not thereby become a saint of Sivia's house.
> Becomes a dog a lion when he bathes in Ganges' stream?
> Benares turns not harlot into pure and trusted wife.' "

Hearing their own language chanted, the people pressed forward still more intently.

" Nay, brothers, it is not by these outward acts, even to the utmost austerity, that we can attain to harmony with God. Does not your beloved Vemana again say:—

> ' 'Tis not by roaming deserts wild, nor gazing at the sky;
> 'Tis not by bathing in the stream, nor pilgrimage to shrine;
> But thine own heart must thou make pure, and then, and then alone,
> Shalt thou see Him no eye hath kenned, that thou behold thy King.'

" Now, how can your hearts be made pure so that we may see God? I have learned the secret; I will tell it you."

Then I told the Story of stories; the story of redeeming love. Gradually and imperceptibly I had raised my voice until, as I spoke in the clear resonant Telegu, all down those three streets the multitudes could hear. And as I told them of His rejection by those

He had come to save, and told them that it was for them, too, far away here in India, that He had suffered this agony on the cross, I saw tears coursing and dropping upon the pavements that they had torn up to stone us with. Far earlier in the story I had seen them stealthily dropping their armfuls of stones into the gutter, and press back to listen.

How they listened as I went on to tell them further of the love of God in Christ!

"Now," said I, folding my arms and standing before them, "I have finished my story. You may stone me now. I will make no resistance."

"No, no," said they, "We don't want to stone you now. We did not know whose messenger you were, nor what you had come to tell us. Do those books tell more about this wonderful Redeemer?"

"Yes," said I, "this is the history of His life on earth—His death and resurrection glory."

With this their wallets were produced, and they purchased all we had of the Gospel of Luke. They purchased all the Gospels and tracts we had with us, and appointed a deputation of their best men to escort us to our camp.

Verily, the story of the Cross has not lost its power. Preach it, brother, anywhere, everywhere!

Preach it in regions beyond and in your own homes, with a tongue of fire and a heart burning with the mighty, melting love of God!

—*From a Missionary's Diary.*

THE MASTER KNOCKING

" Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me."—Rev. iii. 20.

Speechless sorrow sat with me:
I was sighing wearily;
Lamp and fire went out, the rain
Wildly beat the window-pane!
In the dark we heard a knock,
And a hand was on the lock;
One in waiting spake to me,
Saying sweetly,
" I am come to sup with thee."

All my room was dark and damp;
" Sorrow," said I; " trim the lamp,
Light the fire and cheer thy face;
Set the guest chair in its place";
And again I heard the knock,
In the dark I found the lock:
" Enter! I have turned the key!
Enter Stranger,
Who art to come and sup with me."

Opening wide the door, He came;
But I could not speak His name;
In the guest chair took His place,
But I could not see His face!
When my cheerful fire was beaming,
When my little lamp was gleaming,
And the feast was spread for three—
Lo! my Master
Was the guest that supped with me.

And He cometh even now,
Lovingly to all below,
Through our darkness, doubt, and woe,
Still He knocks, as long ago.
Waiting patiently as ever,
Meaning to desert us never,
Longing our dear Lord to be.
Lo! the Master
Seeks to-day for thee and me.

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A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD

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T. WESTON, 53, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

"MY WIFE NEVER LOVED ME LIKE THAT"

I WAS seated in my study one afternoon when a message was brought to me that someone wished to see me.

I rose as my visitor entered, and for a moment gazed astonished at the appearance of the one who stood before me. His clothes were in a most dilapidated condition, and the coat buttoned up to the chin told of the poverty underneath. There was a wild, half-despairing look upon the face, gaunt and haggard with privation.

I recognised him as one who had sat by my side at school, and who had been my companion in many a schoolboy escapade. I remembered he had left England to go abroad, that over and over again his friends had tried to reclaim him, until at last all had turned against him except one sister and myself. His wife had left him in despair at his drunkenness and general evil living; but as he stood before me, forlorn and wretched, bygone memories stirred my heart, and I held out my hand to grasp his, saying, "Charlie, I am glad to see you. Come in and sit down."

He sat down and ate eagerly the food I put before him, and told me much of the story of his wasted life. He had done the most menial work in foreign lands, had associated with the lowest, and at last had worked his way on board ship back to England again, homeless and penniless.

Poor fellow! how my heart ached for him; and as we sat, one each side of the fire, I took my Bible and read to him the wonderful

story of the prodigal son. He sat silent while the grand pathos of the narrative sounded in his ears—the prodigal's journey to the far-off country, the substance wasted in riotous living, the loss of all, the famine, the loathsome service, and the utter despair, and then the penitential cry, " I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants." And how he arose and came to his father, and how the father in his love saw him a long way off and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him, and welcomed him, and fed and clothed him, and rejoiced to have him home again.

As I read this golden story, his interest deepened; by and by the tears gathered in his eyes, and his body shook with emotion, as he heard, *" The father ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him."* " Oh ! " he cried, " my wife never loved me like that ! " He was face to face with a love surpassing any human affection, and it appealed to his poor worn heart. I spoke long about the love of God in Christ, and told him how, although he had alienated human love from him, divine love and pity were his for the asking. Poor Charlie ! I do not think he ever forgot the story of the prodigal son, for when I took him into my bedroom, and opened my chest of drawers, and told him to take what he wanted for his body, I am sure God was speaking to his soul.

Thirty years and more have passed since we sat together that day; he has passed away from my life; I never heard of him afterwards. May be I shall meet him on the golden streets, no longer clad in the garb of the prodigal, but walking in white before the throne of God. May be he sought again the human love he had trifled with and lost awhile. I have often prayed for him, for as a boy I loved him well, and pitied him for the ruin of a life that at one time seemed full of great possibilities.

It may be some poor prodigal will read this; one who has wandered far from human love, and has felt the degradation of sin, and the famine of the land where there is no God. God's love is stronger than any earthly love, and when we have proved it we can say, that "no one ever loved me like that."

The most wonderful thing in the world is the love of God in Christ. It changes a poor sinner that believes it from the misery of sin to the happiness of heaven.

I was speaking to a dear old man yesterday, asking him if he was saved and going to heaven. He answered so brightly and readily, "Yes, oh, yes! I pray the blessed Lord every day and every hour to take me home. I wake at night and pray, and in the morning. Yes, sir, heaven is my home." My heart was filled with joy as I listened to the joyous certainty of his words.

Believe and trust the changeless love of God, my reader, and you will know the happiness of salvation and the rest of eternity.

H. W.

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"DICK, THE DEVIL DRIVER"

HOW he got that name, I cannot tell. I have an idea, but it is somewhat crude. Everybody called him Dick but his mother. His wife, and sometimes his children, would indulge in the familiar expression, but his mother never. By her he was always mentioned by the one name. Richard she called him the very day he was born; and on the night he died she was heard in the solitude of her chamber sobbing out her sorrow, "O Richard! Richard! my poor lost Richard! Would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!"

It was in the autumn of 18— I first made his acquaintance. The village in which he lived was one of those narrow strips of

a place that have grown up along the great highway which led from London to B——. His house was along the road. Behind his dwelling was the smithy. Proceeding there on one occasion after a visit to his house, his wife quietly suggested that I should not go then. " He is drunk," she said. " He is mad," added a neighbour. " The devil is in him," said a third. And so, acting upon their suggestion, I retraced my steps.

" A bad un, that, sir," said a decrepit old man, as I turned to depart.

" Do you know him? " said I.

" Know un? Shud think I did. Know'd un ever since a wer' a child."

So with this bit of information I commenced plying my questions about this unfortunate man. I found that Dick was a child of godly parents—that, as a boy, he was of a free, almost of a wild, rollicking disposition—that at one time he gave promise of a useful life, and even went so far as to make a profession of religion, and, as the old man remarked, " Enjoyed it, too "; that at length he fell in love with a goodly, godly girl, and made her his wife; and that shortly after their marriage he gave way to bad companions and the drink, until at length he became, as the old man observed, " a very brute of a man."

" Hold ! hold ! " I replied; " draw it mild. Not quite so bad as that, to be sure."

" 'Old, 'old, where you will," said the old man, in a pet; " but by the time you've know'd un as long as I 'ave, my name ain't Billy Brown if you don't say so, too. Why, sur, he is the biggest villain out. Know his wife? Shud think I did. She wer' the purtiest little crittur as a child I ever cast eyes upon. And so good. Born religious, she wer', if there ever wer' one. Why, I saw 'er t'other day, poor thing, weeping like a child. 'Es a drunk, Sue? ' said I. ' Well, doan't 'e see,' said she, ' he went out

this morning on an empty stomach, and the veriest thimbleful has made'n troublesome like.' But lor, sur, I know'd what it meant. He es breaking 'er 'eart by inches, 'e es; and if 'e don't break his neck some day, my name ain't what it es. So good day, sur, good day."

In another hour Dick had leaped upon his horse, and was off. The old feelings had come back; and in spite of pleading wife and weeping children, he was gone.

It was late that night when there came dashing down the street a riderless horse. "Stop him!" shouted one. "Stand clear!" bawled another; whilst on and on rushed the horse, until at length, foaming and trembling, it stopped at the smithy door.

"My goodness!" exclaimed a neighbour, "what's up? Here's the hoss, but no Dick."

Away a mile and a half down the road Dick had alighted at the "First and Last." Calling for a glass of half-and-half, he quaffed it at a draught. Asking for another, he served it much the same; and then with the finish of a third, he rose to depart.

"Steady, old feller, st-e-a-dy," said a bantering few who were tippling at the bar.

"I—I'll st-e-a-dy you," said Dick with an oath, as with a slash of his whip he aimed it at the knot of men from whom the taunt had come. But the blow had missed its mark, and with a wild "Ha! ha! ha!" they said, "Go it again!"

Mad with excitement, and missing his revenge on the men, he slashed it on his horse. Mounting as best he could, and striking his spurs into his steed before he was well into his saddle, he exclaimed, "I'll ride thee to hell!" when the animal reared, and Dick fell with a heavy thud to the ground.

"Hark! what's that?" shouted the publican; and amid the breathless silence of the house, the quick clatter, clatter of the runaway horse fell softer and still softer on their ear.

"Missus, quick! bring us a light," said the publican, "there's something wrong"; and so saying he rushed to the door. Groping his way through the darkness to a huge mass of something which lay motionless in the road, he put his hand and felt the face of a man, and with "Here, men, quick! for God's sake, help!" he raised the head of the fallen, and placed it for a time between his knees.

"Oh," said the publican, as the flickering light fell upon the face of the unfortunate man, "it's Dick! Why, he's dead!" And so, bearing him up in their arms, they carried him back to the "First and Last."

The next day a coroner's inquest was held. Certain facts were elicited; and after a protracted investigation of the case, in which it was found that the fall had dislocated his neck, a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

But was the death "accidental?"

"IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY"

"NO," said the lawyer, "I sha'n't press your claim against that man; you can get some one else to take the case, or you can withdraw it, just as you please."

"Think there isn't any money in it?"

"There would probably be some money in it, but it would, as you know, come from the sale of the little house the man occupies and calls 'home'; but I don't want to meddle with the matter, anyhow."

"Got frightened out of it, eh?"

"No, I wasn't frightened out of it."

"I suppose the old fellow begged hard to be let off?"

"Well—yes, he did."

"And you caved, likely?"

"No, I didn't speak a word to him."

"What in creation *did* you do?"

"I believe I shed a few tears."

"And the old fellow begged you hard, you say?"

"No, I didn't say so; he didn't speak a word to me."

"Well, may I respectfully inquire whom he did address in your hearing?"

"God Almighty."

"Ah! he took to praying, did he?"

"Not for my benefit, in the least. You see"—the lawyer crossed his right foot over his left knee, and began stroking his lower leg up and down, as if to help to state his case concisely—"you see, I found the little house easily enough, and knocked on the outer door, which stood ajar; but nobody heard me, so I stepped into the little hall, and saw through the crack of another door just as cosy a sitting-room as there ever was.

"There, on a bed, with her silver head high up on the pillows, was an old lady who looked for all the world just as my mother did the last time I ever saw her on earth. Well, I was right on the point of knocking, when she said, as clearly as could be, 'Come, father, now begin; I'm all ready,' and down on his knees by her side went an old, white-haired man, still older than his wife, I should judge; and I couldn't have knocked then for the life of me. Well, he began; first he reminded God they were still His submissive children, mother and he, and no matter what He saw fit to bring upon them, they shouldn't rebel at His will. He reminded God in the next place how different it all might have been if only one of their boys had been spared them; then he went on to repeat that nothing could be so sharp again as the parting with those three sons—unless mother and he should be separated. But at last he fell to comforting himself with the fact that the dear Lord knew it

was through no fault of his own that mother and he were threatened with the loss of their dear little home, which meant beggary and the almshouse, a place they prayed to be delivered from entering, if it could be consistent with God's will; and then he fell to quoting a multitude of promises concerning the safety of those who put their trust in the Lord. Yes, I should say he begged hard; in fact, it was the most thrilling plea to which I ever listened; and at last he prayed for God's blessing on those who were about to demand justice "—the lawyer stroked his lower limb in silence for a moment or two, then continued, more slowly than ever—" and—I—believe I'd rather go to the poor-house myself, to-night, than stain my heart and hands with the blood of such a prosecution as that."

" Little afraid to defeat the old man's prayer, eh? " asked the client.

" Bless your soul, man, you couldn't defeat it! " roared the lawyer. " It doesn't admit of defeat! I tell you he left it all subject to the will of God; but he left no doubt as to his wishes in the matter, claiming that we were told to make known our desires unto God; but of all the pleading I ever heard, that beat all. You see, I was taught that kind of thing myself in my childhood, and why I was sent to hear that prayer I'm sure I don't know; but I hand the case over."

" I wish," said the client, twisting uneasily, " you hadn't told me about the old fellow's prayer."

" Why so? "

" Well, because—I greatly want the money that the place would bring, but I was taught the Bible all straight enough when I was a youngster, and I'd hate to run counter to such an harangue as that you tell me about. I wish you hadn't heard a word of it; and another time I wouldn't listen to petitions not intended for your ears."

The lawyer smiled. "My dear fellow," he said, "you're wrong again; it *was* intended for my ears, and yours too; and God Almighty intended it. My old mother used to sing about God's moving 'in a mysterious way,' I remember."

"Well, my mother used to sing it too," said the claimant, as he twisted his claim-papers in his fingers. "You can call in the morning, if you like, and tell 'mother and him' the claim has been met."

"In a mysterious way," added the lawyer, smiling.

(*Selected*).

GEORGE AINSWORTH AND THE HYMN

IN our singing practice (says William Taylor, in a book called "A Four Years' Campaign in India"), I was in the habit of repeating the first verse of a hymn till the congregation could catch the tune, and then proceed. George Ainsworth, with his wife, came one night for the first time to hear me preach. They entered and got seated while we were engaged in singing practice —for which we took half-an-hour before the time appointed for preaching. We had just taken up the first verse of one of Charles Wesley's grand hymns:

"And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain,—
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"

A book was handed to Mr. and Mrs. Ainsworth, and the hymn indicated; but to their surprise the same verse was sung again— "A mistake, perhaps." Then we sang it over again. "What does this mean?"

It was sung again and again; and Ainsworth said to himself, as he told us subsequently, "And this is the great preacher I have heard about! I came to hear him preach; and he seems to know nothing but one verse of a hymn. When he gets to the end of it he begins and goes over the same verse again. What nonsense!"

On we went, singing the same verse; and the rest of the congregation, who knew the value of repeating in order quickly to master the tune, were getting on beautifully; but Ainsworth, there for the first time, and knowing nothing of the design of this method, was first surprised, then disgusted, and then got angry, and was tempted to get up abruptly and leave the house; but the small room was greatly crowded, and he had difficulty to get a seat; and being a man of good breeding, he made up his mind to stand it patiently, and see the end. On went the repetition—and now the whole crowd had got the tune; and George began to reflect, "What wonderful words are these, that must be sung thirty times over before we go on to the second verse?—

"'And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?'

"'That *I* should gain'—I, George Ainsworth: can I gain an interest in the Saviour's blood? Oh, would not that be a gain worth more to me than to gain the world? To gain the world, and lose my soul: dreadful!—

"'And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?'

"Why not? I hear of many who have gained this, at these very meetings. What's to hinder me from finding this 'pearl of great price'? 'He tasted death for every man'—hence for me.'"

Repeated again by the congregation, it came ringing into his ears—

"Died He for me, who caused His pain,—
For me, who Him to death pursued?"

"Yes, He died for me—for George Ainsworth; and I have, in the murderous spirit of carnal enmity to God that pursued Him to the death of the cross, been rejecting Him all my life, and am a rebel against Him now, with the brand-mark of His murderers upon my soul."

I have merely given the substance of what he said passed in his mind. We then went on with the hymn, and came to the verse—

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;"—

"True," said George to himself; "and I am a poor prisoner to-night."

"Thine eye diffused a quickening ray:
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,—
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

"Oh, that I could feel that quickening ray to-night!" was the throb of a new life that the Holy Spirit was beginning to inspire in his dead soul. It grew and increased, and when seekers were invited at the close of the sermon, George Ainsworth was among the first to respond, and in the agony produced by a sudden, deep awakening of the Spirit of God, he surrendered, and received Christ; his wife also; then they could indeed sing with that little host of Jesus' witnesses—

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray:
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free,—
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

"No condemnation now I dread:
Jesus, with all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own."

THY WORK SHALL BE REWARDED

I HAVE always found it true that work done with a single eye to God's glory is sure to be rewarded, and sometimes the fruit will appear in this life. *We* may and *do* forget, but God never forgets, and if it is good for us to know of the fruit, He permits us to do so.

Here is an instance. A nephew of mine came to dinner, January 25th. He is a clergyman of an important parish, has eight sons and daughters, and is a grandfather. I invited an aged friend of mine to meet him, being aware that she knew him in his school days. Fancy her grateful praise and thanks to God when he told her, "It was you who first led me to think of seeking the Lord. When you used to come to our bedsides at school and tell us each one of God's love, you gave me my text, 'I love them that love me, and those that seek me early *shall find me.*' I have never forgotten it"; and introducing his dear wife, he said, "I have often told her how Miss —— was the first to win my heart for the Lord."

Oh, dear readers, young and old, speak words for the Master whilst you have opportunity, and *make* opportunities, as this dear young lady did, for she was young then.

E. P. L.

❀ ❀ ❀

WHY NOT TAKE IT?

ABOUT two years ago, when I was coming out of a preaching service, I saw an old man looking very unhappy. So I said, "My friend, you are not happy."

"No," he replied, "I am not."

I added, "You are not saved."

"No," he said, "I have been praying for it for twenty years."

"What!" I said; "praying for it for twenty years! Let me tell you a story, for you remind me of the circumstance:

"I saw a gentleman the other day who was paralyzed on one side, and was wheeled about in a Bath chair. As he was out one day he saw a poor man sitting by the roadside, afflicted in the same manner and calling out 'Oh, for God's sake, give me a ha'p'ny!' The rich man told his servant to wheel him over to the poor man. He did so, and the gentleman held out half-a-crown to the beggar. But the man still kept crying, 'Oh, for God's sake, give me a ha'p'ny!'

"He was blind. The gentleman said, 'Here my good fellow, is half-a-crown for you.' But the man was deaf, and still he kept calling out for the halfpenny. The servant wheeled the gentleman nearer, and at last he made the poor man hear, and then he thankfully took the half-crown.

"Now, my dear friend, this is just what you are about. God is offering you salvation as a free gift through the blood of Jesus Christ; but instead of taking it, and thanking Him for it, and rejoicing in it, you keep on asking for it."

"What!" said he, interrupting me, "can I have salvation without asking for it?"

"Of course you can," I replied. "'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord'; and the thing to do with a gift is to take it, not to pray that you may have it. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.'"

"Oh, sir; I see it all now!" he exclaimed, and turned away comforted.

"YOU'RE A FOOL!"

SOME years ago a Christian lady in Scotland lay upon her death-bed. Her husband was already dead; and, reflecting that her little daughter would soon have to be handed over to the charge of her grandfather, who was an infidel, she was filled with anxiety at the prospect, and called the child to her side, and obtained from her a promise that for *her sake* she would read one chapter of the Bible to herself every day.

The child soon after was removed to the house of the aged infidel, and, faithful to her promise, was found by him one day reading to herself in the garden. Requiring to know what book it was, she replied it was her Bible.

He at once began to make light of it, declared that it was useless to read such a book, and asked what was the good of it. She answered, That she might learn of God.

"God!" he said; "there is no God!"

The effect of this upon the child can scarcely be described, so great was her fright and amazement. For the moment she appeared petrified; but, recovering herself, she exclaimed with passionate earnestness—

"Oh, grandfather, you're a fool; you're a fool; you're a fool!" The man was amazed at this extraordinary audacity on the part of his granddaughter; but the child continued to exclaim—

"Oh, grandfather, you're a fool! The Bible says you are a fool! 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God'" (Psa. xiv. 1).

The man listened no longer; but to forget it was impossible. Wherever he went, by night and by day, every waking moment it seemed to come into his mind, "You are a fool; The Bible says so!" The result was that he became miserably unhappy and broken down before God; and the Lord graciously used the circumstance to his conversion.

THE HEAVENLY CALL

Gently on the breath of evening,
When the day's last beams were leaving,
And the shadows on the hill
Deepened into darkness still,
Came a voice oft heard before
Asking earnestly once more:
"Weary heart, with care opprest,
Wilt thou enter into rest?"

Sadly summer flowers were dying,
Faded autumn wreaths were lying,
And the memory of the past
Came with start and pain at last,
Then the soul, bereft and lone,
Heard again that pitying tone:
"Weary heart, bereaved, distrest,
Wilt thou enter into rest?"

Mournfully the winds were sighing,
All around the dead leaves flying,
And the soul felt cold and chill,
Empty, for earth could not fill,
Troubled, for its strife was vain:
When that low voice spake again,
"Weary heart, forlorn, unblest,
Wilt thou enter into rest?"

Destitute of Hope's relieving,
Sad, disconsolately grieving,
Watching till the fading day
Silently had passed away,
Till the solemn calm was stirred
By the oft-repeated word:
"Weary heart, here end thy quest,
Come, and I will give thee rest!"

And no longer cold, unheeding,
For the heart, repentant, needing,
Turned aside from earth and sin,
Praying, "Let me enter in."
And the storm-driven, helpless dove
Flew into the Arms of Love,
Folded on the Saviour's breast,
Found in Him its final rest!

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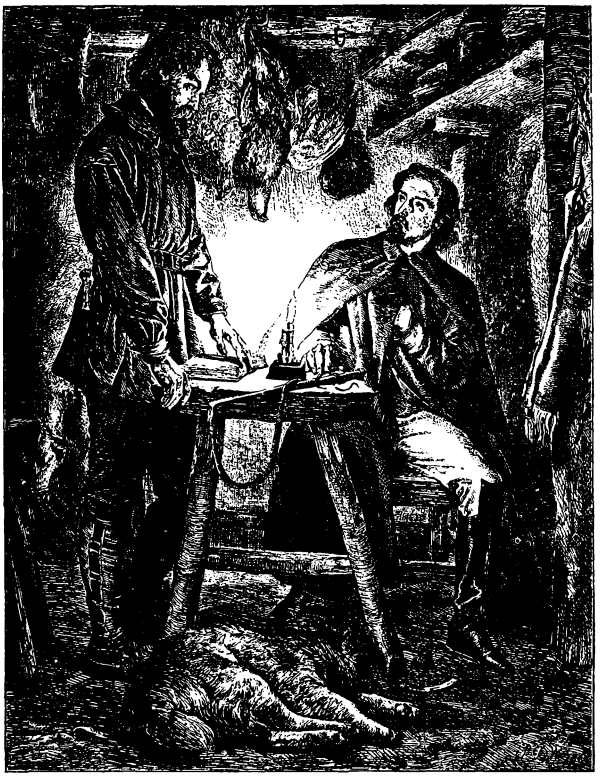
A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD



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T. WESTON, 53, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

THE CHILDREN COMING

"Suffer little children TO COME *unto Me."*

ON Christmas Day, 1908, a few friends had met together in the house of one of our Christian workers in Exeter. After a pleasant afternoon had been spent and tea over, the friends left; and around the fire, the family circle, composed of father and mother and three children, was made. As the time passed in pleasant reminiscence, the father and mother felt the power of the presence of God. After supper was over, the conversation was renewed. The theme of the parents was God's goodness to them through the year; contrasting the comfort and love of their home with others quite as deserving, but not so blest. Then the children were reminded of the power of Satan in the world, robbing men's lives, and taking every blessing from them; then the theme was Jesus dying to save them, giving them blessing upon blessing day by day, and soon coming to take those who loved Him, and believed in Him, home to glory. And while they talked it seemed as if the Lord was there, as assuredly He was; and the peace of His presence seemed to fill the room.

Then the hymn was sung,

"Sinners Jesus will receive."

All sung it heartily, and then the children left to go to bed.

The youngest son, J——, a boy of ten, passed quietly out with the others, but in a few minutes a sound of sobbing was heard from the landing. The father went out to see what was the matter; he found J—— weeping. On asking him why he wept, his answer

was, " FATHER, I'M A SINNER, AND I WANT JESUS TO FORGIVE ME MY SINS." The father took the dear boy up in his arms, and carried him back into the dining room again. Then all the family knelt in prayer to God to save the sobbing child; and even as they knelt he gave his heart to Jesus. What joy that Christmas day brought to that home can never be told on earth, but heaven will be the brighter for it for all eternity.

JANUARY 5th, 1911

This is another date to be remembered with thanksgiving on earth and praise in heaven. On this day E——, the son of another of our helpers, who was himself converted at the Royal Public Rooms, came to Jesus.

E—— was twelve years of age, and for two or three years he had been anxious about his soul. He had often wept when alone in bed, and his parents had gone to him and prayed with him, and sought to lead him to the Saviour.

About the beginning of January of this year a change was noticeable in the child's behaviour; he seemed quieter and more thoughtful.

On January 5th, when he was alone, the Spirit of God began to work mightily in his soul, and the lad went up into his bedroom to pray. When he came downtairs again, he took his Bible, and opened to Matthew xi. 28th and 29th verses, and read the glorious invitation, " Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

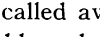
When his father came home he went to meet him with tears in his eyes, and the open Bible in his hand. " What is the matter? " asked the father. The sobbing answer was, " Dad, I want the Lord to forgive me my sins." " I am sure He will," was the parent's answer, " we must ask Him."

They went into the kitchen, and knelt down in silent prayer. Suddenly the dear lad burst out in prayer to God, so earnestly that those who heard could never forget it.

"LORD FORGIVE ME MY SINS; CLEANSE ME FROM MY INIQUITIES, THAT I MAY TRUST THEE. AMEN." This was the prayer that rose to heaven and to God from the boy's heart. The prayer was heard, and the answer was given. He rose from his knees and went to his mother and said the Lord had forgiven his sins, and he felt happy.

Thank God for the salvation of these two lads; thank God for saving them in their homes, and giving the parents the joy of pointing them to Jesus. May their young voices be heard in the Master's service! May others be brought to the Saviour, so that when we who are older are called away, they, if the Lord should tarry, may still carry on His blessed work, and win many souls for Him.

H. W.



A VISION OF GLORY

"AND oh, sir, I have often wondered why I was born!" This was the conclusion of what Betsy Waters said to the kind minister. Betsy was a girl of eighteen, with a deformed spine. A quiet resignation stamped her face, save when the pain was almost too great for endurance. She rested in a plain, narrow bed in an hospital ward. On all sides were sights of human suffering—here a fevered face, flushed to purple, there a distorted countenance, giving evidence that some cruel accident had marred all traces of humanity, making of a man a thing too horrible to be seen.

" How came you here, Betsy? " asked the minister; " have you no friends? "

" Yes, sir, I have some friends, God bless them, but they are too poor to take care of themselves, and much too poor to help me. So I gave them no rest till I got them to put me into the hospital. It is a very good place, sir, only the groans keep me awake."

" How did you come by this illness, Betsy? "

" When I was two years old, sir, my father's house took fire. There was no other way to save me, so he threw me out of the window. It nearly broke my back. I did not walk for a year. My father was burned to death, sir. My mother was carried to the hospital, she was so badly hurt; so my mother and I were left, sick, and helpless, and alone. She was heart-broken, and lost her ambition. We began peddling matches and little penny articles. Many a time when we've had no money to pay for a lodging we've slept in the street. Once one of her feet was frozen; and I have been frozen in my hands and feet so that there are black spots to this day—see, sir. This hand is nearly useless. Then my mother died, and I believe she was glad to die. I was six years old; but, sickly and crooked as I was, I tried to do something after she was buried. Sometimes I found friends, sometimes I was treated cruelly. I had no chances to learn, though Heaven knows it made my eyes hungry to see a little girl go by with books in her hands. I have known nothing but misery and suffering, such as I couldn't possibly tell you, or make you understand—it was so terrible, and I hadn't any chance to help myself. I've cried till it seemed as if I'd be blind, to think what a poor, wretched orphan I was, and I knew that others had peace and plenty. I've been in such pain, too, working; working all the time, with nobody to give me a kind word or a smile—just dying for something of the kind. Oh, sir "—and her voice rose to a wail—" what was I born for? "

" My dear child, do you think that God does not care for you? " asked the man tenderly.

" It was not long ago, sir, that a young lady, beautifully dressed, met me in the street. I was crying with cold, and hunger, and pain. She pitied me—I knew by her face that she pitied me—and she spoke to me with her soft voice, and asked me to come to her house with her. There she gave me some clothes and some food, and told me of God. It did me good, and for months she helped me; but she took a fever and died, and I was sick again. Ever since then, sir, I have been miserable; every day I have been wretched, and it has seemed as if God didn't care for me. I haven't been able to do any good for myself or anybody else, and I am very discouraged. I don't want to have dark, wicked thoughts; I try not to, but they will come when I see people well, rich and happy."

" But if you will look to God, my poor child, He will help you to bear this burden. When your father saw you in the midst of the flames he thought there was no other way of escape, and followed the dictates of human judgment. But God knows that it is best for you to bear these afflictions. He will give you inward mercies if you ask of Him, spiritual comfort if you will only look to Him; and if, like a little child, you put your whole trust in Him, He will compensate you fully for all your cares and troubles in the world to come. Do you ever think of that? "

" I feel it sometimes," said the girl, brokenly. " In the night I seem to be lifted by something when I think of God, and it appears as if there must be another and a better place. Oh, if I could only know! "

" Pray the Lord to give you spiritual sight, that you may look away from these trials. Your sufferings must be great. I, perhaps, strong man that I am—I could not bear them with your patience; but God never forsakes those who trust in Him. Yes, you will forget all this human woe in heaven! "

The minister had gone. The darkness fell gradually over the long avenues between the beds—the dim lamps were lighted—the doctors and nurses had gone their rounds, and silence fell upon the desolate scene. The young girl mused on what the good man had said. "Make me resigned, Lord Jesus," she softly prayed, the tears brimming to her eyes. "Oh, help me to have faith in Thee, and never to doubt Thy loving mercy because I suffer." Her face so white, grew more peaceful. In that sombre place it took on a childlike expression that was touching to see. A few masses of fair hair curled over the pillow—one thin hand pressed her pallid cheek—her eyes were upturned, or else closed in thought. "God has taken away my pain," she whispered. At that moment a strain of soft music seemed to steal dreamily over her senses. It was very low; its intertwined harmonies scarcely stirred the pulses of the air—and yet she heard it.

Little by little the dimness struggled like a vapour with some strange bright glory that gradually superseded it, and rested on the bed, on the upturned face, while Betsy breathlessly gazed, lost in wonder—her whole being changed. Presently the luminous colour grew into an intensity of splendour too great for mortal eyes, but the sick girl had strength to behold it. As the harmony increased, and the strangely brilliant dyes melted the one into the other, in their midst came a form that seemed familiar. She remembered now her mother's face—the holy smile, the look of love—but she had never seen such garments on any one. Of a lustre brighter than the sun, yet so soft and ethereal that it gave her no pain, the appearance of this celestial visitant filled her soul with a new exultant rapture. Sorrow, and the great sum of all her privations, and the cruelties of the world to which she had so often been subjected, were all forgotten. Such ineffable peace filled her soul that she could only whisper, "It is enough." Presently another form appeared, clad in garments as heavenly—but oh! the exceeding purity of that

celestial countenance! She had not remembered her father, but she did recollect how often her mother had told her how good a man he was, and how he loved God and Jesus Christ, and prayed for them—his wife and his child—every day when he was alive. She knew him now, and stretched forth her hands towards him, yearning for his embrace.

"Not yet!"

The words seemed to melt in liquid music on his lips. Then the glory blazed and deepened—playing with a sort of twinkling splendour upon wall and bed till their whiteness was something heavenly—until all outlines were lost, and forth from the vast distance came beautiful forms clad in clear white robes that swept the air, and their faces were so filled with a living joy that it fell over into her heart, and from those serene eyes she gathered strength and hope, and a peace she had never dreamed of. Feebly she murmured, "Shall I be so?" and the rich, deep chorus swelled up, "As we are, so shall you be." Then she felt the bonds of earth loosen—her soul arose as from some dark crypt—she floated up toward them, and in a heavenly ecstasy exclaimed, "Oh! I am glad that I was born!"

"She is asleep," said the physician to an attendant. "I don't know that I have ever found her asleep at this hour—very soundly, too"; and he moved the lamp across her face.

"It strikes me she has a singularly lovely expression. I never noticed it before; she must be dreaming something pleasant. Poor thing, I hope so; her life has been sad enough, I warrant, and she is a very patient creature. But stop—look! why, what is this?"

Still dreaming; a low, exultant cry issuing from the smiling lips, the girl lifted herself gradually—lifted her face as in a tranced triumph—lifted her clasped hands—the whiteness and the pureness of some angelic ministrant as if reflected in her features. Suddenly

the whole form relaxed, and the smile still inwrought with every line of her countenance, she fell back upon the pillow.

The doctor spoke but one word—

"Dead!"

But his lips trembled, and he knew that in some vision of glory she must have gone home.

A STRONGHOLD, AND A STRONG HOLD

YES, two strongholds, and our precious Lord Jesus Christ is both. He is a Stronghold (a walled city, Num. xiii. 19-28) for safety, from sin and Satan and eternal death. By His grace given to us we can run in to Him our Stronghold; as it says in Zechariah ix. 12, "Turn you to the stronghold ye prisoners of hope. . . . I will render double unto thee"; double, first, for your shame *iniquity pardoned*; second, everlasting joy for comfort (see Isa. xl. 2 and Isa. lxi. 7).

As a strong-hold He "is a nail in a *sure* place." This anecdote will illustrate a sure place:—I wanted to hang a picture, and the carpenter struck in a nail. "No," said he, "it is plaster; not strong enough." But when he had knocked the nail into the wood, he put up both hands, and swung himself on it, saying "It has a good *hold* now, ma'am." So in Isa. xxii. 23, the Word says of Himself: "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, and they shall hang on him all the glory of his Father's house. . . . . from the vessels of cups to all the vessels of flagons."

So dear reader, both you and I can hang on our Strong*hold* as the Prayer Book version of the 63rd Pslam says: "My soul hangeth upon thee and thy right hand upholdeth me." Yes, we are safe whichever way, for He is our Stronghold and Strong-*hold*.

E. P. L.

THE UNFINISHED PRAYER

" Now I lay "—repeat it, darling.
" Lay me " lisped the tiny lips
Of my daughter, kneeling, bending
O'er her folded finger-tips.

" Down to sleep." " To sleep," she murmured,
And the curly head bent low;
" I pray the Lord," I gently added—
" You can say it all, I know."

" Pray the Lord "—the sound came faintly,
Fainter still, " my soul to keep ";
Then the tired head fairly nodded,
And the child was fast asleep.

But the dewy eyes half opened
When I clapsed her to my breast,
And the dear voice softly whispered—
" Mamma, God knows all the rest."

—*Selected.*

THE FRIGHTENED INFIDEL

NOTHING can be more proper than that men should have an opportunity of putting their principles to the test. Theories that look well on paoer frequently break down under the strain of actual experience and real life. It may be noted that those men who find the most fault with the Bible, take the best of care to keep themselves under its shadow. They could very easily get away from its influence, and live in places where Bibles are unknown. They could go among savages; they could plunge into the heart of Africa : there are many places where the soil is fertile, the climate delightful, and the Bible unknown. Why do not these gentlemen pack up their goods, and start for some of those favoured lands, which are free from the baleful influence of Holy Scripture? To be sure, their scalps might not be very safe, but that would be a small matter compared with the advantage of exemption from the influence of priest-craft, superstition and the Bible !

But these men seem in no haste to liberate themselves from the influence of Christianity; in fact, they rather like to marry pious wives, employ religious servants, and are sometimes relieved from great anxieties by the presence of the very Bible which they so roundly abuse.

The following incident, clipped from an American paper, furnishes an instance of the working of infidel principles, under the stress of actual experience.

"A Virginian banker, who was the chairman of a noted infidel club, was once travelling on horseback through Kentucky, having with him bank bills of great value. When he came to a lonely forest, where robberies and murders were said to be frequent, he was soon lost through taking a wrong road. The darkness of the night came quickly over him, and how to escape from the threatened danger he knew not. In his alarm, he suddenly espied in the distance a dim light, and urging his horse onward, he at length came to a wretched-looking cabin. He knocked, and the door was opened by a woman, who said that her husband was out hunting, but would shortly return, and she was sure he would cheerily give him shelter for the night. The gentleman tied up his horse, and entered the cabin, but with feelings that may be better imagined than described. Here he was, with a large sum of money, alone, and perhaps in the house of one of those robbers whose name was a terror to the country.

"In a short time the man of the house returned. He had on a deer-skin hunting-shirt, a bear-skin cap, seemed much fatigued, and in no talkative mood. All this boded the infidel no good. He felt in his pocket for his pistols, and placed them so as to be ready for instant use. The man asked the stranger to retire to bed; but he declined, saying that he would sit by the fire all night. The man urged, but the more he urged, the more the infidel was alarmed. His fears grew into a perfect agony. What was to be done?

"At length the backwoodsman rose, and reaching to a shelf, he took down an old book, and said—

"'Well, stranger, if you won't go to bed, I will; but it is my custom always to read a chapter of Holy Scripture before I go to bed.'

"What a change did these words produce! Alarm was at once removed from the sceptic's mind. Though avowing himself an infidel, he had now confidence in the Bible. He felt safe. He felt that the man who kept an old Bible in the house, and read it, and bent his knees in prayer, was no robber or murderer! He listened to the simple prayer of the good man, at once dismissed all his fears, and lay down in that rude cabin, and slept as calmly as he did under his father's roof. From that night he ceased to revile the good old Bible. He became a sincere Christian, and often related the story of his eventful journey as the best proof he could give of the folly of infidelity."

Such a fact is worth several arguments. That infidel knew that he was secure in a cabin where the Holy Scriptures were revered, and where sincere prayer was offered to Almighty God. But suppose this backwoodsman, instead of taking down a Bible, had produced a pack of cards, a bottle of rum, and a lot of infidel and blasphemous books. Would such an exhibition have reassured this frightened sceptic? Suppose the evening had been devoted to the cheerful occupation of proving that Moses was mistaken when he declared that God said, "Thou shalt not steal," and "Thou shalt not kill." Would such a discussion have had a very strong tendency to quiet the apprehensions of this disturbed sceptic?

Let Christian men rejoice that they have a faith which is adapted to the necessities of practical life. Let those who lack such a faith leave the paths of darkness which they have trodden so long, and turn their feet into the testimonies of the Lord.

"DOST THOU BELIEVE ON THE SON OF GOD?"

SCRIPTURE teems with questions of all sorts; but surely none of deeper importance were ever uttered than the one which stands at the head of this paper. The question was asked by One who had performed the wonderful miracle of opening the eyes of a man who had been born blind, and who had already confessed, before his neighbours and friends, that "*a man called Jesus* had made some clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight." This was in itself a good confession as to Christ's person and work; but further testimony quickly followed when he declared that this same Jesus was "a prophet," and, amidst the jeers of Christ's enemies, boldly asserted, in the confidence of faith, " Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; *one thing I know*, that whereas *I was blind, now I see.*"

Pharisaic reviling was now freely heaped upon the man whose eyes were opened; but brighter still shone his faith when their callous sneers were met by the simple statement, " Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God he could do nothing." Their bitter rage now reached its climax, as they exclaimed, " Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out." Yes; the religious world of that day had agreed among themselves that "if any man did confess that Jesus was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."

As then, so is it now that the mere religionist is a bitter foe to God and His Christ; hence the synagogue door was rudely shut in the face of this true confessor, only however, to bring him into still closer touch with his Almighty Deliverer. " Jesus heard

that they had cast him out; and when He had found him He said unto him, *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* "

This, dear reader, is the all-important question for each and all of Adam's race; and none can ever really know the joys of God's salvation unless from their hearts they honestly confess that Jesus the Christ is, in deed and in truth, the Son of God. On this divine foundation everything rests for time and eternity; and amidst all the ten thousand dogmas and increasing confusion of these last and closing days faith can give only one answer to Christ's question. Face to face with his mighty Deliverer, the man whose eyes were now open earnestly enquires, " Who is he, *Lord*, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him; and it is he that talketh with thee."

With this fresh confession that Jesus is Lord, divine light filled his soul; and the spiritual eyes of him who had been born blind gazed with adoring wonder on God's Holy One; and, as this stupendous truth was borne in upon his spiritual vision, he joyfully exclaims, " *Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.*"

Dear reader, nineteen centuries have rolled away since this wonderful event took place, and while we who, through grace, believe in Jesus can truly say: " We know the Son of God has come; and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true," may I ask you *personally*, Have you ever yet confessed, from the inmost depths of your soul, that the " *Man called Jesus* " is none other than *the Son of God?* Were He not such He would be nothing to thee; but as He *is* what He *is*, the Son of the living God, may it be your joy to own Him now as your own Saviour and Lord!

As *Son of God* He gives eternal life to all who trust Him; but the day is coming when those who refuse Him now as their own personal Saviour will stand before Him as Judge, for " the Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is

the *Son of Man.*" Be not then like those self-righteous Pharisees who asked Jesus that foolish question, "*Are we blind also?*" and yet unmoved, received from His holy lips the heart-aching answer, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, *We see*, therefore your sin remaineth." "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." True wisdom is only found when, like the blind man, we simply obey the Lord's word; and, just as the soul unreservedly yields to God's grace, the eyes of the heart are opened by faith, and we discover, to our eternal peace and joy, what a real Saviour Jesus is.

Reader, sooner or later, this question must be answered:—"*Dost thou believe on the Son of God?*"

S. T.

THE GOSPEL BIRD

IT is said that on the coast of Africa, and especially in Liberia, there is a little bird whose sweet notes seem distinctly to say, "Go—preach the Gospel! Go!" To many who for the first time hear it, it so clearly utters these words that they can scarcely be persuaded that it is not a human voice. An English officer, as he first heard it, supposed it was a paroquet trained to utter the expression. And so plain is the utterance that the little songster has long since received the name of "The Gospel Bird." A lady to whom the facts were related was so struck with them that she wrote the following lines:—

What voice is that, so softly clear,
Now heard afar, now hovering near,
Amid the murmurs of the breeze
That sigh among the plantain-trees?
A voice that utters words I know—
"Go—preach the Gospel! Go!"

Is it a spirit sent from God
To point His messenger a road
Through jungles dense or deserts wild,
To reach His far-off heathen child?
Whence comes the urgent pleading low—
" Go—preach the Gospel! Go! "

Nay, not a spirit; from a bird
Those words of high import are heard;
Thus in this strange, benighted land
I seem to hear God's high command:
For Christ's sake, who has loved us so,
" Go—preach the Gospel! Go! "

Thou blessed bird! Oh, not in vain
Is heard that constant, eager strain;
The message of a love divine
Shall speed through all this land of thine,
Until the powers of darkness fly
Like night before day's glowing eye.

Ah, yes, no power has e'er withstood
The quiet force of love and good;
Slowly, but surely, on they speed,
As springs towards heaven the tiny seed,
And stretches wide its shade to bless
The wanderers in the wilderness.

Sing on, sweet bird, thy heaven-taught lay,
Until shall dawn that glorious day
When, through the Gospel truth made free,
Thy land hath no more need of thee,
Thou prophet-voice, who urgest so,
" Go—preach the Gospel! Go! "

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A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD

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THE CONVERT'S ALBUM

THE GIRL WHO CAME TO BE SAVED.

I WAS preaching in the year 1881 in the Assembly Room, Fore Street, Exeter. One beautiful summer Sunday evening in July a young girl came to the service. She was very ill, and was helped upstairs to the Hall by her mother and sister, who accompanied her. She had been ill for five years, and it was apparent to all who knew her that she could not live long. She had heard of our services, and had expressed a great desire to be taken to one of them. So on this Sunday evening she sat between her mother and sister just inside the door.

The preaching that evening was about the cleansing of the leper in Israel. At the close of the service the hymn was sung,

"Hark! the voice of Jesus calling—
Come ye weary, come to ME;
I have rest and peace to offer—
Rest, thou burdened one, for thee.
Take salvation,
Take it NOW and happy be.

When the hymn was done, and the last prayer over, she turned to her mother and sister and said, "I am saved." There and then she took salvation as it was offered her. They helped her home, and when she arrived there she knelt down upon the kitchen floor and thanked God for her conversion, and prayed earnestly for all the rest. With tears of joy in her eyes she invited them all to come to Jesus.

It was the first and only time that she came to the preaching, but God was in it all, He prepared her for the word, and He prepared the word for her, and she was saved.

It was not until the following October that I heard about her conversion, and then I went to see her. Never shall I forget the happy hours I spent with her from time to time until she passed away to be with Christ the following February.

She had never any doubts about her salvation; her Bible was very, very dear to her, as the thumb-marked pages shewed. As long as she could, she would kneel by the bed and pray, but when her legs became so swollen that this was impossible, she would lay her head on the pillow and so spend hours in prayer. Often she would exclaim:

"O, Mr. Wreford, I only wish I could tell you how precious Jesus is to me!" And on her face such a lovely light was shining —she seemed to live in heaven—at any rate heaven dwelt in her.

She said to me one day, "The devil tells me I shall be frightened when it comes to the end, but no, He'll never, *never,* NEVER leave me nor forsake me." And again she would say, "I wish I could tell you how happy I am, *precious,* PRECIOUS Jesus."

Towards the end of her happy life here she became more and more anxious about the conversion of those around her. She wrote the following letter to her father, which he received after she was gone; she was so anxious to have it posted before she died.

This is the letter:—

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have been going to write you for a long time, but I have kept putting it off from time to time, but now I feel I am getting much worse, and I don't think I shall be very long here. But I am going to be with Jesus, and I want you to meet me in heaven. Dear father, the Lord Jesus says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." Take Jesus at His word, the One who

cannot lie. Dear father, the longest life here is short compared with eternity. My dear father, will you think of it? We are none of us too bad for Jesus; the vilest sinner He came to save. The dear Lord says in His word, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

My dear father, I should like to have seen you once more, and wished you "Good-bye," but if it cannot be, I hope you will meet me in heaven; there we shall meet to part no more. I have suffered great pain here, but there will be no pain there.

Sometimes I murmur and complain, but I am trying to say, "Thy will be done," my Jesus will help me if I trust Him, for He says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and He will be with me to the end, and the end will be very soon, for I am feeling so tired and weary. And now I must say "Good-bye," trusting to meet you in heaven. Dear father, you will meet me there. I am not afraid, for Jesus will be with me. At first I thought I should be afraid; then I was looking at my poor self, which is nothing but sin; but when I look away to Jesus all is well.

Once more, dear father, "Good-bye," no more to meet on earth, but do meet me in heaven.

Your loving daughter,

POLLY.

Her brother George came to see her. She took his strong hand in her wasted ones, and said, looking up into his face, "What a pity, dear George, that I feel too weak to speak to you of Jesus now."

Looking upwards, she said, "Dear Lord Jesus, give me a word to speak to my dear brother before I die."

Then in direct appeal to him she said, "George, I'm going home, I'm going to be with Jesus; will you follow?" He could not speak for tears. She still held his hand and continued, "Don't put it off until your deathbed. If I had I might never have found Christ." After a pause she repeated softly,

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

Then she said, "It's nothing but the blood of Jesus; I'm trusting to nothing but the blood of Jesus. Sing!" she cried to all, "sing, 'Nothing but the blood of Jesus.'" She then asked them all to meet her in heaven.

She came downstairs for the last time on Sunday afternoon, February 18th. The sun was shining beautifully as she sat at table with the rest, and said, "This is the last time I shall sit here."

I saw her on the following day. She was almost unconscious. They told her I was there, and her eyes opened with a glad smile of welcome. How full of heaven they looked! I took her hand, and said, "You love Jesus, don't you?" She whispered, "Precious Jesus! I am happy, happy!" "You are going to be with Jesus?" I said. "Yes, oh, yes! He will never leave me nor forsake me."

In a very feeble voice she continued, "I wish I could talk and tell you how happy I am."

"You will be in heaven before we shall." "Yes."

"But we shall soon follow you." "Yes," she replied, "I am praying for them all. Precious Jesus! I am *so* happy. Read to me."

I opened my Bible and read the end of the eighth of Romans, and while the sunlight from without fell upon her where she lay, I read in the Revelation, chapters xxi. and xxii. She clasped her hands as I read of the "holy city, New Jerusalem," of God being with His people, and being their God; of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the glorious promise, "and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads." Then, as the golden beams trembled on the bed, and shone around the departing one, I read, "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."

On Tuesday, February 20th, the day she passed away, I called to see her in the afternoon. She asked them to sit her up. Her sister said, "Is Jesus with you, Polly?" She whispered, "Yes, Jesus." She wished to remember the Lord in His death before she passed into His presence, and very solemn and sweet it was to see her face as she took the bread and wine, and clasped her hands in prayer and praise. And then with the name of Jesus constantly upon her lips she lay, and waited for the summons to call her home.

For hours she lay unconscious, breathing heavily; and thus the day wore on. At half-past five the eyes that had been fixed and glassy for hours once more beamed with intelligence. The troubled waters of life were past now, she was anchored in the haven, and was just stepping from her frail bark of time on to the shores of eternity. With one sweet glance of love and recognition to those around her, and with lips moving in the last "Good-bye," she passed into the presence of angels and saints redeemed to be with Christ. The sun shone out with golden radiance, as the messenger came to take her home, and one who stood and watched said, "It seemed as if the sky were filled with angels when she died."

As I gazed upon the cold unconscious clay I could but thank the Lord for such a life and such a death. I said, "She has led the way for you all I trust to heaven. The first in heaven; you will all follow her, will you not?"

The sister answered, speaking as it were to the peaceful dead, "Yes, Polly, we will follow you; we will come to Jesus, you made us promise."

Thus with tears the promise made to the living was renewed by all. I said, "Let us pray," and we knelt around the dead.

"Oh, we do not doubt," one said, just before we left the room; "we know she is in heaven."

Yes, by their fruits ye shall know them.

Reader, if it were thine to die to-night, where would to-morrow find thee? I remember, in closing this narrative, a remark of the sister, "Oh!" she said, "how fearful it would be if after all her sufferings here she should have had to suffer hereafter!" Fearful! Oh! my God! let every one who reads this turn AT ONCE to Christ. Yes, sinner, turn AT ONCE to Christ.

H. W.

A CHILD'S RELIGION

IN a poor unwholesome home, a little time ago, a father died of fever. He left as desolate a home as I had ever seen. On the burial night his widow and children were seated by the fire; the only daughter, a child of ten years, looking with a wearied look into her mother's face, said, "Mother, how sore my head is!" Next day fever in her was also developed, and for the safety of the rest she was ordered to the hospital. She was one of our Sunday school scholars. Just before the twilight hour the hospital van came to take her. In times of trouble you often see among the poor a quiet strength that rises to heroism. When the wheels of the van were heard in the lane and pausing at the door, there was simply, "Maggie, they have come for you now." To prepare to go, the child at once raised her aching head from the pillow, with her artless, "Mother, ye *ken* I may not come back to you again. Will the man wait till I sing my hymn?" And with a quivering voice she began with—

"Come, sing to me of heaven,
When I'm about to die,
Sing songs of holy ecstasy
To waft my soul on high."

After a moment's pause she took up the chorus of another favourite hymn with our scholars—

"Here in the body pent,
Absent from thee I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home,
Nearer Home."

And so they carried the ailing child that night, with joyous thoughts as these filling her young heart, to pitch her tent in the place where the journey from this to the eternal world is so short and so often made. O blessed religion, this of Jesus! Blessed to the child of ten as well as the sage of seventy years. "This is but a child's religion," an older reader says. Yes, and is it not the glory of the gospel that it does give strength and gladness to the young heart? The most childlike are most blessed by it. Jesus, the loving Saviour, will yet, as when on earth, deal gently with the little ones, for "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

THE BABY'S SERMON

THE children had been up in their mamma's room, after breakfast, that Sunday morning, learning their text; and when they had it perfectly, and were coming downstairs again for a run in the garden, whilst nurse was busy, Nannie and Frank fell to disputing. And what do you think about? Why, who should carry the great rubber ball downstairs.

Nannie wanted it because she had thought of it first, and Frank wanted it because he was the oldest. "You're a mean, selfish boy," said Nannie.

"You're a pig," said Frank.

"I'll just tell papa what a horrid boy your are," said Nannie.

"And I'll tell mamma I wish she'd sell you to somebody. I don't want such a sister," answered Frank.

" I don't love you one single bit," said Nannie.

" And who wants you to? " inquired Frank.

So these naughty children went on from bad to worse, saying all sorts of unkind and unpleasant things to one another—so very unkind that they were ashamed enough whenever they remembered them afterwards.

All this time Baby Ben was coming downstairs behind them. Slowly, one foot at a time, holding fast to the banisters with both fat, small hands, the little man made his way; and wider and wider opened his big blue eyes, more and more surprised he looked, as he heard the angry words.

The children stopped to finish their quarrel at the foot of the stairs. Frank was trying very hard to get the ball away from Nannie, and she had got as far as pulling his hair, the naughty girl, when the baby stopped on the lowest stair and preached his sermon to them.

" Ickle chillen," said he, " love one anodder."

That was every word he said. It was the text the children had been learning in their mother's room such a short time before. Nannie dropped her hands, her face flushed, and she turned half away from Baby Ben, and nobody said anything for a moment.

" Here, Frank," said Nannie at last, holding out the ball, "you may have it. *I'm* going to be good."

" So am I," said Frank. " You shall have the first toss, Nannie. I'm—I'm very sorry I was so cross."

So the two went off to the garden hand in hand, ashamed enough of having been so naughty, while the baby curled himself up in papa's big chair in the study, and there nurse found him, after a long hunt, fast asleep, with his thumb in his mouth.

MY CHANGED MOTTO

OWING to another serious loss of principal, and therefore an income which seems to be ending in a "vanishing point," I wrote to my brother and told him that I had made up my mind to change the motto of my crest, and for the future I should write it:—"Having nothing and yet possessing all things." "True," answered he, "a most appropriate and beautiful motto which St. Paul boasted of in his list of Christian graces and endowments." Truer still, thought I, if, with St. Paul, I believe that "*all* things work together for good to them that love God," which I am sure I do, and also I know that my God shall supply all my need according to His riches in glory.

A morning or two after I had made this proposal I was reading my morning portion, and came to this verse concerning the high priest in the Mosaic law:—"And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have *no* inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them, for *I* am thy part and I am thine inheritance"! Oh! that's where St. Paul took this motto from, "Having nothing YET possessing all things"; he knew the Aaronic law. If God possess all things and if *He* is my inheritance I shall lack nothing. Also St. Paul knew as we do the priesthood of believers in Christ, and as priests we must possess nothing and yet possess all things! One of the wonderful paradoxes of Divine truth so entrancing to the spiritual nature. With this inheritance there is a continual feast on the provision the Lord provides. "*All the best thereof ye shall give to Aaron.*" Can ye make the children of the bride chamber *fast* while the Bridegroom is with them? No, there is no want to those who possess all things. A millionaire is nothing to my possessions—read Psalm l. 10-15, when you, my soul, forget your inheritance and call with unflinching, unfeigned faith on ME who has linked your poverty with My *riches*.

E. P. L.

THE FALL OF TABLE ROCK

YEARS ago those who visited Niagara Falls were interested in seeing Table Rock, a broad shell which jutted some sixty feet from the mainland over a cauldron of seething waters. At the end of the rock a wooden bridge, or staging, had been thrust forward some ten feet over the water, terminating in a small box, in which visitors could stand and view the foaming floods beneath, the staging being kept in position by a ponderous load of stones heaped upon its inner end.

Thousands of persons visited Table Rock, and, standing in the little box, listened to the thunder of the cataract, and saw the foam of the boiling flood.

About noon one day in the month of June, 1850, Mr. George Wilkes, a well-known New York editor, accompanied a lady from the Clifton House to the Falls. As they left their carriage at Table Rock, and approached the platform, Mr. Wilkes pointed out to his companion a vast crack or fissure, traversing the entire base of the rock, and remarked that he had never noticed it before. The lady shuddered as she looked at it, and shrank back, declaring that she did not care about going upon the rock.

"Oh," said he, "you might as well come on, now that you are here. I hardly think the rock will take a notion to fall simply because we are on it."

They went out, and gazed upon the awful cataract and listened to its thundering roar, till they seemed filled with an indefinable dread.

"This is a terrible place," said he. "Look under there and see on what a mere shell we stand. For years and years the teeth of the torrent in that angry stream have been gnawing out that hollow, and some day this plane must fall."

The lady shuddered. They glanced again at the waters, when,

looking at each other, each recognised in the other's face an expression of mortal fear.

"I don't like this place," exclaimed Wilkes. "The whole base of the rock is probably disintegrated, and perhaps it is poised in a succession of notches, ready to fall out and topple down at any unusual perturbation. That fissure there seems to me to be unusually wide to-day. I think we had better leave, for I don't fancy such a *finis;* and besides, my paper must be published next week."

With these half-bantering words he seized his companion's hand, and in absolute panic they fled as fast as their feet could carry them towards the shore, bursting into a laugh when they regained the land, and jumping into the carriage as if they had made a fortunate escape. They rode back towards the Clifton House, but within two minutes they heard a thundering report, like the roar of an earthquake; the ground trembled beneath their wheels, and turning about they found that Table Rock had fallen. Doubtless the unusual jar caused by their flying footsteps had disturbed its equilibrium and hurled it from its poise.

In a moment the road was filled with hurrying people, and they were told a hundred times that a lady and gentleman who were on Table Rock had gone down the Falls. They were safe, however, but their escape had been a most narrow one; and but for the nameless and unacknowledged fear which had rooted itself in their minds and revealed itself in their faces, they would undoubtedly both have been lost.

Table Rock had stood there for ages, and people had visited it again and again in safety, and yet everyone was aware that some time it might fall. The time had come, and only their sudden departure saved them from a terrible calamity.

So the world in which we live is verging onward toward a terrible doom; and yet people are fearless and indifferent, and

secure. But the last day will come, and in the midst of carelessness, self-confidence, and security, shall burst upon mankind the thunder of the judgment hour. Men have been warned; but what avails warning? Noah warned the world in his day, but "they knew not till the flood came, and took them all away." Warnings did not save those who dwelt in Sodom; and warnings will not save the ungodly who shall, at last, be taken in the snare, and overwhelmed in the ruin predicted. Let us see to it that we take heed to timely warnings, and "watch and pray" always, that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are coming on the earth.

NO GOD AT OUR HOUSE!

WHILE travelling, no matter where, we overtook a sprightly lad, and soon were on terms of intimacy with him. We asked him if he loved God.

"Oh, no," said he; "we don't have any God at our house!"

But God is everywhere present, and must be at your house as at other places."

"No," said he; "I know that He is not there, for father never prays, and mother never says anything about Him."

And was it true that there was no God in that family? Did those parents so live that their children had good reason to suppose that their house was without a God? We read of those who "had no hope and were without God in the world," and, alas! many families are now in the same wretched case. They have no family altars, no voice of prayer ever directs the young hearts to Him who loves and blesses all; no words of counsel drawn from that Book which speaks of God and heaven; no mention of the fact

that God made us, and that every blessing comes from Him, and that we owe Him gratitude, obedience, love. The high and sacred truths which should distil upon the plastic hearts of children in all their home-life, uniting the love of father, mother, and home with "Our Father who art in heaven," are all unknown and unrecognised there. The every-day interminglings which ought to be fragrant with divine reminiscences, are wholly barren and worldly. Among all the thoughts which drop into the opening mind of childhood, not one suggests a God, or an eternal world. All of that silent attrition of modest, homelike, unobtrusive piety which infuses itself into the inner life, the elemental culture of the spirit, is lost, and those spiritual chords which are so essential to the harmony and bliss of the soul are left wholly undeveloped, so that through the entire journey of life and in eternity they may yield no response to the touch of the finger of God.

That child who grows up in a family where prayer is not a daily service is most unfortunate. His loss cannot be repaired by inheritance of gold, or large estates. All the wealth and glory that can be thrown into his hands will never compensate for the loss of culture, and the leavening power of prayer, upon the heart. His external riches can never mitigate the evil of internal poverty. If there is no God in the family, it is more than likely there will be none in the hearts of the children. They will have no God when they marry; none in their family circle; none to shield them from the snares of sin; none to comfort them midst scenes of sorrow; none to stand by them in the hour of death; none to welcome them to the world of light. "Without hope and without God!" And all because those parents had no God in their family! Many generations sink to woe because those parents had no family altar. Professed Christians, too, and no God in the house!

TIRED MOTHERS

A little elbow leans upon your knee,
  Your tired knee that has so much to bear;
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
  From underneath a thatch of tangled hair.

Perhaps you do not heed the loving touch
  Of warm, moist fingers holding yours so tight;
You do not prize this blessing over much,
  You almost are too tired *to pray, to-night!*

But it is blessedness! A year ago
  I did not see it as I do to-day;—
We are so dull and thankless, and too slow
  To catch the sunshine till it slip away.

And now it seems surpassing strange to me,
  That while I bore the badge of motherhood
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly
  The little child that brought me only good.

And if some night, when you sat down to rest,
  You missed the elbow from your tired knee,
The restless curling head from off your breast,
  The lisping tongue that chatters constantly;—

If from your own the dimpled hands had slipped,
  And ne'er would nestle in your palm again,
If the white feet into their grave had tipped,
  I could not blame you for your heart-ache then.

I wonder so that mothers ever fret
  At little children clinging at their gown,
Or that the footprints, when the days are wet,
  Are ever black enough to make them frown.

If I could find a little muddy boot,
  Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor;
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
  And hear its patter in my house once more;

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky,
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I!

But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never rumpled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest is flown;
The little boy I used to kiss is dead!

THE BIBLE

WITH ever increasing delight we turn to the sacred volume, every page, and line, and word of which were penned by inspiration of God. In these Divine records we have unfolded the history of man from paradise to paradise, from the first transgression to its final judgment in the lake of fire; from the tribunal in the garden (Gen. iii.) to the judgment throne of eternity (Rev. xx.); from eternity, through all time and its vicissitudes, on to eternity.

(Selected).

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T. WESTON, 53, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

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A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD

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All communications for the Editor should be addressed to Heyman Wreford, The Firs, Denmark Road, Exeter.

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THE HONEST PRIEST

AT Trèmel, the other day, Madame Lecoat told me an incident in her father's life that interested me very much. When he was near his end he suddenly asked her to fetch a priest, naming one he knew. She was intensely surprised at his request, knowing him to be a Christian, and for a little while hesitated about acceding to it. But feeling it was her duty to go, she left the house to do her father's bidding, and on her way to the priest's house she met him walking along the street. He said to her:—

"Where are you going? She replied: "I am going on a strange errand; my father says he wants to see you and to speak to you." The priest was surprised at the request and asked, "Do you know for what he wishes to see me?"

"No, I do not," she replied.

"I will go with you at once," he said, and together they returned home.

When the priest came into the room where the dying Christian lay he shook hands, saying, "Well, my friend, how are you? Your daughter tells me you want to see me."

"Yes, I sent for you because I wanted to tell you that I have learnt in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content, and that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ."

The priest stood silent with tears in his eyes, and without a word left the dying Christian.

When he got outside the house he met a Roman Catholic lady who knew Madame Lecoat's father. She said to the priest, "I am so glad you have been called in to see him; I hope you had a

chance to say something to him." "Madame," he replied, with deep feeling, "I could add nothing to what he said himself."

No, the look in the dying eyes was enough; the words of the dying lips were all sufficient: "NOTHING CAN SEPARATE ME FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST." The Roman priest felt he was face to face with the dignity of Christian hope. Thank God nothing can separate the believer from the love of Christ; that love passeth understanding, and is only known by those who are saved.

❀ ❀ ❀ H.W.

THE DYING MINER

TWENTY miles from camp, and night approaching. A young home missionary, working for his Master in one of the mining communities of Colorado, found himself in this situation one day, and was beginning to look about him for a desirable place in which to spend the night, when, a little way ahead, he descried a rude cabin.

Approaching nearer, he saw it was one of the poorest of these rough habitations, and much of the "chinking" between the logs had fallen out, rendering the place additionally uncomfortable.

"Such a place as that is surely deserted," said the young minister to himself; "and I am inclined to think I would rather sleep out of doors to-night than inside that shell, even if it should prove to be inhabited by one who would make me welcome:"

At that moment the sound of song floated out through the openings between the logs, and our traveller stopped his horse to listen to the man's weak voice singing that dear old home song, "The home of the soul."

"Oh, that home of the soul! in my visions and dreams
Its bright jasper walls I can see,
Till I fancy but dimly the veil intervenes
Between that fair city and me,"

were the words that reached the ear of the listener outside.

" I must see the man who can sing like that in such a place as this," thought the missionary, riding up to the cabin and alighting from his horse.

A feeble " Come in! " came from within in answer to his knock; and entering, he found himself in the one small room of the cabin, which was almost destitute of furniture.

In one corner a rude bedstead had been constructed of boards and pieces of timber, on which some old blankets were spread; and on this hard bed lay a man evidently very near to death.

" Dying alone, in this situation, twenty miles from the nearest camp, still his look into the beyond seemed so clear, so real, that the language of the hymn he feebly sung was indeed the language of his heart," said the missionary, as he related the incident afterward. " He died that night, and I have never ceased to feel a thrill of thankfulness whenever I think of him, that I was belated that day, and so enabled to be with that man when the end came." Surely that which satisfies a man when dying in the midst of such surroundings is not a thing to be lightly rejected. When a young man leaves the home of his boyhood, he cannot afford to leave the religion of Christ too!

EARLY LOVE TO CHRIST

QUITE recently a little girl was desirous of publicly professing her faith in Christ. One of the teachers said to her, "When do you think you commenced to love the Lord Jesus?" " I don't know, sir," and a tear stood in her eye; " but I think it was when I began to love my mother." Why not? The little children of our Christian households and of our Sunday classes should drink in love to Christ in the very atmosphere of the home and the school.

THE TEACHERS TAUGHT

SOME years ago a servant of the Lord—Dr. C. J. Davis, a native of Barbadoes, West Indies, familiarly called "the Good Black Doctor" by the soldiers amongst whom he laboured during the Franco-German war of 1871—on his way from London to a town on the sea coast (where he was going on his Master's service, and also with the hope of recruiting his health a little, which had become much broken down by arduous duties), entered a railway carriage in which were several passengers. Having had to hurry to the station, he sat down, and, leaning back in his seat to recover his breath, looked out of the window. Presently the train moved on, and as they passed the busy crowds still left on the platform, he heaved a sigh as he thought of the multitudes rushing through this world without, perhaps, any concern about eternity or their precious souls. It might have been the heavy sigh, or his colour and general appearance, that attracted the notice of an elderly lady seated opposite him, for he soon became conscious that she was regarding him with marked attention. She said to her companion:

"What an interesting looking person that is! He looks ill. What a fine race of people he must belong to! I wonder who he is? Do you think he is a Turk or a Hindu?"

"I think he is an Indian," said the young lady.

"I wish we could speak to him, continued the elderly lady; "I quite long to tell him the way to heaven. How sad it is that such a fine, intelligent-looking people should bow down to images and stocks and stones! What a pity we can't speak to him! for he doesn't seem to understand a word we say."

"Perhaps he may be able to read English a little, if he cannot speak it," suggested the young lady.

"You might offer him a tract," said one of the gentlemen.

The elderly lady opened her bag, and from a number selected one, which she presented to him with a smile and a motion to read it. He received the tract, bowed his thanks, and read it in silence.

While he was reading it they talked together of the desirableness of increased exertion on the part of this Christian land to send the gospel to the heathen, and much was said about the great good accomplished in various parts by missionary efforts, etc.

Availing himself of a pause in the conversation, our friend in good English thanked the lady for her care for his soul, telling her it was an all-important object to him, adding: " I heard you say, madam you longed to tell me the way to heaven; have the kindness to tell me how I may be *sure* of going there—I want to hear that. This tract does not tell me how I may be *sure now* that I shall be saved. It tells me to repent of my sins and to pray; but how can I know when I have prayed and repented enough? Can you not tell me plainly how I may be sure of getting to heaven? Have you no other book that tells a poor sinner how he may get to heaven? "

" Oh, yes," said the lady; " the Bible, which is the word of God, was given on purpose to show the way to heaven. *Read the Bible and pray*, and you will be sure to go to heaven."

" Can you show me in God's word where that is said? Where does it say that if I pray I shall go to heaven? I want to be sure of that. Have you a Bible, madam? and can you point out the word which plainly tells how I may be sure of that? " She had no Bible in her bag. The other three passengers were appealed to for a Bible, but no one carried a Bible about with them.

At length our friend drew the precious volume from his pocket, and holding it up, said: " Is *that* the Book you mean, madam? If it be the word of God, given on purpose to show the way to heaven, it will surely give plain directions. Will you kindly show me where? "

The lady took the Bible, and, turning over the leaves confusedly said, " I do not exactly know where to find what I want to show you, but it says if you *repent* of your sins and *pray earnestly* you will be saved."

" That does not satisfy me. How am I to know that I have prayed enough to satisfy God? Can you not point out one portion that is enough to rest upon? "

Turning to her companion, she said: " Can you find it? " She answered, " No." The poor lady asked the others in turn, and the Bible was offered to each with the entreaty that they would point out some portion that told plainly how the sinner was to get to heaven; but all confessed their inability to recollect where such passages could be found.

The lady returned the Bible, and said: " Well, I cannot find the place, but if you will call upon the Rev. Mr. ——— when you reach Folkestone, he will tell you. He is a very good man, an evangelical clergyman, and he will be happy to direct you."

" But, madam, we may never reach Folkestone. The train may run off the line, and we may be all killed. We may have a collision. Many things may happen. I do not know that I may live to see Folkestone. Can none of you Christians tell a poor foreigner how he may be saved? You are moved with pity for his darkness and ignorance; can you not help him to the light? "

" I have told you you must *pray*," said the lady. " The Bible says so."

He took the Bible, and opening it at John iii. 14-16, read out the verses: " And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then John v. 24: " ' Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth

my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life; and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' " And Acts xiii. 38-39: " ' Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.' Are these the portions you mean, madam? " he asked.

" Yes, that is what I could not remember."

" But you told me I must *pray* and *repent*. This precious Book tells me to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and I shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Praise to His name! The poor foreigner can trust that blessed word, and know he is safe for heaven—saved through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ which was finished on the cross more than 1800 years ago, and is happy in knowing he is justified from all things in virtue of that blood shed for sinners, and not by his own prayers and repentance—happy in knowing Christ made peace by the blood of His cross!"

Can you, reader, thus speak of yourself as *saved*? If not, oh, turn to the sin-forgiving Saviour at once. Do not tarry, for if you put it off the door of mercy may be closed, and you may be lost forever? Remember, to-day is the day of salvation—" NOW." If you trifle with God's salvation now, what can await you in the future but punishment and wrath!

Our coloured friend then proceeded at some length to set forth to his astonished fellow-travellers the love that led God to send His Son into this world to die for sinners, and the love that brought the Son to do the will of His Father. He told them how He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners—He who knew no sin—was " made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

" Stop, sir," said one of the gentlemen, angrily; " this is no place for such holding forth. It is neither the time nor place, sir."

" When is the time and where is the place, in this Christian land, for a Christian to speak of Christ? " calmly, but earnestly, asked the doctor.

" Sunday is the time, sir, and the church is the place, but not a railway carriage. This is a very improper place."

They had reached the end of their journey, and parted to meet no more on earth, for " the Good Black Doctor " was seized with a severe attack of smallpox a few days after his arrival at Sedan, and was soon after taken to be for ever with the Lord.

Reader, are you happy in knowing Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross?

THE TEACHER'S REWARD

" I have laboured in vain," a teacher said,
And her brow was marked by care;
" I have laboured in vain." She bowed her head,
And bitter and sad were the tears she shed,
In that moment of dark despair.

" I am weary and worn, and my hands are weak,
And my courage is well-nigh gone;
For none give heed to the words I speak,
And in vain for a promise of fruit I seek,
Where the seed of the Word is sown."

As she slept, in her dream her soul took flight
To a blessed and bright abode;
She saw a throne of dazzling light,
And harps were ringing, and robes were white,
Made pure in a Saviour's blood.

Then a white-robed maiden came forth and said,
"Joy! joy! for thy trials are past!
I am *one* that thy gentle words have led
In the narrow pathway of life to tread—
I welcome thee home at last!"

And the teacher gazed on the maiden's face;
She had seen that face on earth,
When, with anxious heart, in her wonted place,
She had told her charge of a Saviour's grace,
And their need of a second birth.

Then the teacher smiled, and an angel said,
"Go forth to thy work again;
It is not in vain that the seed is spread;
If only *one* soul to the Cross is led,
Thy labour is not in vain."

And at last she awoke, and her knee she bent
In grateful, child-like prayer;
And she prayed till an answer of peace was sent,
And faith and hope as a rainbow blent
O'er the clouds of her earthly care.

Thus rise, fellow-teacher; to labour go!
Wide scatter the precious grain;
Though the fruit may never be seen below,
Be sure that the seed of the Word shall grow;
Toil on in faith, and thou soon shalt know
"Thy labour is not in vain!"

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THE WHITE FLAG

ONE evening the wife of the old flagman, at a railway station, said to her husband, "John, there will be a flag held out to-night—a flag in the hand of Jesus. It will not be a red flag, for there is no danger; and it will not be a green one, for, thank God, there is no doubt; but it will be a pure white flag, for all is perfect safety and peace, and I am very nearly at my journey's end." That night she died.

WHICH ROAD ARE YOU ON?

THERE are but *two* roads, dear reader, the *broad* and the *narrow*—on which are you travelling? You may, according to your age, have been either few or many years on the road; but the all-important question is, *Which* of those two roads are you *now* treading? It was at "a place where *two* ways met," that the colt was loosed, on which Jesus the Saviour rode into Jerusalem amidst the Hosannahs of the crowd; while a few days after, amidst its cruel jeers, He was crucified and slain outside that city's gate.

As regards your future, the cross of Jesus stands, in a spiritual sense, at the parting of the ways, and divides, for all eternity, the *broad* road that leads to hell from the *narrow* way that leads to heaven; and again I ask, Which are *you* travelling on *to-day*? Many years ago, in the course of a long country walk, the writer found himself in a great difficulty, for he came to a place where two roads met, and there being no one to guide him, and no sign-post to direct his steps, he knew not what to do. A choice had to be quickly made, for he wished to reach his destination that night, and the afternoon was already far advanced. Instead of asking for guidance from above, as might have been his happy privilege, he judged by the sight of his eyes, and foolishly took the way he thought was best, with the sad result that, after walking some five miles down the left-hand road, he became aware (on enquiry at a lonely wayside cottage) that he had chosen the wrong turning, and that every step he had taken had only been leading him farther and farther away from the place he wished to reach. There being *no short cut* to that destination, and, moreover, a wide stream separating those two roads, there was no other way out of the difficulty but *to return to the point of departure.* Yes, with weary feet, those five long miles had again to be traversed ere he could reach the right road, and the darkness was gathering quickly all around.

Truly thankful, and glad, was he, therefore, after long exertion, and through God's mercy, to finally reach his destination in safety. Is there not, dear reader, a simple but a solemn lesson to be learnt from this incident? In your own journey through this dark and evil world have you yet troubled yourself to think *which way you are going*; and whether *destruction* or *glory* lies at the end of the journey?

Like Jonah of old, you may in self-will and disobedience have run away from God, and are now going to your "*Tarshish*" (i.e., destruction), through another "*Joppa*" (i.e., a beautiful place), for there is much in this world to attract both eyes and heart. If so, it is high time to *return* ere the storm of coming judgment bursts and overwhelms you. Or, like the prodigal of old, you may perchance have come to the end of all your resources, and are now lonely, sad, and heart-broken, far away from God and home. If so it be, let me beseech you to return, and quickly, to the parting of the ways; where, rising up before your soul's vision, there stands the cross of Jesus, and His own wounded hand (wounded for your many sins) points, like a heavenly finger-post, to that *narrow way* which leads straight on to the Father's house above. Whether you be old, or young, you are forced, if real in your soul with God, to say, "Father, *I have sinned* against heaven and before thee," and as surely as you retrace your steps so will He swiftly run to meet you just *as* you are and just *where* you are, and the kiss of reconciliation, as well as the best robe, will be yours. There is no time to be lost, however, for death and judgment are fast drawing nearer, while you are still lingering on the *broad* road that leads to hell. The world's darkness grows apace; but a voice from the glory-land rings down the narrow road; and it is the voice of God's word and Spirit, saying, "*This is the way; walk ye in it.*" Let your eternal choice then be made, as you read these lines, for the One who died to save you from your sins Himself declares,

"*I am the way,* and the *truth,* and the *life*; no man cometh unto the Father but by *me.*" 'Tis at His cross you will truly learn the measure of your own utter ruin; but there too will you also learn the exceeding riches of God's grace in His kindness toward you by Christ Jesus. His precious blood has answered for all your sins; and, trusting that blood *now*, you will lose the burden at His feet, while, in love divine, He sweetly whispers, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; thy faith hath saved thee; *go in peace.*" Do not delay another moment; but leave the *broad* road *at once*, and, as you enter the *narrow* way, salvation, peace, and all that God can give, shall be yours to enjoy *for evermore.* "Behold! *now* is the accepted time; behold *now* is the day of salvation."

S.T.

CLASP OF HIS MOTHER'S HAND

A CHRISTIAN mother died with the hand of her little son clasped in her own. Years passed and the boy grew to manhood, reckless and abandoned in character. The memory of his mother's prayers, and of the lessons he had learned at her side, seemed to have faded away. From one excess of wickedness into another he plunged, until his cup of iniquity seemed full. Then, by the abounding mercy of God, he was snatched as a brand from the burning, and became a new creature in Christ. Speaking of his life of sin, he said that, hardened as he seemed, and indifferent to all things sacred, there never was a time when tempted to sin, that he did not feel the clasp of his dying mother's hand, drawing him from the paths of sin to the ways of holiness, with a force which he found it hard to resist. That mother, though dead, yet spoke.

JANET'S MUST

GRANDLY did the old Scottish believer, of whom Dr. Brown tells us in his " Horæ Subsecivæ," respond to the challenge of her pastor regarding the ground of her confidence. " Janet," said the minister, " what would you say if, after all He has done for you, God should let you drop into hell? " " E'en's (even as) He likes," answered Janet. " If He does, He'll lose mair than I'll do." At first sight Janet's reply looks irreverent, if not something worse. As we contemplate it, however, its sublimity grows upon us. Like the Psalmist, she could say, " I on Thy word rely " (Psalm cxix. 114, metrical version). If His word were broken, if His faithfulness should fail, if that foundation could be destroyed, truly He would lose more than His trusting child.

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INFLUENCE OF A MOTHER'S PRAYERS

I HAVE a vivid recollection of the effects of maternal influence. My honoured mother was a religious woman, and she watched over and instructed me as pious mothers are accustomed to do. Alas! I often forget her admonitions, but in my most thoughtless days I never lost the impressions which her holy example had made on my mind. After spending a large portion of my life in foreign lands, I returned again to visit my native village. Both my parents died while I was in Russia, and their house is now occupied by my brother. The furniture remains just the same as when I was a boy, and at night I was accommodated with the same bed in which I had often slept before; but my busy thoughts would not let me sleep. I was thinking how God had led me through the journey of life. At last the light of the morning darted through the little window, and then my eye caught a sight of the spot where my sainted mother, forty years before, took my

hand and said, " Come, my dear, kneel down with me, and I will go to prayer." This completely overcame me. I seemed to hear the very tones of her voice. I recollected some of her expressions, and I burst into tears, and arose from my bed, and fell upon my knees just on the spot where my mother kneeled, and thanked God that I had once a praying mother.

R. K.

BOTH SAFE, OR NEITHER

THE frowning Alpine height was scaled by the tourist and his trusty guide. Then as the far more formidable descent was faced, the latter perceived a look of dismay on his companion's countenance. And instantly he wound around him the rope he carried, and firmly secured it to his own body, saying as he did so, " Both safe, or neither."

A striking illustration of the union wherein every true follower of Christ is " bound in the bundle of life " to his divine Leader; for His assurance to His people " because I live, ye shall live also," is not only a priceless promise but an unchanging fact, in virtue of which the apostle declares while still amid the toils and sufferings of his earthly ways, " I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," and " death hath no more dominion over him."

Very far short does our illustration fall of the blessing involved in this oneness with our Lord; not alone deliverance from "fear of death," but the gift of a new, a heavenly life even here and now. " As He is, so are we in this world " made " more than conquerors," however fierce and long and manifold the conflict, " through Him who loves us." Not only concerning that glorious, cloudless, eternal future, but our daily pilgrimage here below, may we claim the Master's promise, " Where I am, there shall also my servant be."

A. J. H.

MY MOTHER'S HANDS

" Such beautiful, beautiful hands,
They're neither white nor small;
And you, I know, would scarcely think
That they were fair at all.
I've looked on hands whose form and hue
A sculptor's dream might be;
Yet are these aged wrinkled hands
Most beautiful to me.

" Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
Though heart were weary and sad,
These patient hands kept toiling on,
That the children might be glad.
I almost weep, as looking back
To childhood's distant day,
I think how these hands rested not
When mine were at their play.

" Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
They're growing feeble now;
For time and pain have left their mark
On hand and heart and brow.
Alas! alas! the nearing time
And the sad, sad day to me,
When 'neath the daisies, out of sight,
These hands will folded be.

" But oh, beyond this shadow-lamp,
Where all is bright and fair,
I know full well these dear old hands
Will palms of victory bear;
Where crystal streams, through endless years,
Flow over golden sands,
And where the old grow young again,
I'll clasp my mother's hands."

C.H.E.

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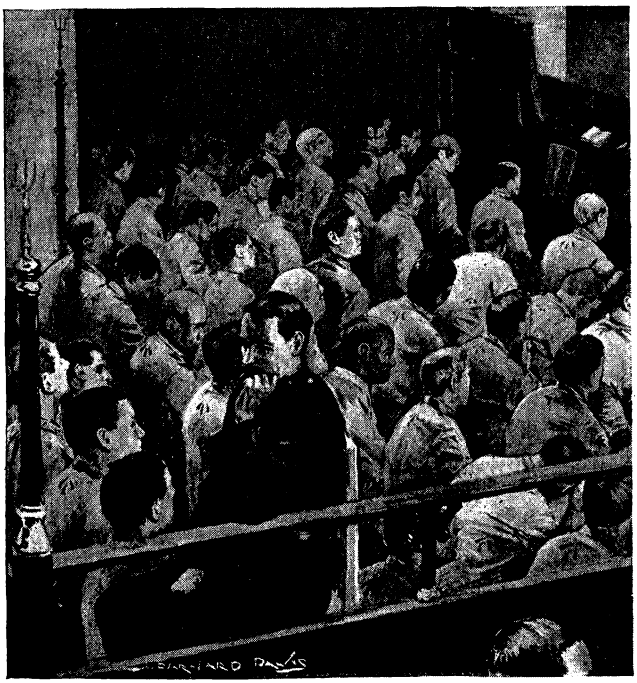

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WHAT I KNOW

THE following beautiful lines were written by a Christian poetess nine days before she departed to be with Christ. She was bedridden for thirteen years, and during that time often suffered agonies of pain. She constantly longed for the home call, and often seemed close to the gates of heaven, and was so disappointed when she got a little better. But resigned to the will of God she would say, " The day will really come when I shall be home and see Him whom I so love,and when I shall be for ever free from pain."

After a very bad attack of pain she would write one of her sweet poems. In the early morning she would often be heard in a weak voice singing the praises of God. She used to say, " I would not change places with anyone."

Those who visited her went away refreshed in spirit at her calm and beautiful faith.

I am sure all who read these lovely lines will thank God that " out of the depths " such a pæan of praise ascended to heaven, and that the "furnace of affliction " taught this suffering saint so much of the loving kindness of her God.

H. W.

WHAT I KNOW

(Song of Sol. ii. 16—vi. 3)

I know not when the call may come
To summon me away,
To enter the Eternal Home
I've longed for many a day.

I know not when my Lord will stoop
My earthly bond to sever;
But this I know, that He is mine,
And I am His for ever!

I know not why He set His love
Upon a thing so vile:
Nor why He drew my heart above,
And cheered me with His smile.
I wonder at His tender care,
For I deserve it never, never.
But oh, I know that He is mine,
And I am His for ever!

I know not why that wounded hand
Should often press me down;
His ways I cannot understand,—
And Life's unfading Crown
Is hidden from my feeble sight,
To win it be my firm endeavour;
Oh, joy to know that He is mine,
And I am His for ever!

I know not why He keeps me here
In suffering deep and long;
Why oft the clouds hang dark and drear,
And I can sing no song.
No song in *words;* yet, my poor *heart*
Would, silent, praise Him doubting never.
For well I know that He is mine,
And I am His for ever!

I know not how His blessings come,
And come so unexpected;
'Mid all the needs, while travelling Home,
We never are neglected.
Nor why so many of His friends
To bless my life should all endeavour,
Unless it be that He is mine,
And I am His for ever!

I know not yet the mystery
How He has made me His,
Nor how He gave Himself to me.—
I only know the bliss
Of hearing from His gracious lips
That He will leave me never, never;
And so I know that He is mine,
And I am His for ever!

I know not anything at all
As some day I shall know;
What darksome shadows yet may fall
Across the way I go.
I am not wise to understand,
At questions deep I am not clever,
But, praise the Lord! I KNOW I'M HIS,
AND HE IS MINE FOR EVER!

ANNA WOODCOCK

Written Sept. 25th, 1910
Passed into the Presence of the King, Oct. 4th, 1910

THE DEATH BED OF THE LOST

"I HAVE nothing to expect, sir, but condemnation; nothing to expect but condemnation." The speaker articulated with difficulty. He was a large man, massive of feature and muscular of limb. The awful pallor of his face was increased by the masses of thick black hair that lay in confusion about the pillow, brushed off from the dead whiteness of his forehead. Struck down suddenly from full hearty life to the bed of death, he made then and there an agonising confession, such as too often racks the ear of the listener at unhappy death-beds.

A meek woman sat near the nurse, who was striving quietly to alleviate the suffering he endured.

"Oh, don't talk to me of pain!" he cried bitterly. "It is *the mind*, woman, the mind"; and agony overclouded his face.

He continued, slowly and deliberately, "There is a demon whispering in my ear for ever, 'You knew it at the time, and at every time; you *knew* it.' Knew what? why, that a penalty *must* follow a broken law. Mark me, I have not opened a Bible for thirty odd years, I have not entered a church for twenty; yet the very recollection that my mother taught me to pray (and she died when I was only six) has passed judgment upon all my sins. I have done wrong *knowing* that it was wrong; first with a few qualms, then brushing aside conscience, and at last with the coolness of a fiend. Sir, in one minute of all my life I have not lived for heaven; no, not one minute.

"Oh, yes! Christ died for sinners, but my intellect is clear, sir—clearer than ever before. I tell you"—his voice sharpened, almost whistled, it was so shrill and concentrated—"I can see almost into eternity. I can feel that unless Christ is desired, sought after, longed for, that unless guilt is repented of, His death can do *me* no good.

"Do I not repent? No! I am only savage at myself to think—to think, sir,"—he lifted his right hand impressively—"that I have so cursed myself! Is *that* repentance? Do not try to console me; save your sympathy for those who will bear it, I cannot."

"Thank you, nurse" (this as she wiped his brow, and moistened his parched lips), "I am not dead to kindness, if I am to hope. I thank you, sir, for your Christian offices, though they do me no good. If we sow thorns, you know, we cannot reap flowers—and corn don't grow from thistle-seed. I have been following up the natural laws, and I see an affinity between them and the great laws of God's moral universe. Heaven was made for the holy; without right."

After that, till eleven o'clock, his mind wandered, then he slept a few moments. Presently, aroused by the striking of the clock, are dogs, and adulterers. There's a distinction—it's all right, all

he looked round dreamily, caught the eye of the nurse, then of the Christian friend who watched.

" It's awfully dark here," he whispered. " My feet stand on the slippery edge of a great gulf. Oh, for some foundation! " He stretched his hand out as if feeling for a way.

" Christ is the only help—' I am the way, the truth, and the life,' " whispered the man of God.

" Not for me! " and pen cannot describe the immeasurable woe in that answer.

" I shall fall! I am falling! " he half shrieked an instant after —he shuddered, and all was over. The wilfully blind, deaf, and maimed, had gone before his Judge. The poor despairing soul had taken that last plunge into eternity.

" I'm falling! " It seems as if the very chamber where he died has kept the echo of that terrible cry.

THE POWER OF SILENCE

" I REMEMBER," said a young man, " being in company with several thoughtless girls. Among them, however, there was one exception—a serious, quiet, and beautiful woman, whose religious opinions were well known, and whose pen had for a long time spoken eloquently in the cause of truth and virtue through the columns of our village paper. Suddenly I conceived the thought of bantering upon religious subjects, and with the foolhardiness of youth and the recklessness of impiety, I launched forth with some stale infidel objections that none but " the fool who said in his heart, There is no God," would venture to reiterate. The flock of silly goslings about me laughed and tittered, and I, encouraged by their mirth, grew bold, and repeated my innuendoes,

occasionally glancing slily towards the principal butt of all my amusement. She did not seem to notice me at all; she did not smile, did not look away, did not look *at* me.

"Still I continued my impious harangue, thinking that she must refute something, that she would not surely hear her own faith held up to ridicule by a beardless boy. Those around me gradually began to glance towards her. Her face was so quiet, so even solemn in its quietness, that seriousness stole over them, and I stood alone, striving by my own senseless laughter to buoy up my fast sinking courage. Still she never spoke nor smiled—scarcely moved; her immobility grew awful; I began to stutter—to pause—to feel cold and strange—I could not tell how. My courage oozed out; my heart grew faint—I was conquered.

" That night, after I went home, in reflecting over my foolhardy adventure, I could have scourged myself. The sweet angelic countenance of my mute accuser came up before me even in the visions of the night. I could not sleep. Nor did I rest, till, some days after, I went to the home of the lady I had insulted, and asked her pardon. Then she spoke to me—how mild! how Christianly! how sweetly!

" I was subdued, melted down; and it was not long after that I became, I trust, a humble Christian, and looked back to my miserable unbelief with horror.

" Her silence saved me. Had she answered with warmth; with sarcasm, with sneer, or with rebuke, I should have grown stronger in my bantering, and more determined in my opposition. But she was silent, and I felt as if my voice was striving to make itself heard against the mighty words of an omnipotent God. Oh, how often would it be better if, instead of vain argument or hot dispute, the Christian would use the magic of silence—utter silence."

GOD'S GREAT LOVE

"THE doctor says I have only three weeks to live, and that is far too short a time to do what those good men tell me is needful!" So said a tall, pale, and wasted-looking young lady of about twenty summers. What did she mean?

Her visitor had asked as to her health, and she had frankly told him the doctor's opinion. Let us hear their conversation, as nearly as I can recollect it.

"Then I suppose you will be thinking a great deal of where you are going after death?"

"Oh! no! on the contrary, I try to banish this from my mind. I have lived a gay life. I have gone in for the pleasures of the world in all their many forms, and its no use my thinking of anything else now. Besides, no less than five clergymen have called to see me, and one and all of them have told me that I must make myself good in order to fit myself for heaven; and I can't do that. Indeed, I have no inclination to try, and in any case I have only three weeks to live, and that is far too short a time to do what those good men tell me is needful to fit me for heaven; so what is the use of making myself unhappy with the thought of it now?"

"My dear young lady, I have only fifteen minutes to be with you, as I have to catch a train for ——; but I have to tell you that in fifteen minutes you can be made fit for the presence of God. Why do you laugh?"

"Pardon me, I did not mean to be disrespectful, but I could not help laughing at the idea of *me* being fit for God's presence here and now in fifteen minutes!"

"Well, here in this old Book, the Bible, I will show you what God says. In Eph ii. 4-5, we read: 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are

saved).' Now look at it; is not that your state—' dead in sins ' ? "

" Yes, indeed, it is, exactly."

" Well, you see these words—' For his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins.' You say that is you. Well, don't you see that God loves you just as you are? It is true you cannot make yourself good—not in thirty years, much less in three weeks; but God meets you with His great love just where you are."

Ah, under the cover of seeming indifference there lies many an aching, yearning heart; and this young lady, so apparently careless as to eternal things, burst into tears.

" Oh, why did the others not tell me this? " she exclaimed. " Only to think of God *loving me*! "

After a few more words as to the gospel of God's free, sovereign love, her visitor had to leave for the station; but, returning to that town a few days after, he called again. This time she was in bed, but her face lit up with a glad smile as she welcomed him.

" Oh," she said, " since you were here I have been able to think of nothing else than God's great love, but I cannot find the verse you read to me. Will you please show it to me, so that I may read it again? "

Two of her young lady friends called at this moment, and began to tell her of some of the amusements they had been at; but she soon silenced them by telling them of her conversion to God, and how repulsive to her now were these worldly things which had so long wasted her life. Then, turning to them, she so earnestly pleaded with them as to their souls, that they fled from the room without even saying good-bye.

She lived for three months (how often has the joy of the Lord sustained the life of the body!), testifying to all who came near her of the love of God, and pressing it on their earnest attention. Her room was a Bethel, and it was a pleasure to be beside her.

Reader, have you believed the *great love of God*? Calvary is the witness to it. The voice of Jesus tells louder than the voice of the archangel that " God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life " (John iii. 16).

L. W. L.

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A CONVERTED HEART SHOULD BE A CONVERTED PURSE

THERE is no doubt that this ought to be the case, anyone being turned from Satan to God (Acts xxvi. 18) could never seek to defraud his neighbour. My doctor happened to come in before my breakfast things had been removed. " Ah! " said he, " I am glad you can manage an egg." " Yes," I answered, " and these eggs are so different from what I get from the shop—so different ! " " Shall I tell you why?" he replied ; "we have them from a railway man, a converted man, who would not sell a stale egg for anything—letting his light shine, doing all, ' in word or deed, in the name of the Lord Jesus ' (Col. iii. 17)."

" Ah! " said I, " I can give you another instance how our converted railway men act uprightly as to the Lord :—At St. David's Station I was waiting for the up train to Bath, and got into conversation with one of the porters, trying to say a word for my Master. I found, to my great joy, the man knew my Master. When the express rushed in I jumped into a carriage, and he handed in my little handbag. I gave him a penny, as I thought. Well, just as the train was moving off quickly this same man rushed to the window, saying, ' I am sure you gave me this half-crown unintentionally,' and so sharply did he put it into my hand as the train whirled off that I had no chance to give it back or to give him sixpence instead. Converted purse, you see, as well as heart. He acted uprightly as in God's sight."

E.P.L.

"IS IT FOR ME?"

"IS it for me? Is it for me?" Such were the eager words that fell from the lips of George Hunniwell, who, many years ago, was suffering a term of penal servitude in the States prison of Massachusetts as a punishment for having, ten years previously, wilfully set fire to his brother's house in a drunken bout, with the sad result that, not only was the house burnt down, but his brother perished in the flames. It would appear to have been the custom at that time for the American President once a year to exercise his prerogative, as Chief of the State, of pardoning any one prisoner in that gaol; and hence, as the particular day came round each year, the prisoners were naturally anxious to know who might be the specially favoured one to receive the Presidential pardon. It was customary, on these occasions, for all the prisoners to attend a preliminary service held in the prison chapel, when the chaplain would give an address, and, at its close, the looked-for announcement would be made by the governor.

On this particular occasion the chapel was full; and the discourse being ended, the Governor rose from his seat, and, facing the prisoners, declared the following message:—

"This year the President of the United States grants a free pardon to *George Hunniwell.*"

There was perfect silence for a moment, but no one moved. As the good news rang out once more from the Governor's lips a pale and haggard man hurriedly rose, with a strange light in his eyes; and, gazing intently at the Governor, exclaimed in eager tones, "Is it *for me*? Is it *for me*?"

"Yes," was the prompt reply, "*It is for you, George Hunniwell*, the President has pardoned *you.*"

At first, the glorious news seemed all too good to be true, for the guilty criminal had only completed half his term; but, as the

truth dawned upon him, his heart was filled with gratitude and joy; and that very day the prison cell was left behind, and George Hunniwell went out into God's sunshine, a pardoned man. This kind act on the part of the American President did not, however, cost him anything; but the pardon of all your sins, dear reader, cost the Christ of God the laying down of His spotless life, and the shedding of His precious blood; and, "*through this man*," *God* now offers *you* a full and free pardon; and it rests with you either to accept it in this day of grace, or reject it to your everlasting sorrow.

Now will you come with me in spirit to a little meeting room at C———, in the south of London; where, in the spring of 1878, the writer was engaged to preach one Sunday evening? It was just after the time of Messrs. Moody and Sankey's first visit to this country; and their beautiful hymns and melodies had gained such a hold upon the hearts of our countrymen. On my way to that gospel meeting I was deep in thought and meditation, when the tune associated with the hymn "There is a gate that stands ajar" came vividly to my mind; and, though enjoying the tune, I was pondering in my heart how infinitely preferable would be such words as "There is a door wide open stands."

While thus meditating, I looked to the Lord for guidance, and my thoughts were immediately directed to that beautiful and well-known hymn:—

"There is a stream of precious blood,
Which flowed from Jesu's veins;
And sinners washed in that blest flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

At once, like a message from heaven, the words of a suited chorus presented themselves to my mind; and I resolved that, were it the Lord's will, I would sing them in connection with the above hymn at the close of the gospel meeting. The Spirit of God

wrought with much blessing in that meeting in answer to prayer; and then I asked the congregation to sing the following chorus after each verse:—

"Oh! depth of mercy, can it be,
That precious blood was shed *for me*?
For *me*; for *me*;
That blood was shed *for me*."

The words were heartily sung; but little did I think at the time of what was going to be the result of that chorus, which undoubtedly the Spirit of God had then given me. This was not manifested until the following Lord's Day evening, when I was again preaching in the same room. During a very happy after-meeting which followed the address, I had observed a sailor sitting near the door, whose eyes were wet with tears; and thinking that possibly he might be in distress of soul, I felt led to speak to him, counting on God to give me the right and suited word. Advancing towards him, I gently whispered, "May I speak to you, dear friend?" to which he quickly assented.

"*Are you troubled*," said I, "*about your sins*?"

Amidst his fast falling tears, he replied, "Oh! no, sir, I'm not crying about my sins; but *for the joy of knowing they're all gone.*"

Expressing my deep delight at such good news, I rejoined, "Has the Lord saved you *to-night*?"

"Oh! no," said he; "He did that *last Sunday night*, as we sung the closing hymn. It was those blessed words we sang which went straight to my heart."

"What words?" I asked. And amidst a fresh outburst of tears he exclaimed:—

"Oh! depth of mercy, can it be,
That precious blood was shed *for me*?
For *me*; for *me*;
That blood was shed *for me*."

Thus had God's Spirit graciously wrought both in preacher and hearer; and there was joy in heaven, and on earth, as the prodigal was welcomed home; and one more lost one had found rest and peace through his own personal appropriation by faith of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ to *his own individual need*. Needless to say, though many years have since passed, the events of that happy night will never be erased from my memory; and may I, in closing, earnestly implore every reader of these lines, if still lost and guilty, to come *at once* to the Saviour, and prove *for yourself* the truth of those words,

"Oh! depth of mercy, can it be,
That precious blood was shed *for me?*
For *me*; for *me*;
That blood was shed *for me.*"

Then, like the beloved apostle, will you be enabled to say from the depths of your ransomed soul, *Jesus* is "the *Son of God*, who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me.*"

S. T.

THE POWER OF THE WORD

UPON the urgent request of a friend, a gay, splendour-loving lady in Geneva, Claudine Levet, resolved once to listen to a gospel preacher. She sat immediately in front of him, with an air of contempt; but as he preached Christ the expression of her face changed. When he closed, she asked, "How do you know what you said is true?" "Here it is written." "Give me the Book." She took the Bible, went home and ordered that no one should disturb her, and remained locked in her room for three days. She came from that room a happy, decided Christian. She is lost to us, her aristocratic friends lamented; she no longer cares for festivities, fashionable garments,

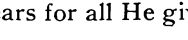
and pleasures, but continually wants to visit the poor and the sick, and read the Bible.

* * * * *

A few years ago there was a prize-fighter in England, strong as a giant, a rough and dreaded man. A few words from the Bible struck him like a thunderbolt, and made him a new man. A short time after, he was met by a rival, who, having heard that he had became a saint, mockingly challenged him to a fight, and struck him in the face so hard that the blood gushed. He wiped off the blood, and said clamly, " If I did not know the Bible, I would beat you to death. I forgive you, and will not fight with you."

* * * * *

There lies in a hospital a man in his prime, who formerly was very active and travelled a good deal, but for years has been incurably paralysed, so that he can move only his head and his hands, and often suffers intense pain. A cheerless and hopeless existence, you will probably think. No; he has his Bible, and writes, " Not only the days, but the nights are too short to thank God with shouting and tears for all He gives me in His word."



MY THREE TEACHERS

It seems scarce past—that Summer morn—
When first our class of seven
Sat waiting for a willing guide,
To lead our steps toward heaven.

She came at length, a matron tall,
With reverence in her eyes,
And measured were the accents all
That proved her passing wise.

Of Abraham, the friend of God,
Of Jacob, strong in prayer,
Of David's harp, and Aaron's rod,
She spoke with solemn air.

She taught us calmly, week by week,
Yet scarcely breathed the love
Of Him who came the lost to seek,
The Shepherd from above.

Another filled her vacant place —
An elder, learned as well.
On doctrines, Catechisms, creeds,
Did he profoundly dwell.

He quoted Paul and Timothy;
He made distinctions clear;
Yet listened we with hardening hearts
Throughout the dreary year.

When he was gone, a gentle maid,
With glances bright as spring,
And heart low fluttering in its nest,
In words that seemed to sing.

Began the tale of Bethlehem's Babe,
The life all strange and lowly
That led at length to Calvary's Cross,
The Just One and the Holy.

We sat with her on Sychar's well,
We saw the lepers' healing;
It seemed as though our very souls
In Golgotha were kneeling;

We followed, while she led the way
To Olivet's glad story,
Then tarried, watching on the mount
For Christ the Prince of Glory!

M. J. P.

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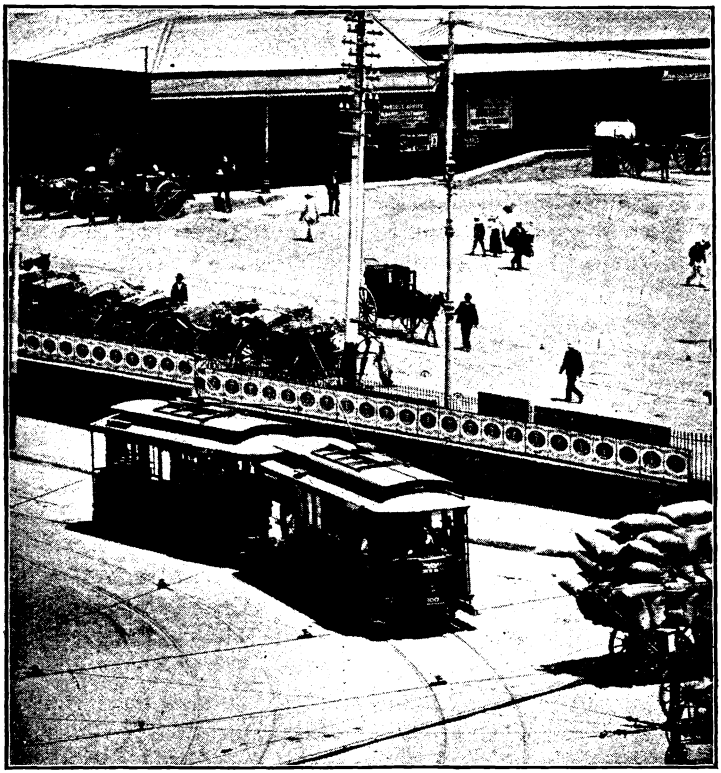
A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD



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A MORAL REFORMER

I REMEMBER in the early days of my preaching how I tried to be a moral reformer to one of the worst drunkards I knew. He had so often ill-used his poor wife that in her despair she ran away from him. She came to me in her trouble, and told me the wretched story of her life. He heard that I had seen his wife, and so he called to see me. He demanded to know where his wife was. I refused to tell him; I spoke very plainly to him of his drunkenness, and how he had treated her. As I spoke he wept and said he would never do it again, and he begged and implored me to tell him where his wife was. His grief seemed so real, I told him I would ask his wife to take him back again if he would promise to give up the drink. He promised eagerly. I saw the poor wife, and she consented to come back again to her ruined home. I appointed a time for him to meet her in the house, and sent the wife upstairs while I waited for her husband. Before he saw her I made him sign the most solemn pledge in the presence of God, that he would never drink again. He signed it and I witnessed it. I then prayed with him, and the wife coming downstairs I left them both together.

Before three weeks had passed he was as bad a drunkard as ever. This, thank God, was the first and last time I tried to be a moral reformer. Only the power of the Spirit of God can cast the demon of drink, or any other demon out of a man or woman. Nothing but *complete salvation*, through faith in the finished work of Christ can bring blessing to the life. There will be plenty of man-reformed sinners in hell, but NOT ONE who has trusted in the power of Christ to save them.

H. W.

A REMARKABLE CONVERSION

A LADY living in Brighton, went to see a lady in London about the character of a servant who had applied to her for a situation.

After being seated the lady told her that she took more interest in servants than she used to, as " a Servant " was the means of her conversion, which occurred in the following way;—

She said, My husband had once to be away from me for a week on important business, and being by myself, I felt very sad and lonely, especially on one particular morning, and I said to myself, " I have got all that this world can give, why am I like this? "

My servant then came into the room, holding a letter in her hand, saying, " Please mistress, will you read this letter from my sister? "

At one time my pride would have resented this, but I believe the Spirit of God compelled me to read it. The letter ran thus;— " Do you know you are either serving God or Satan? Will you give your heart to the Lord Jesus? You cannot serve two masters." These words arrested my attention, and I shed bitter tears of repentance, as I was convinced that I was not serving God.

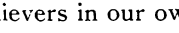
Soon afterwards I encountered my servant on the staircase, and she said, " Well mistress! what do you think of my sister's letter?"

I said it was very nice, and was going on, but she stopped me and said, " If I give my heart to the Lord Jesus, will you? "

I told her to come with me into the parlour, and we both knelt down, and gave our hearts to the Lord Jesus, and have been happy ever since, and so completely did I surrender myself to the Lord, that I got rid of all my jewellery and could not bear to go to my wardrobe and see my smart dresses that I used to wear at balls and theatres. When my husband returned, I told him of my

conversion. He replied, Is it to be " me or Christ? " I said, " Christ." No one knows what I suffered at his hands, until two years before his death, when I am happy to say, he made the same choice.

During the above period, we had Bible Meetings, and happy fellowship with fellow believers in our own house. W. S. G.



IS CHRIST INACCESSIBLE?

A Word to Roman Catholics

VERY many years ago, in the days of the East India Company, a young man in its employ went home to England on leave. During his holiday he was engaged to be married, and, very shortly after, he became a Christian, and learnt what it was to have the Lord Jesus Christ for his Saviour. He was then much troubled at the thought of his future wife being a Roman Catholic, whilst he was a Protestant; and, moreover, a Protestant who cared to pray and read his Bible. The girl did not see her way to giving up the religion in which she had been brought up, and her mother was an extremely bigoted Roman Catholic.

The day came when the young man had to return to India. At his farewell interview with his intended he said, " M——, do you ever pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, or do you only address the Virgin Mary? "

" Oh, how could I be so presumptuous as to address Him, when the Holy Mother of God would present my petition with so much more efficacy; *He is inaccessible to me.*" She spoke also of having been taught from her childhood to worship Him hanging on the cross and in the Host, but that to pray to Him and tell Him her needs would be impossible to her. Nevertheless, she could not refuse her future husband's parting request, that she

would that very night kneel down and, instead of praying to the Virgin Mary, make the same requests to her Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

When evening came, she knelt down and, with a sinking heart, began to pray. Almost at once the thought of a dead Christ in suffering on the cross vanished from her mind, and instead she realised that He was alive, living at God's right hand—that He *loved* a poor sinner like her and that His ear was attentive unto her cry. She knew, too, that she *needed* Him for her Saviour. It seemed such a wonderful thing to her to think that she might speak in all simplicity to the One whom she had thought inaccessible; and most of the night was passed in thanking Him for loving a poor sinner and allowing her to know that *He ever liveth* to make intercession for us (Heb. vii. 25).

She came down late to breakfast, and her mother said, "M—, you will not be in time for Mass."

"I am not going, mother! Christ is alive in heaven, and He loved me and died for me; I can pray direct to Him, and I don't need the intercession of the Virgin, nor these constant masses said."

From this moment poor M—— had to pass through much trial and persecution. When neither mother, nor priests, nor threats could shake her faith or her determination to go no longer to Mass or to confession, she was turned out of her home for ever. But God's hand was over her, and He enabled her to go out to India, where she was shortly married to the man whose request had brought her into so much blessing. For many years they served the Lord in India, being used to many. Their daughter, who related these incidents, remembered how earnest her mother always was in prayer, and how the thought of a living Christ in heaven who loved her seemed to colour her whole life.

The worst sinner, be he Protestant or Roman Catholic, who turns to Christ in his misery and need, may have this joy. His

prayers will not save him, but the *Christ* to whom he prays will show him that He loved him well enough to die for him on the cross to bear the punishment of his many sins instead of him, and that now in the glory He ever lives as the proof that the sins are put away. Peter had to say, " *Lord, save me*! And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him " (Matt. xiv. 30-31). The dying thief said, " *Lord, remember me* when thou comest in thy kingdom "; and directly came the answer, " To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise " (Luke xxiii. 42-43).

Do we who know the Lord realise when we pray that every word reaches His ear, that every cry and groan is heard and understood, and that though we may not hear or see the answer at once, yet the answer is *there*; in the knowledge that we have access to Christ, to whom all power has been given, and that nothing is too great for Him to do for us if He sees good. Receiving an answer is not everything, but having to do personally with the Christ who cares to hear whatever we say to Him is worth more, and imparts a comfort and stay to the heart that nothing else can.

L. W. K.

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"NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN"

AND never book spake like the word of God. " It measures all states and conditions of life; it is acquainted with every grief; it touches every chord of sympathy; it contains the spiritual biography of every heart; it is suited to every class of society, and can be read with the same interest by the king and the beggar, the philosopher and the child "; and " it has a comfort for every sorrow and a balm for every wound " (Psa. xix. 7-10; cxix. 162; Rom. xv. 4; Eph. v. 26; 2 Tim. iii. 15-17; 1 Peter i. 23).

FORGOTTEN, FORSAKEN, OR FORGIVEN

I.—" Forgotten."

HOW easy, alas! it is to *forget* even the passing things of time, which perish in the using; but oh! how terribly solemn, and infinitely worse, when it becomes a question not merely for time, but for that *endless eternity,* to which we are all hastening! We dare not slight the psalmist's warning words, " The wicked shall be turned *into hell;* and all the nations that *forget God.*" The day we live in is, however, one where God is *entirely forgotten* by countless thousands; at least, six days out of seven; and then, perchance, just one brief hour on Sunday suffices for all thoughts of Him.

How still more serious is this when we reflect that, speaking generally, one-third of our lives is spent in sleep! Men to-day are too much engrossed with their business and money-making, their selfish schemes and ambitions, pleasures, and the like, to let God come into their thoughts; and, while feeding on their ever-increasing love of excitement of all kinds, Satan drags down his willing victims into a whirling vortex, where *God is forgotten,* but the end . . . *is hell.* " *Beware* lest thou *forget* the Lord thy God," were the law-giver's warning words to God's ancient people, and Israel's after history, ending as it did in the rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah, is a solemn object lesson to every *God-forgetter.*

Does God forget? So far, dear reader, as *you* are concerned, the answer to that question rests with *yourself.* If you still continue to persistently *forget God,* He will most assuredly *not forget* your sins; and at the great white throne they will all appear against you, and your final sentence and everlasting doom will be pronounced by the very One who would have been your *Saviour now,* but who will *then* be your *Judge.* If, on the other

hand, you come *now,* as a poor, guilty sinner, to Christ, He will save you *now,* for His precious blood avails for all who trust it, and God's word to every believer is, "*Your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more.*" "Can a woman *forget* her sucking child? Yea, she may forget, yet *will I not forget thee.*" "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."

Thus is it sweetly true that, though God eternally *forgives* the believer's *sins,* yet He *never forgets* even the feeblest *believer.* For you, dear reader, if still unsaved, is it not high time to "awake out of sleep," and "*consider your ways,*" or one day you will be "*forgotten* as a dead man out of mind," and "the place that once knew you shall know you no more"?

II.—"FORSAKEN"

"God forbid that we should *forsake* the Lord to serve other gods," were the people's words to Joshua, in reply to his heart-searching request, "*Choose you this day whom ye will serve*"; and years after the voice of the prophet Elijah rang out on Mount Carmel's summit, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord *be God,* follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." But all that happened between Moses and Christ was, with few exceptions, the same sad story of Israel's *forsaking God,* and worshipping idols. To deliberately *forsake God* must end, however, in being *forsaken* of God. Yet, nevertheless, does His heart delight in mercy; and hence the precious record runs, "Let the wicked *forsake* his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him *return unto the Lord,* and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will *abundantly pardon.*"

The voice of wisdom still crieth, "*Forsake* the *foolish,* and live." And yet again, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso *confesseth* and *forsaketh* them shall have mercy." Mercy and truth met together at Calvary's cross, where

God's Holy One was "made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." But what a sight it was for men and angels! "Then all the disciples *forsook* him and fled"; and, amidst the jeerings of the crowd, the taunts of the soldiers, and the bitter revilings of the robbers that were crucified with Him, the sixth hour drew nigh, and from the sixth unto the ninth hour "there was darkness over the whole land." During those three solemn hours the stupendous question of sin *was for ever settled,* and its awful judgment could only be adequately expressed by the bitter cry that came from the lips of the divine Sin-bearer, "My God, my God, why hast thou *forsaken me*?"

Pause then, my soul, and gauge, if thou canst, the awful meaning of those solemn words. That *thou* mightest be forgiven, Jesus was *forsaken;* and that *thou* mightest be justified, Jesus was *judged.* "Deep called unto deep at the noise of God's water-spouts," as judgment's bitter cup was being drained to its dregs. Yes, my soul, it was for thee that that holy Victim was thus *forsaken,* that thou mightest fully know the truth of the psalmist's words, "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for Thou, Lord, *hast not forsaken* them that *seek* Thee," as was surely proved that very day in the conversion of the dying but *repentant* robber. Seated now upon His Father's throne, faith hears and believes the voice of that triumphant Saviour, "I will *never leave thee nor forsake thee,* so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

III.—"Forgiven"

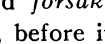
Forgiven! There is a delightful sweetness in that word that none but the *justified* know. Yes, saith the psalmist, "there is *forgiveness with thee* that thou mayest be feared; for thou, Lord, art good, and *ready to forgive;* and plenteous in mercy unto all those that call upon thee." Once more our eyes gaze back on

Calvary's cross, and, amidst its cruel anguish and sorrow, the loving voice of the dying Saviour is heard pleading for His foes, "Father, *forgive them;* they know not what they do." Though nineteen centuries have rolled away since that memorable prayer, God's grace, like a mighty river, still flows on through a *forgetful* and *utterly careless* world; and the gospel message still goes forth, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins;* and by him *all that believe* are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Such is the free, unmerited mercy of God, announced to all of Adam's race, and happy are all they who believe and accept it to the praise of Him, through whose sufferings and death alone could such blessings be so freely offered. "*Beware,* therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets. Behold! ye despisers, and *wonder,* and *perish.*"

How is it with *you,* dear reader? If, alas! you are conscious that you have *forgotten* and *forsaken* God up to this present moment, let me implore you, before it is too late, to turn to that precious Saviour, who is both willing and waiting to save you *now;* and He will welcome you with those ever-gracious words, "Thy sins *are forgiven;* thy faith hath *saved* thee; go in *peace.*"

If, however, you still persistently go on in your sins, you will be *forgotten* by men, *forsaken* by God, and *for ever in hell.* How much better for you to be *forgiven now!* S. T.



LOVE TO CHRIST

CHRIST is not valued at all unless He be valued above all.—AUGUSTINE. Love to Christ, wherever it exists, has signs following it to certify its presence. Like Mary's box of fragrant ointment, it must fill the house with its odour.—MCCULLOCH.

IT MATTERS MUCH

It matters not to God the Lord
What I have done, or what I am—
But what His Son on Calvary bore—
"Who tasted death for every man"
It matters much!

No matter where my birth took place,
In cottage mean, or mansion fair—
But whether I am "born again"
Through faith—with Christ "a fellow-heir"
It matters much!

It matters little where I dwell,
Midst poverty or wealth or space—
But whether Christ in me abides
My body now His dwelling-place.
It matters much!

It matters little what I know
Of science, literature, or art,—
But whether God through Christ I know,
On Him believe with all my heart.
It matters much!

It matters not what I have seen
Of mountain grand, or landscape fair—
But whether I have seen the Lord
On Calvary's mount—my sins to bear—
It matters much!

It matters not whom I may please—
The frown or smile of men I gain—
But whether in God's will I walk
And glory bring to His great name.
It matters much!

'Twill matter nothing bye and bye
What I possess of things below—
But whether I've "a house above"—
Prepared by Christ—"by faith I know"
It matters much!

'Twill matter not when Christ shall come—
What I have known of loss or gain—
But whether I "abide in Him,"
Obedient to His word remain
'Twill matter much! F. J. A.

YOUR WORK SHALL BE REWARDED

No. II.

YEA, even in this life, God allows His servants sometimes to reap a grain of the future harvest. I am quite sure whatever little service is done with a *single* eye to God's glory it has its reward. Scores of times, even in my own uneventful life, have I learnt this. But, mind you that it be a single-eyed motive for His sake and His alone, although the circumstance at the time may appear to be just part of the day's work.

Now, how little I expected to hear of blessing on my work just that May day in 1909 when I went to order coal at one of the stores on the Queen Street road—down over those steps before the great fire which burnt out Sharp's timber yard and Hibberd and Sully, the wholesale grocers' depôt.

I was returning over the train lines for shunting coal trucks when I heard my name several times repeated, and on looking back I saw a working man, with a beaming countenance, and heard him again say, "Miss Leaky, ma'am, you don't know me, but I know you. I shall never forget the day when my missus let you come up to me when I was so ill and you prayed God to change my heart. Yes, ma'am, you knelt down by my bed and prayed, and then you talked to me. I am a changed man from that day to this."

"Thank God," said I, "and you don't drink now?"

" No, no, all that is given up; I am a Christian and live to serve God."

No need for me to say more than that I felt truly humbled that I should, after twenty years or more, hear of and speak to the man I devoutly tried to be made a blessing to in earlier days.

Reader, work while you can with " single eye," and you too may reap even in this life.

E. P. L.

THE SCEPTICAL FOOL

SHUTS his eyes to the evidence all around him, turns a deaf ear to the testimony of the Bible, and says: " There is no God " (Psa. xiv. 1). But observe, this is the language of the fool's *heart*. Not exactly of his mind. His reason, unless perverted, would lead him to the very opposite conclusion. It is in his *heart* he says " No God." That is, if he could only have things as he would like, there would be *no God*. The wish is father to the thought.

More than 250,000 French youths have the letters A.D. tattooed on their arms. These letters stand for " Anti-Dieu," which means " Against God." How horrible! But the *heart* of the sceptic, and, indeed, of all men naturally apart from the grace of God, is branded with the same device. " The carnal mind " (that is, the mind, or will, or desire of the flesh, man's fallen and depraved nature) " is enmity against God " (Rom. viii. 7).

A man hears that he is responsible for his actions to God, and that he must give account to Him for all that he has done. The thought is dreadful to him, for he knows that God is holy, and that he is most unholy. Then he silences the voice of conscience by disclaiming his belief in the existence of God! The Bible emphatically calls this man by his right name—" Fool."

CHRIST'S SYMPATHY

THEY tell us that, in some trackless lands, when one friend passes through the pathless forests, he breaks a twig ever and anon as he goes, that those who come after may see the traces of his having been there, and may know that they are not out of the road. Oh, when we are journeying through the murky night and the dark woods of affliction and sorrow, it is something to find here and there a spray broken, or a leafy stem bent down with the tread of Christ's foot and the brush of His hand as He passed, and to remember that the path He trod He has hallowed, and that there are lingering fragrances and hidden strengths in the remembrance, " in all points tempted as we are [sin excepted]," bearing grief for us, bearing grief with us, bearing grief like us.

MACLARE.

❀ ❀ ❀

THE DOOR BARRED

A WOMAN in Glasgow got into difficulties. Her rent was due, but she had no money for the landlord, and she knew very well that he would turn her out if she did not satisfy his claim. In despair, she knew not what to do. A Christian man heard of her distress, and came to her door with money to help her. He knocked, but, although he thought he could hear some one inside, yet the door was not opened. He knocked again, but still there was no response. The third time he knocked, but that door still remained locked and barred against him. Some time after he met this woman in the streets, and told her how he had gone to her house to pay her rent, but could not get in. " Oh, sir," she exclaimed, " was that you? Why, I thought it was the landlord, and I was afraid to open the door! " So Christ is knocking at the door of the sinner's heart. He comes, not to *demand*, but to *give*! " " The *gift* of God is eternal life."

PROGRESSIVE UNITARIANS

WHILE spending a winter in Los Angelos (U.S.A.) some time ago I took a trolley-car one day to go to Pasadena. Just before entering the car there had been an accident on the street, and two ladies in the seat ahead turned to inquire of me the particulars. This gave me the opportunity to hand them gospel tracts. They took them, and just glancing at them handed them back, and one of them said, " We have no use for these; we are Unitarians of the progressive order. We never were lost, and don't need to be saved; that is old-time theology."

I replied, " Well, I am sorry for you."

One of them said, " Oh, you need not be. I will talk with you a thousand years from to-day; then you will see things differently."

I answered, " If such a thing should be, a thousand years from to-day, it will be as the rich man talked with Abraham, with a great gulf between that will be impassable."

They were so angry that they stopped the car and got off, and in passing one of them said, bitterly, " Well, you are a little fool!"

Alas, what vagaries of the depraved mind of man people will run away with. " Unitarians of the progressive order," " never lost; don't need to be saved! " How the devil, " 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." Willingly deceived by Satan, the great enemy of God and man. No fall of man!

❀ ❀ ❀

PREACHING CHRIST

A MINISTER of the gospel found a slip of paper laid for him, on which were written the words, " Sir, we would see Jesus." The hint was acknowledged the next Sunday by an evangelical sermon from another passage, " Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."

READING THE BIBLE

DR. DUNCAN says:—" In the Old Testament there are 931 chapters; but by distributing the 150 Psalms into 60 equal parts, they will then be reduced to 841; add to these 260, which is the number contained in the New Testament, they will then be 1,101. Divide this by 3, and you will find each part contains 365 chapters, and 6 over; so that by reading three chapters every day, you will read the whole over in one year, except six chapters. The most profitable method is to begin with the first chapter of Genesis, the first Psalm, and the first chapter of Matthew, and to proceed regularly.

GRACE

A SMALL slip of paper was found, in which the late excellent Duchess of Gordon had written the following remarkable prayer of a poor man, seeking alms in Fife, before eating some food that was given him: " Lord, give me grace to feel my need of grace; give me grace to ask for grace; give me grace to receive grace; and, O Lord, when grace is given, give me grace to use it."

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A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD

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T. WESTON, 53, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

A MESSAGE FROM GOD

YES, indeed! A message from God! And God sends this message by the most faithful and trustworthy messenger that ever lived. For God hath spoken unto us, in these last days, by His Son. The Messenger has come direct from heaven, direct from God, and faithfully and lovingly delivered the message.

But the Messenger has been despised, and mocked, and cruelly put to death. Nevertheless, the message which has been given holds good, yea, it cannot be silenced or destroyed, for it is life in itself. It is quick and powerful! It liveth and abideth for ever!

Hearken to the Messenger, who says thus, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." His enemies (and He had many) said, "Never man spake like this man." A man of authority indeed whose words and messages will live on and on, and never, no, never, be forgotten. May God command attention now, and command His rich blessing as we consider the message which reads thus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again (born from above, or born anew), he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus, to whom these words were spoken (surely a man of great intelligence and knowledge), could not understand them at all. By his remarks we see his mind simply turns to the natural birth. But no! Jesus sought again to teach and convince him, saying the second time these words, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (See John iii. verses 1 to 7).

Whether the reader understands it or not, you must have a new birth. Man must have a divine nature, must have life divine in his soul, or else he will remain in darkness and ignorance and doubt and uncertainty all the days of his life, and never, no never enter heaven. How could man be happy with God, in his old Adam nature? Impossible!

The truth remains, and the truth abides, "Ye must be born again." Education and religion and morality and respectability, won't do for God. We must begin at God's beginning. "We MUST be born again."

May every reader ponder it well. Man, by nature is lost, and dead, and in the darkness and thraldom of sin and Satan; a rebel sinner against God, and also an enemy; a slave to sin and Satan. And Christ, and Christ only, can deliver from this condition, the result of Adam's sin. The carnal mind is enmity against God." "There is none that seeketh after God." "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

But thank God, the Messenger makes known the remedy. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John iii. 14, 15, 16).

Thank God! now we have it, the message of love itself. And all this comes out after four thousand years have rolled by in the history of man, or the world. A message of love from God. God's great and perfect love to man, who has proved himself to be over and over again, a rebellious worm, a creature of the dust, a rebel sinner against God. Yet God loves him. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

Now dear reader, mark well the result: " He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already." And why? Because " he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God " (John iii. 18). Believe the Messenger, I beseech thee, and believe the Message.

A Message from God! Yes, indeed! God hath made Him to be sin for us, Him who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. All is settled. Peace is made. " The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." And the Messenger says: " Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24). Look and live. Believe and live.

R. S.

GOD SAVE KING GEORGE:—

An Acrostic Prayer for Coronation:—22 June, 1911.

Great God of Nations, King of Kings,
Oh! let Thy grace divine,
Descend on our dear country's King,
Save him, and make him Thine;
All needed wisdom, health, and strength
Vouchsafe King George this day,
Enrich him with Thy heavenly love;
Keep him in Thine own way.
In all things be Thy Word his guide,
Nor let his courage fail;
Give him to know the peace of Christ;
Grant that no ills assail.
Enable him the cleansing power
Of Jesu's blood to prove,
Remembering that the Lord of All,
Gladly at whose dear feet we fall,
Eternally doth love.

S. T.

Sandown, I.W. *22nd June,* 1911.

ALLAN'S LITTLE SERMON

ONE rainy Sunday, too wet for Johnny to go to service, his parents left Allan at home, to take care of him. The playthings were all put away except kitty; so Johnny played with kitty until he made her angry by trying to take her up by the ears, as Allan took up his rabbits. Then she jumped out of the window, and Johnny saw her no more that morning.

" Allan," he said, " I wish I could just go and look into my box of playthings. I won't take out one. I just want to look at them; that wouldn't be breaking the Sunday, would it? "

" It would be going into temptation," said Allan; "and you know you prayed this morning, ' Lead us not into temptation.' "

" Oh, dear," sighed Johnny, " then I wish I was at church."

" Come," said Allan, " I will preach you a little sermon."

" Well," said Johnny, " I will listen."

So Allan took the great Bible, and found this text, which was so easy that Johnny could read it himself. "I am the door."

"Here is a little text for a little boy who is four years old," said Allan, " for it has just four words in it, one for every year."

"The first word is ' I.' That has only one letter in it. This means the Lord Jesus, the good Saviour, who loves little children.

" The second word is ' am.' That has two letters in it. When Jesus says, ' I am the door,' of course He doesn't mean that He is a door like that you shut just now; but this little sermon is to show you how He is like a door.

" The third word is ' the,' which has three letters. Jesus says *the* door, because there is only one door into the kingdom of heaven.

" The fourth word is ' door,' which has four letters in it. A door lets people into the house; and if there was no door, they could not get in. So the Lord Jesus lets His people into the king-

dom of heaven; and if it was not for Him, they could not get in at all. A door keeps out the rain, and the dogs, and the thieves, and so Jesus keeps away all evil and hurtful things out of His beautiful heaven.

"Now when you want to go into a house, you go straight to the door; and so, if we want to go into the kingdom of heaven, we must go to Jesus, and ask Him to let us in."

So Allan knelt down, and little Johnny by him, and they prayed to the dear Lord to make them His own good children, so that they might go into His beautiful city when He comes.

HIS LAST OPPORTUNITY

TOWARDS the close of a lovely Sunday evening in the month of June a large crowd had gathered together on the beach of that quaint little Kentish seaside town of Deal, to listen to the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God. It was our privilege, on this occasion, to fulfil once more a promise to the earnestly twice-repeated dying request of a dearly-loved son, made shortly before his spirit passed up to be "with Christ"—his "far better portion—that we would preach the gospel of Christ faithfully."

Telling our audience of this request, and of a further little incident or two concerning him, we urged upon them their necessity, as sinners in God's sight, of closing in at once with His offer of mercy, adding at the same time a reminder as to the uncertainty of life, that "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 . . .*" (1 Pet. i. 24).

It was a solemn moment, and felt by many to be so. A man, too, who could never be persuaded to remain and hear what the preachers of that little band of Christians had to say from time

to time, remained and listened that evening; and, on leaving, impressed with the solemnity of the message, he remarked how true it was, that "*the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away*" !

This was his last opportunity. The next day that man died suddenly—passing into eternity without further warning.

"A curious coincidence," suggests one of our readers. Yes, a coincidence, truly, but perhaps one of God's coincidences; as was also the fact that the very next Sunday evening, knowing nothing of this solemn circumstance, still fresh in the minds of a large number in the company again assembled, we were led, quite *impromptu*, to press upon the attention of our hearers the wisdom of receiving *now* God's "great salvation," in view of the uncertainty of life on the one hand, and of the suddenness of the Lord's coming on the other, when the now opened door of mercy will be closed for ever; to say nothing of the "sudden destruction" awaiting the rejectors of Christ, when the day of the Lord shall come "as a thief in the night."

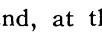
But, alas! how true it is that "God speaketh once, yea twice, though man regardeth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14, R.V).

How is it with you, my reader? There must arrive a moment when your bosom shall cease to heave, and your pulse to beat; and when your last opportunity shall have come and gone. Perhaps your perusal of these lines may prove to be that last opportunity; for death comes to us in such disguises. The late Mrs. Henry Dering tells of a young lady, a child of wealth and fashion, who, when riding in Hyde Park, London, broke a blood vessel. She was taken home, and the doctor sent for. Alas! his verdict was a hopeless one, and he warned her she could only last out a few hours. Then, in an agony, she exclaimed, "I cannot die! Oh, save my life! save my life! I can't—I can't die! Oh, mother, mother, you taught me to live, but you never taught me to

die! Oh, doctor, save my life! I cannot die!" and with that she passed away.

Only a few weeks ago a young acquaintance of ours in the Territorials—a fine, strong, intelligent fellow—was taken suddenly ill, after the manœuvres, on the 6th of the month; he died on the 9th, and was buried on the 12th! And, like his, so your end may come, quick and sharp, with pain leaving you no leisure to think of eternal realities. Oh, then, be wise! acknowledge the truth of God's testimony concerning your *lost* condition as a sinner, and honour Him by receiving as your very own the glorious Saviour He Himself has provided—JESUS, the Son of man, who came "to seek and to save that which was *lost*" (Luke xix. 10). It is the "*lost*" who need the "*Saviour*"; as the once well-known John Newton said to a friend, at the extreme close of his life: "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things—that *I am a great sinner*, and that *Christ is a great Saviour*."

N. L. N.



NOTHING TO LOSE, BUT EVERYTHING TO GAIN

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." (Matt. xvi. 26).

NOTHING to lose but everything to gain. Such were the words which fell on my ears in passing a lady and gentleman in earnest conversation. What had been said previously, or said after, I know not; but from what I saw and heard (and I trust my judgment was correct), the lady was seeking to press upon the young man his need of Christ and His salvation. But be that as it may, it is of that I would now desire to have a few words with you, dear reader.

Have you ever seriously considered your position and your future prospect, if you should be called suddenly to leave this scene? Have you made preparation for Eternity? Do not turn away or evade the question, it is of the greatest importance that you should give such a matter your whole-hearted and undivided attention. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose thereby. How many after accepting the salvation of God have had to regret that they had put it off so long. Indeed we cannot make our choice too soon. "Now is the accepted time." Have you ever thought how soon that point of time passes from you? Even while it is upon your lips it is gone, and the day that was now is the yesterday of the past beyond recall. But still God's loving invitation abides, waiting over you in patient love and grace, pleading, beseeching, imploring you to come and accept freely without money and without price, that wonderful and glorious salvation. In accepting such a gift, you will find eternal life, you have nothing to lose but everything to gain. You have got nothing to do, you have nothing to pay, Christ Himself has done all the mighty work for your everlasting salvation, and Christ Himself has paid all the ransom price by which He has procured eternal redemption.

One of the martyrs in the days of Queen Mary wrote, and how true are the words!—"He (Christ) has made all, bought all, and dearly paid for all. With His own immaculate body He discharged your bodies from *sin*, *death*, *and hell*, and with His most precious blood paid your ransom price once and for all. He was indeed and is very God and very man in One person. All depends on this; the death of the cross would be nothing without it, as all would be nothing without that death."

Hallelujah, what a Saviour! And it is through that finished work, the perfect work of His own dear Son, that God now offers to thee, dear reader, His free gift, eternal life. A. E.

"HEALED BY HIS STRIPES"

THERE was once a distinguished gentleman, who, cherishing towards the youth around him the benevolent spirit that glowed in the heart of Robert Raikes, gave much time and money to the support of several Sunday schools in his native county and his immediate neighbourhood. Into those schools many neglected children and vagrant boys, accustomed to desecrate the Lord's Day, had been gathered. Good superintendents had been appointed over them, and they were generally in a thriving condition.

One of these schools, however, had a more than ordinary share of large and troublesome boys; and among them was one ringleader who was particularly unmanageable. Again and again had he broken the rules of the school; the influence of his example was poisoning the minds of the rest; and the superintendent came to the conclusion that the expulsion of this boy from the school was an unavoidable necessity.

Just at the moment when he was about to act upon that decision, this gentleman, the founder of the school, a kind-hearted and noble-looking man, entered unexpectedly.

The superintendent told him at once of the sad duty he was about to perform, and of the mortifying failure of every method employed to reclaim the lad. Forbearance had reached its utmost limit, and the transgressor must, at last, be expelled.

The founder was grieved. His countenance showed the workings of pity. He was sure that if the boy were turned away from the school he would become worse and worse, and that his course would end, probably, in prison or on the gallows.

After a few minutes' conversation he said to the superintendent, "I know that your sentence is just; you cannot allow the law to be broken down, and the order of the school to be destroyed by

indulging the wilful disobedience of any one. I dare not ask you to withhold any longer deserved punishment from the incorrigible transgressor. But one favour, sir, I will ask; let me receive punishment as the boy's substitute. Change the form of the penalty, and let me bear what he deserves. I will take off my coat and submit myself to you to receive 'forty stripes save one'; and then will plead for him that he be permitted to remain in the school and have time and space for reflection. Perhaps he will try again, and may God help him to do better."

At this saying the superintendent was astonished, so were all the scholars. The scene was wonderful. There was perfect stillness. Every eye was fixed on the strange spectacle. The objections of the superintendent were overruled by the kind persistency of the man who presented himself to suffer in the transgressor's stead. There stood that noble-looking gentleman, bowing his back to the smiter for another's sake. The refractory boy, also, like the rest, was greatly surprised. He forgot himself. He seemed to notice no one in the room except the man who was about to suffer for his sake. He remained in his seat motionless, almost breathless, until the lash descended upon the good man's back; then, bounding from his place, as by a mighty impulse, he arrested the hand of the superintendent, saying—

"It is enough! I promise to do better! Spare him, sir, and just try me once more!"

He was not ashamed to weep. For the first time manly tears flowed from the deepest springs of feeling in his nature, and they were tears of repentance. The boy was gained over to the right side, and kept his word faithfully.

Who does not see that this noble act of self-sacrifice on the part of this benefactor was truly Christ-like? It was an appeal of love that rent the rocky heart like a lightning stroke. Such is the appeal that comes to the awakened soul from the cross of Jesus.

When the eyes of the mind are opened to discern the Sufferer there; when His voice is heard, "It is finished"; then we know the meaning of the response of Paul, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation." "By his stripes we are healed."

HER LAST LETTER

'Tis but a line, a hurried scrawl,
And little seem the words to say,
Yet hold me in reproachful thrall:
"You quarrelled with me yesterday;
To-morrow you'll be sad."

Ay, "you'll be sad," the words are few,
And yet they pierce my soul with pain;
Ay, "you'll be sad," the words are true:
They haunt me with prophetic strain:
"To-morrow you'll be sad."

We quarrelled, and for what? a word,
A foolish speech that jarred the ear,
And thus in wrath our pulses stirred;
Then came her letter: "Dear, my dear,
To-morrow you'll be sad."

Few words! half mirth, and half regret,
The last her hand should ever write—
Sad words! learned long ago, and yet
Fresh with new pain to ear and sight:
"To-morrow you'll be sad!"

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

A STORY is told of Lepaux, a member of the French Directory, that with much thought and study he had invented a new religion, to be called "Theophilanthropy," a kind of organised Rousseauism, and that, being disappointed in its not being readily approved and adopted, he complained to Talleyrand of the difficulty he found in introducing it.

"I am not surprised," said Talleyrand, "at the difficulty you find in your effort. It is no easy matter to introduce a new religion. But there is one thing I would advise you to do, and then, perhaps, you might succeed."

"What is it? what is it?" asked the other with eagerness.

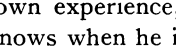
"It is this," said Talleyrand, "go and be crucified, and then be buried, and then rise again on the third day, and then go on working miracles, raising the dead, and healing all manner of diseases, and casting out devils, and then it is possible that you might accomplish your end!" And the philosopher, crestfallen and confounded, went away silent.

The anecdote shows, in a fresh and striking light, how firm the foundation on which Christianity and the faith of the Christian rest. "Ransack all history," says an able writer, "and you cannot find a single event more satisfactorily and clearly proved than the resurrection of Christ from the dead." And says another, a distinguished jurist, "If human evidence ever has proved or ever can prove anything, then the miracles of Christ are proved beyond the shadow of a doubt." And yet the miracles and resurrection of Christ prove His Divinity; and, as Napoleon said, "His Divinity once admitted, Christianity appears with the precision and clearness of algebra; it has the connection and unity of a science."

And on this strong foundation it is that Christianity and the

Christian faith rest. And how absolutely immovable that foundation is, how absolutely convincing the evidence from this source, we hardly realise until, like Talleyrand, we call on the objector himself to be crucified, himself to rise from the dead, and himself to work miracles, as Christ did throughout Jerusalem and all Judæa, in the presence of thousands and tens of thousands, both enemies and friends.

It is a most assuring as well as comforting thought, that this external evidence from without can never be shaken while human testimony has value or meaning. And when we add to this the internal evidence—the fact that thousands and millions of Christians have felt, in their own experience, that the Gospel is true, just as the hungry man knows when he is fed, or the thirsty when he has drank; just as we know the existence of the sun because we see its light and feel its heat—then the foundation on which as Christians we rest, stands doubly sure to the soul. Heaven and earth may pass away, but God's word and all that rests upon it shall abide for ever.



"SAFE!"

AN aged Christian, who had been for some time wearing away, lay on her deathbed; her family were gathered around her, eagerly watching every change betokening the last and greatest. She had been silent for many hours, excepting when roused to answer a question; they saw the end was close at hand now, and they longed much for a word, were it only *one,* that might assure them of the triumph of faith in this her final conflict. They knew death would only open to her the entrance into glory; but they felt it would be an unspeakable comfort to have some assurance from her own lips that in passing "through the valley of the shadow of death she feared no evil"; especially

would it be precious, as she had often said, with a solemn anxiety, "If I may be right and safe at last ! " At length she opened her eyes, raised them upwards, a radiant look came over her face, and she exclaimed, with the emphasis of triumph, " *Safe!* " and then calmly passed away.

Thus their earnest wish was granted—the dying lips gave forth *one* word, and that the word of all others most welcome to their ears; it was *only a word*, but, oh, the full and glorious meaning it contained ! " Safe ! " then her former trembling fears were all at rest; Jesus had indeed spoken blessed words to her soul, and crowned the long struggle of her faith with victory; death and the grave were vanquished, and had no power to harm or separate her from Him whom she had long loved.

"Safe!" *All* that word implies we cannot realise till the last wave of life lands us upon the eternal shore. Great is the joy of the soldier, after the dangers of the battle-field, where the arrows of death flew thickly around, and himself was liable every moment to fall like his fellows, when he is "safe" in his peaceful home again, and past horrors exist only in memory; great is the joy of the mariner, after a long, stormy voyage, and frequent fear of shipwreck, when he nears his native shores, all perils past, all fears at rest, "safe" in the quiet harbour; but these are only faint images of the bliss that must be felt by the dying believer when, as earth recedes, and the glorious scenes of the invisible world open to his view, he realises he is " safe " in that home of perfect peace and purity, from which he will never more go out. It is well worth a lifetime of earnest seeking, to attain such blessedness at its close !

LITTLE WILLIE WAKING UP

Some have thought that in the dawning, in our being's freshest glow,
God is nearer little children than their parents ever know,
And that if you listen sharply, better things than you can teach,
And a sort of mystic wisdom, trickle through their careless speech.

How it is I cannot answer; but I knew a little child,
Who among the thyme and clover and the bees was running wild—
And he came one summer evening, with his ringlets o'er his eyes,
And his hat was torn in pieces, chasing bees and butterflies.

"Now I'll go to bed, dear mother, for I am very tired of play!"
And he said his "Now I lay me," in a kind of careless way;
And he drank the cooling water from his little silver cup,
And said gaily, "When it's morning, will the angels take me up?"

There he lies, how sweet and placid! and his breathing comes and goes
Like a zephyr moving softly, and his cheek is like a rose;
But his mother leaned to listen if his breathing could be heard,—
"Oh," she murmured, "if the angels took my darling at his word!"

Night within its folding mantle hath the sleepers both beguiled,
And within its soft embracings rest the mother and the child;
Up she starteth from her dreaming, for a sound hath struck her ear—
And it comes from little Willie, lying on his trundle near.

Up she springeth, for it strikes upon her troubled ear again,
And his breath, in louder fetches, travels from his lungs in pain,
And his eyes are fixing upward on some face beyond the room,
And the blackness of the spoiler from his cheek hath chased the bloom.

Nevermore his "Now I lay me" will be said from mother's knee,
Nevermore among the clover will he chase the humble bee;
Through the night she watched her darling, now despairing, now in hope,
And about the break of morning did the angels take him up.

SEL.

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A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD

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T. WESTON, 53, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?

"I HAVE prayed so earnestly and waited so long, and it seems all in vain—and yet, I know that God does hear and answer prayer."

This was the sentence in her mother's letter to which Nurse Ernton turned back when she had finished it, and read it over again.

"I don't believe He does," she said to herself.

Poor Nurse Ernton! She had been brought up to believe in the power of prayer, and if she had looked back honestly into her past life, she could have pointed to many an answered prayer of her own, but the sunny trust of her childhood had become clouded by the mists of unbelief. She had not lost her faith in God as the Creator and Ruler of the universe, but she had lost her faith in Him as the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. She looked at the world's mysteries of trouble and anguish, disappointment and death; she looked at her own home, over which, unlifted as it seemed by earnest prayer, hung one dark shadow which had clouded its light for years, and all earth's problems seemed to stand deserted and alone in a dim world of shadows.

It was a pleasant room in which she was seated at breakfast; roses peeped in through the open window and scented the air with their delicate fragrance; outside, bathed in the bright June sunshine, stretched the green lawn and well-kept grounds of the Grange gardens, and between the rose-flecked boughs of the pink may, and the laburnum trees with their golden blossoms, might be

seen the thatched roofs of the cottages and grey ivy-mantled tower of the little village Church. But the scent seemed to die out of the roses, and the light out of the sky as she repeated defiantly: "I don't believe He hears and answers prayer"; and it was with a sad face and a heavy heart she finished her breakfast.

Then she laid the letter aside with a determined air, and putting on her usual cheerful expression—for to look bright, however downhearted she might feel was, she had been taught, one of the first duties of a nurse. She went out of the room and across the passage to her patient.

He lay in bed, a man hardly beyond the prime of life, with soft brown hair and beard, and gentle, steadfast eyes; he had been hopelessly ill ever since the beginning of the year, but within the last few days, to the surprise of both doctor and nurse, he had rallied wonderfully.

"I have had such a good night, Nurse, and am feeling so much better this morning," he said, smiling at her as she entered. "I really believe I shall be able to get as far as Bluebell Copse, and hear the nightingale again after all."

"I hope so," she answered cheerfully, as she smoothed his pillow and re-arranged the bedclothes. "You have a great fancy to hear the nightingale, haven't you?"

"Yes, I have," he replied; "I should like to hear one once more. I have even prayed that I might, I want to so much," he added.

Then he went on dreamily after a little pause. "I have never prayed earnestly for anything in all my life but God has given it to me sooner or later—He is very good."

And as he lay there, Nurse Ernton "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel," and the words of doubt and despair died away on her lips, and into her heart came a fervent desire that she could regain the happy trust of childhood which this man had

kept unshaken through all the troubles and trials of a life nearly twice as long as her own.

The remembrance of that peaceful face and of those simple words of unwavering faith, soothed her unconsciously as she went about her work that morning. " 'Sooner or later,' he said," she thought; " perhaps after all, some day God will answer mother's prayer."

The doctor came for his usual daily visit, and the sick man told him of his fancy, and said how much stronger he was feeling; but when he asked how soon he thought he would be able to go out, the doctor evaded the question, saying cheerily, he must wait a day or two longer, and then they would see about it.

When he left, Nurse Ernton followed him from the room, as she always did, to receive her orders, and then she ventured to ask if he thought their patient would be able to carry out his desire.

He shook his head. " I wish he might," he answered, " but it is absolutely impossible."

" ' Absolutely impossible,' and God is Almighty—so much for the power of prayer! " she said to herself bitterly as she returned to the sick room.

Half an hour later she had to go to the kitchen to see about a special preparation of beef tea, which she always made herself. Cook was busy making pastry, but as she rolled and buttered and rolled again, her tongue went as fast as her fingers.

" Master's better to-day, Nurse! 'e looks much more like 'isself; when I went in with 'is broth this morning I was quite pleased to see 'im. ' You're looking more like yourself, sir,' sez I. ' Yes,' sez he, ' I'm ever so much better. In a day or two I 'ope, please God, to get out o' doors, and 'ear the nightingale a-singing.' ' I 'ope so too, sir,' sez I. Master's powerful set on 'earing them nightingales. I don't think much of their singing myself. Give me a canary that'll sing all day long and be some-

thing to look at, too; not a little brown bird that's nothing to look at if you do see it, and that only sings at night when folks ought to be in bed and asleep. But there, we can't all think alike, and a good job, too. Why if everyone liked the same thing, the dishes wouldn't ever go round, as I sez to Baker sometimes. My word, now, there's a knock at the door, and me up to me elbows in flour! Do, Nurse, go and see who it is, there's a good soul."

Nurse, who, sick at heart, had been listening with an occasional murmur of assent to cook's uninterrupted chatter, did as she was asked and found an overgrown, ragged-looking lad of fourteen or fifteen with a bunch of bee orchids in his rough, dirty fingers. He held them out to her in a shamefaced fashion, saying, " For master, 'e likes 'em."

" Thank you! he will be very pleased with them, he is so fond of flowers," she said as she took them, took them fairly from his hand, with no careful avoidance of contact. The boy noticed it, and instead of making off at once, as usual, stopped to ask gruffly, " Be 'e mortal bad? "

" He is rather better to-day, thank you," she answered gently. " Who shall I say brought him the flowers? "

But he had gone off by this time with slouching walk and hanging head, so she went back to the kitchen to ask there.

" Who is 'e? Why, Idle Dick, that's *who* 'e is, and the plague of the whole parish, that's *what* 'e is," cook answered energetically as she glanced at the retreating figure. " But he'll do anythink for master," she added, " I'll say that much for 'im. But there, anyone would; there isn't a soul in the village but what would do anythink for 'im."

Nurse Ernton went back to the sick room, her whole soul full of bitterness. Any one of these people who knew the dying man, even the worst of them, would do anything for him, but the God he had served so faithfully and loved so fervently would not grant

him this one last desire, this little thing on which he had set his heart. That night she fell asleep, when she did sleep, with the words ringing in her brain and keeping time with the tick of the clock beside her—" God does not hear and answer prayer—does-not-does-not-does-not."

The sick man was not so well the next day; the unexpected accession of strength died away, leaving him weaker than before, and an attack of faintness came over him in the afternoon which the nurse's practiced eye told her was the beginning of the end.

The sun set, the shadows deepened; across the flower-starred lawn came the scented evening breeze, and the room was very still. Suddenly, through the open window came the flash of wings, and a little brown bird, flying in, perched on the rails at the foot of the bed and began to sing.*

Not a breath disturbed it; the dying man lay still and listened, smiling; his wife sat close beside him, and the nurse stood near in silence, while the bird poured out its soul in pure, plaintive, rich-toned snatches of melody—the unrivalled sweetness of the nightingale's song. Tears stole down Nurse Ernton's cheeks as she listened, and the bitterness of unbelief melted out of her heart; what *she* heard was more than a nightingale's song—it was the heavenly music of an answered prayer, a pledge that God, the Almighty, the All-loving, hears, and answers the prayers of the children of men—sooner or later. She can wait now.

E.A.M.

* A fact.

"THAT OLD SERPENT"

"THAT Old Serpent" gives us another phase of Satan's character and power. The name takes us back to the garden of Eden, when in serpent form he gained the spiritual control of our first parents by his lies. In 2 Cor. iv. 4, the title "God of this world" or age is applied to him, in his blinding power over the hearts of men. Again he is represented as transforming himself into an "angel of light" in 2 Cor. xi. 14. All this is his serpent character, and manifests the mighty hold he has on men spiritually. The great deceiver of the human race, luring on souls to their everlasting destruction! This power he exercises from the air above us. The Devil is not reigning in Hell, as so many think. Scripture never even hints at such a thing. He is now "prince of the power of the air," ruling and blinding the hearts of men, from his throne in the air; and whether in heathenism, or in christendom, by his lies and flatteries deceiving souls. I say it unhesitatingly, that every unsaved soul is being led blindfold down to perdition, a willing dupe of the Old Serpent! You do not feel your danger? So much the worse for you!

Before the American war a Southern planter had a slave who used to pray a good deal, and sometimes pretty loud, and rather late. His master said to him one morning, "Sam you prayed very loud last night, and kept it up late."

"Yes, Massa, I pretty full last night, and it hab to come out."

"But you kept the Missis awake, and I don't see why you have to pray so much, when you are a good man."

"Oh, Massa, de Debbil he boders me a heap, and I jus' pray to de Lawd, and he fly away."

"Well, the Devil don't trouble me any," said the planter, "I don't see why he should bother you."

"Massa, we went out to shoot ducks de oder day."

"Yes, but what has that got to do with it?"

"Well, you fire, and you kill some, and you wound oders, which did you send me arter?"

"Why, of course, after the wounded ones."

"What for you send me arter de wounded ones, Massa?"

"Why, I knew I had the dead ones sure, but the wounded ones might get away."

"Jes' so, Massa, and de Debbil he know he got you sure, and he don't boder you, but he don't know he got me, and dat is why he keeps arter me."

And we warn every unsaved soul, that until you accept Christ as your own Saviour, you are *under the personal control of the Devil*! Oh that men and women would awake to this awful fact! Listen no longer to the lies of the Old Serpent charmer. Believe the truth of God, that Christ died to save you, and from that moment you step out from under the power of darkness into the marvellous light of God! J. J. S.

CONSTANT IN PRAYER

FELIX Neff once made the following comparison:—"When a pump is frequently used, but little pains are necessary to have water; the water pours out at the first stroke, because it is high. But if the pump has not been used for a long while, the water gets low, and when you want it you must pump a long while, and the water comes only after great efforts. It is so with prayer; if we are instant in prayer, every little circumstance awakens the disposition to pray, and desires and words are always ready. But if we neglect prayer it is difficult for us to pray; for the water in the well gets low."

ON HEAVEN

THE following piece on heaven was repeated by an aged Christian not long before she passed away. One of her daughters copied the thoughts down; her mother had learnt them as a child, and when she came to die, her memory recalled the beautiful thoughts.

" The rose is sweet, but surrounded with thorns. The lily of the valley is fragrant, but it springs up amongst the brambles. The spring is pleasant, but it soon passes away. The rainbow is very glorious, but it soon vanishes. Life is good, but it is quickly swallowed up in death.

" There is a land where the rose is without thorns. Flowers are not mixed with brambles in that eternal spring. Life without a cloud. Rivers of pleasure are there, and flowers that never fade. Myriads of happy spirits are there surrounding the Throne of God with a perpetual hymn. The angels with their golden harps sing praises continually. The cherubins fly on wings of fire.

" This country is the country that is good, and nothing that defileth can enter in. The toad must not spit its venom among the turtle doves, or poisonous henbane bloom among sweet flowers. Neither shall anyone that doeth evil enter into this good land.

" This earth is pleasant, but it is God's earth, and is filled with many delightful things. But in that country it is far better. There we shall not grieve any more, or be sick any more, or do wrong any more.

" There the cold shall not wither us, or the heat of the summer scorch us.

" When our parents and friends die they are laid in the cold ground. Here we shall see them no more. But there we shall embrace them and be separated no more. There we shall see all good men of whom we read in holy books. Abraham, called of

God, the father of the faithful. Moses after his long wanderings in the Arabian deserts. Elijah, the prophet of God. Daniel who escaped the lions' den, and then the son of Jesse, the shepherd king, the sweet singer of Israel. They loved God on earth, and praised Him on earth, but in that country they will praise Him much better, and love Him more. There we shall see Jesus who has gone to that happy land. There we shall behold the glory of the High God. Although we cannot see Him here, we love Him here, and we often think of heaven, that happy land that is to be our home.

" We are here for a little while, but there for eternal ages."

Dec. 31st, 1910.

THE WONDROUS CROSS

WHO can tell out the story of the cross? There was a time when we thought we knew much of it: but, oh! the depths, the wonderful depths of the cross and the work accomplished there, which constantly break in upon the heart as one meditates on the cross. One who knew the cross, whose eyes were filled with all its glory, because he beheld Him who hung on the cross, in highest glory, has told us, " But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Crucified unto the world. Dead to the world and to sin are the blessed effects of the cross.

Some time ago, while remembering the Lord on the Lord's day, we sang a familiar hymn—

" When we survey the wondrous cross
On which the Lord of glory died,
Our richest gain we count but loss,
And pour contempt on all our pride."

How true!—contempt must be poured on all our pride when we behold that sight, the cross on which the Lord of glory died. But is it so—" And pour contempt on all our pride "?

And when we sang the second verse, its truth came home still more to the conscience—

" Forbid it Lord, that we should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, our God;
All the vain things that charm us most,
We'd sacrifice them to His blood."

How true! If such a One died to deliver us out of this present evil age, then the vain things that charm us most—not the sinful things—must be relinquished. But is it really so—" all the vain things that charm us most, we'd sacrifice them to His blood "?

" There from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flowed mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

" Were the whole realm of nature ours,
That were an off'ring far too small;
Love that transcends our highest powers
Demands our soul, our life, our all."

And then once more the heart said, How true! Marvellous sight, the Lord of glory on that cross for me! Forsaken of God, paying the penalty of my sins, drinking the cup of wrath, untasted by me. Such love surely demands our soul, our life, our all. But is it so? How often we sing these blessed truths and our lives are strangers to them. God grant that we may live out the truth of the cross in our lives. May the deliverance, the victory, and the power of His cross be manifested in our lives. Dead to the world, and the world dead to me.

A.C.G.

WHY GOD IS SILENT

THE DAY OF MERCY AND THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

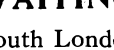
SOME people are in the habit of looking at things upside down. Instead of letting God judge them, they put God on His trial to see whether He can justify His right to a place in the universe. Said Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, in a tone of dismay, " Nobody is afraid of God now." Men think they can try conclusions with the Almighty with impunity because He does not step in openly in human affairs.

For nineteen hundred years God has been silent. It is true that during this time He has been at work in the lives of multitudes, bringing them back to Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ, regenerating them by the power of the Holy Spirit, and giving them new experiences, desires, hopes and ambitions. But His operations have been largely hidden. For nineteen centuries God has not given this world any outward manifestation of His presence and power such as men's senses can judge of. He has, as it were, withdrawn Himself. And why is God silent now? Because His every attribute has been vindicated and fully manifested in Christ. In giving His Son He did all that could be done for the salvation of men, and now He is waiting to see how men treat His message of pardon. In the gospel He has spoken His last word of mercy, and the day of wrath is not yet. He who is to come as Judge is now sitting on the throne as Saviour. The great amnesty is still in force. The day of mercy still runs its course.

But there is a day coming when the world will have to answer as to how it treated the Son of God. And YOU, reader, will have to answer the question, "What have YOU done with Christ? " It is no use for you to say, " I'll be neutral," for the Lord Jesus Christ says, " He that is not with me is against me." There is

no middle ground. CHRIST OR SELF; CHRIST OR THE WORLD—WHICH? Whatever others may do, may the language of your soul be,

" My heart is fixed, eternal God,
Fixed on Thee;
And my eternal choice is made,
CHRIST FOR ME."



" WAITING "

IN a pretty cemetery in South London is to be seen a tombstone which has, as an epitaph, the single word " *Waiting.*" It is the resting-place of the body of one who, when here, was a " living epistle," exemplifying that brief and comprehensive view of what a *true* Christian is, as recorded in 1 Thess. i. 9-10. There are three things we read of in that passage which characterised the Thessalonian Christians:

First, " They had turned to God from idols." That is, they were converted. There was " *aversion* " from sin, and " *conversion* " to God; not merely a turning from one set of ideas to another, but a being turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. How needful this is in the case of every one of us is seen in the fact that " God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Why? Not only in view of a dying bed, but " because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world by that Man whom He hath ordained." TO-DAY He is " the God of all grace," and meeting Him as such we obtain instant salvation. But in the " APPOINTED DAY " above referred to He will be " the God of judgment," and, meeting Him as such, men will receive " the due reward of their deeds "—" eternal judgment."

Next, we read, they " serve the living and true God." Before this, they served idols. Like the Ephesians, they " walked accord-

ing to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind." But now, having turned their backs on sin and Satan, they rejoice in a happy service, having God for their object.

This recalls an incident to mind connected with an old peasant in a little village in Germany, who also knew what it was to have turned from sin unto God. The lady who tells it says that, like most of the villagers, he possessed one or two apple and pear trees, and used to amuse himself in the summer by picking up the fallen fruit and heaping it up in a corner of the shed. One day, when out for a walk, she came upon him as he was stooping to pick up a fallen apple. " Don't you get weary," she asked, " of stooping so often, and they lying all alone by the roadside? " " No, no, Miss," he answered, smiling, and offering her a handful of ripe pears, " I don't weary; I'm just waiting—*waiting*. I think I'm about ripe now, and I must soon fall to the ground; and then, just think, the Lord will pick me up! Oh, Miss, you are young yet, and perhaps just in blossom; turn well round to ' the Sun of righteousness,' that you may ripen sweet for His service."

This brings us to the third thing. We read these Thessalonian Christians " turned to God. . . *to wait* for His Son from heaven." Many long years have passed away since then, but these dear people, like many others, are still waiting, *consciously waiting*, for that glorious moment when Christ shall come. True, they are no longer " in the body pent," for their spirits, having returned to God who gave them, are waiting "with Christ " for the time when " they that sleep in Jesus God shall bring with Him," to take up their bodies of glory, and thus to be " for ever with the Lord." Blessed attitude for every child of God, to go on from day to day *waiting* for " the Lord from heaven "!

But what about those who have never turned to God, never been converted, never repented? Alas! their bodies will turn to ashes,

but their spirits will likewise return to God who gave them, and in " hades " (not the grave, as some fondly imagine, but the unseen world) they will remain imprisoned, *waiting* for the moment when the " dead, small and great, shall stand before God," only to find, alas! that their portion must be "the second death"—eternal separation from the God they neglected or refused.

Oh, my reader, if unsaved, be wise now; heed God's message of salvation now; repent and believe the gospel now! Wait not for a dying hour. Many are ushered into eternity without a moment to think; and even if you be allowed a dying hour, you may be then quite unfitted, physically, to give attention to this momentous subject. *A death-bed is a poor place to prepare for eternity!*

N.L.N.

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THAT WORD "BELIEVE"

"I AM no scholar, sir," said an old man; " I have taught myself the last fifteen years, and I delight to read the Bible. That word BELIEVE is a great word with me—it is everything to me; and, as far as I can make out, there is no other way of getting to Jesus. He says, ' Come unto me,' and I thank God I am very happy in coming to Him by believing that He died for me, and that He washed all my sins away."

As the old man thus spoke his venerable face brightened up with joy and peace in believing.

Have you, reader, joy and peace in believing? Are your sins washed away by the blood of Jesus? There is, indeed, salvation in no other, for there is " none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved " (Acts iv. 12). Therefore, look to, trust in, believe in Jesus, be reconciled to God now, for " He has made Christ to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Glorious salvation!

HIDDEN PRESENCE

" I will never leave thee."—Heb. xiii. 5.
" Lo, I am with you alway."—Matt. xxviii. 20.
" Whom having not seen, ye love." -1 Pet. i. 8.

Still Thou art near when fades the glowing daylight,
And night is brooding over land and sea,
Father of lights, unwearied Thou art watching,
For, dark or light, it matters not to Thee.

So near Thine own when, wrapped in peaceful slumbers,
They lie secure beneath Thy sheltering wing,
Unconscious as the forest-bird of danger,
While angel-guards methinks do sweetly sing.

Nearer than Angels when in pain we languish,
And sleep has spread her wings and flown afar,
Then may we hear Thy whispers in the stillness,
And glimpse the radiance of the Morning Star.

Lord, even here, the sweetness of Thy presence
Brings rest and comfort to our weary hearts.
Though faith is feeble, and our eyes are holden,
Yet will we trust Thee till the cloud departs.

O gracious Father keep our hearts from wandering.
These wayward hearts so prone to go astray,
Be Thou our Light and let Thy radiant presence
Illume our path, and chase the mists away.

Nearer and nearer dawns the fadeless morning
That ushers in the long eternal day,
When we shall see Thee, in unclouded glory,
In that fair land beyond the shadows grey.

ANNA WOODCOCK.

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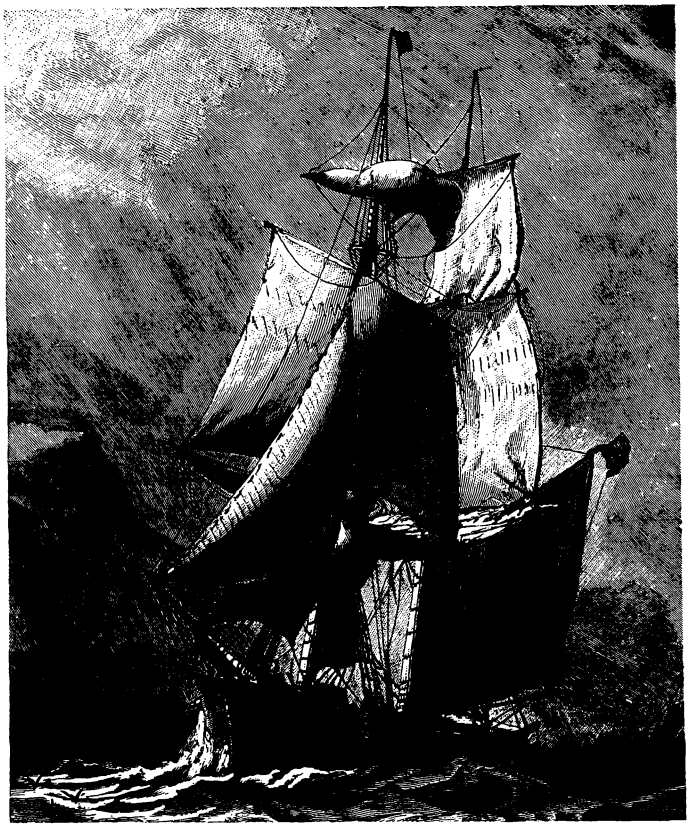
A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD



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BELIEVING IN GOD AND BELIEVING GOD

WHEN people are asked whether they have any interest in Christ, they sometimes answer, "Well, I believe in God." There are not many, even in these days when a mild agnosticism is supreme among men in general, who would deny the existence of a Supreme. And even those who declare themselves atheists are often the first to call upon God in times of great danger and trouble.

To believe IN God avails but little. Perhaps you say, "I believe in God." What practical effect does such a belief have on the life? Many who in theory confess the name of God give the lie to their profession in their lives, for they LIVE as if there were no God. They are practically atheists.

To believe IN God is one thing; to BELIEVE God is quite another. There is all the difference in the world between being convinced of the existence of God and believing what He says. The gospel brings us a word to believe, first concerning ourselves, and then concerning Christ. God says that man is lost, guilty, ruined, helpless. If you believe God you will take the place of the lost sinner. This is very different from carelessly admitting that "all men are sinners." You may not FEEL very bad, but whatever you may feel, you may KNOW, because God says so, that you are a lost sinner.

As soon as you believe what God says about YOU, and take the place that truly belongs to you, you will be interested in what

God says about CHRIST. God says that it is a trustworthy statement and worthy of universal acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." If you do not take the place of the lost sinner, then on your own shewing Christ is not for you. Only those who are "condemned already" can claim a Saviour. God cannot accept your thoughts about yourself. Just because you accept God's estimate of yourself you have the right to accept God's estimate of Christ for you. You may imagine that you have to make yourself good enough for Christ to trust YOU; God says that Christ is good enough for you to trust HIM. Be a true rationalist and believe the God who cannot lie. Accept the character He gives you, and accept the Saviour He has provided for you. TAKE THE GUILTY SINNER'S PLACE, AND CLAIM THE GUILTY SINNER'S SAVIOUR.

THE STRAITS OF BAB-EL-MANDEB

ON more than one occasion the writer has sat on the forecastle of one of His Majesty's ships, when passing through the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, which the sailors call "Hell's Gates," because of the intense heat experienced when entering the Red Sea by its eastern entrance.

It is an awfully solemn thought, isn't it, that quietly, and peacefully gliding along, like a ship on smooth water, many souls are passing through hell's gates, into hell, awaiting the eternal burnings, as so solemnly announced by the Lord Jesus, and recorded in the Gospel by Mark (chap. ix. 43-48).

You will readily admit that there was a power which drove the ship into the Red Sea; she did not pass through those awful Straits without a guide. No! neither are you passing into that dreadful

abyss without the power of the evil one propelling you along a smooth slippery path, paved with many good resolutions, yet cunningly and surely guiding you to the gates of hell.

Is there no remedy? Yes, praise God! He has provided the *only* way of escape—His beloved Son. His word declares, "For God *so* loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER *believeth* in him should not perish, but have *everlasting life.*" Isn't this good news? That God, the One that you and I sinned against, has provided such a Saviour, One who saves from sin, from death, and from hell, and for eternal glory.

He, the Holy One, took my place, the sinful one, at Calvary's cross. God meted out to Him the cross, the grave. He got what I deserved, that I may get what He deserved, and if you own yourself to be a guilty sinner, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be able to say with me, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." What! *all* my sins gone? Yes! on the authority of God's unerring word, "and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17). Every one, therefore, who has faith in the person and work of God's beloved Son, can rely upon the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ for cleansing; for His word declares, "and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

Ah, my dear deluded soul, do not trifle with God, for these are solemn realities, and sooner or later must be faced. God is beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself, and you can be so the moment you trust Christ, and thus be right with God for ever. That wicked one—the devil— is saying, "Time enough yet, wait a little longer," and by his prevailing influences he is drawing you through "Hell's gates," into the "lake of fire" (Rev. xxi. 8)!

C. H. C.

NO PEACE APART FROM THE BLOOD

NEXT to the consciousness of our existence, the deepest fact in our being is that we are sinners; that we are responsible to God, and that there is within us a conscience which bears witness to the fact of sin, and to the fact of our accountability to God.

The infinitely holy God could never allow the approach of a sinner to Himself on any ground but that which maintains His own righteousness. God's character as the holy and righteous One must be established; therefore, the sinner's approach to God must be in God's own way and no other. Hence, the first question to be settled in each person's experience, and in every approach to God, is that of sin. Until the question of sin is settled, there is nothing settled.

I have read a very popular book on "Rest." Beautiful language and beautiful thoughts about the weariness and the burdens of life, and about a rest that is found in yielding up the will to Christ; but from beginning to end no mention is made of the heaviest burden a man can have—the burden of sin, the burden of a guilty conscience; that insurmountable barrier which stands between sinful man and the holy God.

How can there be rest until the burden of sin is removed, until conscience is relieved of the dark, foul, guilty stain of sin? How can there be rest until the heart is assured that sins have been forgiven according to the righteousness of God?

The first rest our hearts can know, the first peace our souls can enjoy, is the rest and the peace we obtain when, ceasing from our own works, we believe on Him who finished the work for us. In the precious blood of the great sin-offering, poured out for us on Calvary, there is rest and peace, and nowhere else.

J. R. C.

"THAT LITTLE BIT"

SEVERAL years ago there lived in the East End of London a man, known to the writer, who was a notorious ruffian, and one to whom the respectable class of his neighbours gave a wide berth. Still, he was not beyond the saving grace of God, and his conversion caused, at the time, no small stir in the neighbourhood, where he was known as a costermonger.

Sixteen years have rolled away since his marvellous conversion and departure to be with Christ, the tale of which I will give in brief.

A servant of the Lord was suddenly called to the bedside of poor Bill, and found him in rapid consumption. Turning to the dying man, he asked him what he would like him to read. "Anything you like," was the reply. He opened his Bible and began to read the story of the brazen serpent, but the poor dying man seemed ignorant of the whole matter; to him the Bible was a strange book. After praying with him, his visitor left, promising to call the next day, which he did, and found him in an anxious state of soul. Then, with regret, Bill told his visitor how much of his time and money had been spent upon the racecourse. But the God of all grace was about to turn his thoughts to that which was far more important than all the pleasures of sin that the world offers. Calling to see him one evening, after a prayer meeting, Bill was told that there had been a thousand people praying for him, and he at once fervently exclaimed, "Thank God!" He was visited every day—on one or two occasions twice a day—and earnestly pleaded with to come to Jesus. From 14th April to 24th May not a day passed but what he was pointed to Him who alone can save the vilest sinner. On one occasion he said, "Do pray with me—I want to be saved." He was in deep earnest now.

The servant of the Lord explained to him how Christ on the cross took our place, bore our sins, and suffered in our stead.

" I see it now," said Bill; " He suffered for me, then." From that moment he took God at His word, and in simple faith believed the testimony concerning His blessed Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The passage God blessed to him was Isaiah xliii. 25, " I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Christ taking his sins, and he receiving Christ as his righteousness, was now all clear to him.

Calling upon him on one occasion, I found a rather rough-looking individual in the room, and was led to speak of Christ to him. Bill, as he lay there, chimed in, " You can have it for nothing, mate." Another time his son was present, and he also had an opportunity to hear the word, when, all of a sudden interrupting the conversation, the dying man said, " Give him that little bit."

" What bit? "

" That little bit about Christ taking my place and bearing my punishment for me, that's the bit."

When the end was nearing I took him by the hand and said, " Is there anything I can do for you? "

" No; God bless you; you have done me the best turn in my life."

" It is all peace, then, all clear? "

" Yes, indeed."

" No doubts? "

" What's them? " said he.

" Well, I hardly care to tell you; it is when Satan comes and tells us perhaps we are not saved."

"No, I haven't any of them yet." He never did have. A short time after he passed away to be with Him who loved him and gave Himself for him.

You may wonder, my reader, why I have told you this story. First of all to shew that God is not "willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," and further, also to appeal to you now to decide in time and not to put it off.

What great pains God often manifests in His interest in one soul. Oh, for more earnest desire on the part of all His children to interest themselves in the solitary ones, or the twos and threes that may be in our neighbourhood, yea, even on our very threshold.

E. J. E.

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THE BIBLE

THIS BOOK contains:—The mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practise it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be open at the judgment, and be remembered for ever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labour, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents (John xii. 48; 2 Tim. iii. 16; Prov. xiii. 13).

THIS IS THE WAY

THERE lies an emigrant ship in a certain harbour. She is to sail shortly with several hundreds of passengers, who are already on their way to her from all parts of the country, and of all occupations; and they are all going to the ship by all manner of ways, and by different conveyances—some walking, some riding, some driving, some sailing, some by train. No matter how they get there, they must all board her by the narrow gangway on foot. But observe, when once on board they are all carried by the same ship, over the same tract of sea, to the same destination.

That destination, no matter what it may be, you may compare to heaven, the ship to Christ, the gangway to faith, and the passengers, coming from all parts in various ways to the gangway, to poor sinners coming in all sorts of ways, at all sorts of times, and by all sorts of means, to this saving point—*believing or trusting Christ alone.* And oh, if once in *this* ship, how sure is heaven! This ship will "weather the storm" indeed! It won't go down. It won't be wrecked. The ark was a type of it. How safe was Noah! O soul, if we had you only safe in Christ, we should be happy about you. We should certainly meet on "yonder side." "*I am the Way*"—not *a* way, or a good way, or the best way, but THE Way—the only Way.

Don't, I beseech you, as too many do, confound Christ with heaven; don't think, when we say, "Come to Christ," that we mean merely turn good and get to heaven. There is no road to heaven in that direction. There is a board up, so to speak, to that effect. The flames of Sinai will scorch to death every soul who attempts to get to heaven by that way.

The road is by Calvary—"I am *the* Way," says Christ. So when we say, "Come to Christ," we mean what we say; come to

Christ and have dealings with Him, *in order to get* to heaven. *Christ* is not only THE Way, but the *whole* Way. He is the first step, and the last, to heaven—the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and the Omega.

J. G.

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"DON'T YOU KNOW I'M FORGIVEN?"

MY favourite nephew was a particularly naughty little fellow, but worth loving, full of spirit and full of most original naughtinesses.

Once a lady was left in charge of the numerous children whilst father and mother were away. Now Frankie hated the long *book-prayers* she used when waiting for his breakfast. One morning no book could be found, for Frank had buried it in the garden! Frankie loved his father, but one day, being very rebellious, self-willed and disobedient, he kept away from his parents altogether and went whistling about the house as if he did not care. His poor little heart was heavy, and with tears in his eyes he felt too ashamed to go to his father. At last he could bear it no longer, so he rushed down to the study, and flying into his father's arms he cried, " I am so sorry, do forgive me." As in the case of the prodigal son, his father was only too ready with loving words to speak forgiveness. Frankie kept close to his father the rest of the day, and when his mother said " He sticks to his father's side as if he grew there," the boy looked up and said, " I may, for don't you know I'm forgiven."

And so, dear reader, it may be for you and for me. We have but to acknowledge our sinfulness and sins, and ask our Heavenly Father's forgiveness, and He will forgive at once. And when we are forgiven let us keep close to His side. " Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith" (Hebrews xii. 2).

E.P.L.

DOCTRINE OF NON-ETERNITY OF PUNISHMENT

HOW does the doctrine of the non-eternity of punishment dishonour the Person and work of Christ?

1. Because it lessens *the magnitude of the guilt of sin.* Sin in Scripture is likened to a debt; and if we want to know the indebtedness of a person whose liabilities have all been met, we have but to ask what was paid to liquidate them. God's Christ is heaven's liquidation of the sinner's debt; and if God's claim be less than infinite, that which met the claim must be equally so. Christ's payment does not exceed God's claim. If less would have sufficed, less would have been demanded, and less have been paid. Man has no conception of what sin is. The cross of Christ alone reveals it. An infinite sacrifice tells us that sin is infinite, and we have no other measure by which to estimate it.

2. Because it lessens *the cost of the atonement.* The atonement measures the sin, even as the mercy-seat, or propitiatory, was exactly of the same dimensions as the ark that contained the symbols of the holiness of God. Sin is the violation of that holiness, and the propitiation made by Christ meets its claims, and no more.

3. Because it lessens *the punishment of sin.* Of the punishment our Lord solemnly speaks when He tells us of one who was cast into God's prison : " Thou shalt not come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing" (Matt. v. 25, 26). In these words that fell from the loving lips of Him who was to be the mighty Sacrifice, and who knew what payment of sin's demerits really meant, there is a divine severity that makes them awfully searching and terrible.

It deserves notice here that in the Hebrew Bible the same

word is used for the *sin*, the *punishment* of sin, and the *atonement* for sin, or the sin-offering. In the following passages the identity of the sin and the punishment will be seen by comparing the text and the marginal readings :—Gen. iv. 15; Lam. iv. 6, 22; Zech. xiv. 19. And whenever sin-offering occurs, it is always in Hebrew simply "sin." Let us ponder over these identities in the mind of God, and we shall have no doubt that the doctrine in question dishonours the Person and work of Christ.

Man rebels against God's estimate of sin, does not take God's estimate of the sin-offering, and therefore cannot accept God's estimate of the punishment demanded. All three are raised or lowered together. Hence the vital importance of God's truth in this matter in these days, when sin is a trifle, atonement a fiction, and hell a falsehood! God keep His saints walking in the old paths!

SEL.

A MILLION SOULS

JOHN HYATT had served the Lord many years, and had often said in preaching, "If I had a hundred souls, I would trust them all to Christ." He lay dying. A fellow worker whispered to him, "If you had a hundred souls would you commit them to Christ now?" With a convulsive effort he replied, "A million." Yes, to know Christ is a blessed reality. Eternity is ablaze with love and joy and glory for all who do know Him. If you have not as a guilty, unworthy sinner believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, why not do so now? Be saved with an everlasting salvation, and rejoice that He is able to keep that which you have committed unto Him against that day of eternal reckoning.

THE DYING SOLDIER

IT was just after the battle of Williamsburg, where hundreds of our brave fellows had fallen, never to bear arms again in their country's cause, and where hundreds more were wounded, that a soldier came to the tent of a delegate of the Christian Commission, and said, " Chaplain, one of our boys is badly wounded, and wants to see you right away." " Hurriedly following the soldier," says the delegate, " I was taken to the hospital, and led to a bed, upon which lay a noble young soldier. He was pale and blood-stained from a terrible wound above the temple. I saw at a glance that he had but a few hours to live upon earth. Taking his hand, I said, ' Well my brother, what can I do for you? ' The poor dying soldier looked up in my face, and placing his finger where his hair was stained with his blood, he said, ' Chaplain, cut a big lock from here for mother—for mother, mind, chaplain! ' I hesitated to do it. He said, ' Don't be afraid, chaplain, to disfigure my hair. It's for mother, and nobody will come to see me in the dead-house, to-morrow.' I did as he requested me. ' Now, chaplain,' said the dying man, ' I want you to kneel down by me and return thanks to God.' ' For what? ' I asked. ' For giving me such a mother. O chaplain, she is a good mother; her teachings comfort and console me now. And, chaplain, thank God that by His grace I am a Christian. Oh, what would I do now if I wasn't a Christian? I know that my Redeemer liveth. I feel that His finished work has saved me. And, chaplain, thank God for giving me dying grace. He has made my dying bed ' feel soft as downy pillows are.' Thank Him for the promised home in glory. I'll soon be there—there where there is no war, nor sorrow, nor desolation, nor death—where I'll see Jesus, and be for ever with the Lord.' I knelt by the dying man, and thanked God for the blessings he had bestowed upon him—the blessings of a good

mother, a Christian hope, and dying grace, to bear testimony to God's faithfulness. Shortly after the prayer, he said, ' Good-bye, chaplain; if you ever see mother, tell her it was all well! ' "—*American Magazine.*

A REMARKABLE CONVERSION

A FRIEND of mine, passing along the streets of Chicago one night, heard the sound of singing coming from a building, and he passed into what is known as the Pacific Garden Mission—one of the greatest rescue missions in the world. When he entered the building he found the audience of men singing, and occasionally testifying. Then the leader of the mission stood up and said: " If any man in this building wants to come forward and speak for Jesus, let him come now."

Two or three seats back of my friend a man rose and started down to the front. There was a strange look in his face. He had evidently lived a dissipated life. You could not tell whether he was thirty or fifty years of age. Just as he passed the row of seats wehere my friend sat, the man sitting next to my friend, also a man from the streets, said to his companion in misery, " He is getting paid for this," meaning that he was going to get the price of a night's lodging. When this strange man reached the front, he leaned up against the platform and told this story:—

" Men," said he, " my home is in the vicinity of Boston. I had one of the best fathers that ever lived, but I sinned against him. A year ago my father called me into his study and said, ' I want you to go away, first of all, because you have dishonoured your father's name. Then I want you to stay away, and, because you have dishonoured my name, change yours.' I have a sister back in the east whose name I have not spoken for months with these lips of mine, because they have been too impure. I came to

this city and sank so low that they would not have me at the police station. The other night, passing this mission, I heard them singing my mother's hymn, 'Come, Thou Fount of every blessing.' Men, Jesus Christ met me here. My sins have been forgiven. I have been a Christian for two weeks. I heard a man say, as I came down the aisle a moment ago, that I was getting paid for this, and I want to tell you that I am getting paid. I received this morning a letter from my father, who said that I could not come home too soon, that the doors were wide open to receive me, and that his arms are outstretched to welcome me. He tells me that my sister has never closed her eyes in sleep without mentioning my name in her prayers. Boys, I am going back to my home to-night, and I am getting paid!"

W. C.

"MY BELOVED IS MINE, AND I AM HIS"

There is a voice I love to hear,
A face I long to see;
And to behold His wounded side,
Who shed His blood for me.

The hand which for my sins was pierced,
Now leads me safely home;
Securely in its grasp I'm kept
As through the waste I roam.

That selfsame hand for me has spread
A feast of joy divine;
It waves "love's banner" o'er my head,
And gives me bread and wine.

There is an eye that never sleeps,
All watchful in its care,
Which knows my needs, and guides my steps!
What can with it compare?

There is a heart which beats for me,
Upon the Father's throne;
And on that heart will I recline,
Where cares are all unknown.

There is a peace which fills my soul,
And garrisons my mind;
'Tis found in fellowship with God,
Where all my joys I find.

There is a spot that's dearer far
Than all the world beside,
The cross where all my guilt was borne,
The place where Jesus died.

There is a home my spirit loves,
A quiet, sweet retreat;
Unseen by mortal eyes, but found
By faith at Jesu's feet.

There would I ever sit and sing
My loftiest songs of praise,
And catch the sweetness of His smile
From glory's brightest rays.

Lord Jesus, Thou art "all in all,"
Thy holy Name I bless;
Oh! give me grace to live for Thee,
And all Thy ways express.

S. T.

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A Message from God

EDITED BY HEYMAN WREFORD

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T. WESTON, 53, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT"

ANOTHER year of the long-suffering of God is now well-nigh come to a close. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye; return, come' '(Is. xxi. 11).

Let us meditate a little on the year that is passed—a measured portion of "the night"—the long, dark night of man's rejection of Christ. God has His own, those whom He has taken out of the world, who are not of it, but given to Christ. But let us not shut our eyes to the awful fact that the world has rejected and killed the Son of God, and still rejects Him. Satan, the great enemy of man, is the god of this world; and nowhere does Satan display more enmity against Christ than in the professing Church.

Is not Christendom a caricature of the Church of God as seen in Scripture in the beginning? How rapidly infidelity is increasing in it everywhere, and if not infidelity, the grossest idolatry. As a Hindu idolator said to a professed Christian: "We have no idolatry like yours. We worship an idol as representing God; *but you bake a god, worship it as God, and then eat it.*"

Surely this is the lowest depth of dark idolatry! And Satan calls this wickedness, holy communion! "Watchman, what of the night?" Is it not getting darker, darker, ripening for the terrible judgment? And what is the state of the world around? Violence and lawlessness, dishonesty publicly defended. Surely there never was a time when Christians even needed more to cry

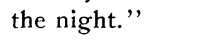
to God to preserve their Majesties the King and Queen of England from the hands of those who would do them harm.

Surely, if we remember the cruel death of the Holy One of God at the hands of men we cannot wonder at anything. And yet what a year this has been! The very foundations of the State shaken, and the red flag of Socialism and anarchy unfurled. The Son of God and the Holy Scriptures derided and set aside. Yea, the long night of man's rejection of Christ grows darker and darker. . . .

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?" The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night." . . .

The watchman then bringeth these two things before us: "The morning cometh, and also the night." If we should then close this year on earth, may the watchman's words be our motto—*"The morning cometh"!* May this be the deep, settled hope of our hearts, for "we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is"! As we shall be like Him then, so may we more and more seek to walk as He walked, until we are for ever with and like the Lord.

Our Watchman never slumbers. May we also be awake, and hear His words, Surely the Holy Ghost thus speaks to us: "The morning cometh and also the night."



A LIGHT BEYOND THE SUN

ABOUT five or six years ago, when staying in Birmingham for a short time in the service of the gospel, I was asked by some Christian friends to go to Dudley, in Worcestershire, to see Robert P., a great invalid, a Christian. I consented to do so, and shall never, I think, forget my visit. It had

been my lot in former days to see very much suffering in connection with the most painful diseases; I have seen the poor body tortured and racked by pain and anguish, which neither the pen nor tongue of man could describe; I have seen limbs distorted, and certain organs destroyed or rendered useless in one or another poor patient by painful diseases; but I doubt if I ever saw (save perhaps in one case) such an instance of accumulated sufferings of the most terrific kind in any one person, as I found in R.P.

At the time of my visit he was thirty-eight years of age, and had been ill for eighteen years. He evidently had been a large, fine man, but to the eye of nature it was pitiable to see the "outward man" as I saw him. He was bent down almost double, his face turned in toward his chest, with his chin pressing hard upon his breast-bones so that for two years he had seen nothing but the light. His jaws were so locked that he could only take food the thickness of a penny, which had to be slipped in between his teeth. His limbs were not only deformed, but perfectly useless to him. He could only move two fingers when I saw him; all the rest of his body was as immovable as if it had been a wood-carving, save his tongue. This his Father was pleased to leave him the full use of, and as he had a heart completely at rest and fully satisfied—for he had CHRIST there, he used the member left him to speak of the love and mercy of that gracious God who gave His Son for sinners, and of that blessed Lord Jesus Christ who had filled his soul with sunshine.

Some time after I had seen him, his God and Father, to fill up his cup of suffering, was pleased to cause even the eyes, which before could see the light, to fail before the ravages of that direful disease, so that, physically, he was to sit in darkness for the rest of his days on earth. Besides this the two fingers that he had been able to move became seized as the rest of his body. When in this state it was that he called some one to him to write down

from his lips the good matter which his heart was inditing, and he spoke as follows :—

Once I could see, but ne'er again
Shall I behold the verdant plain,
Jewelled with flowers of colours bright,
Bathed in a flood of golden light.
The birds, the brilliant butterflies,
These all in *thought* before me rise;
The shining rivulet, whose song
Comes sweetly murmuring along;
The sky, the cloud, the grass, the trees,
All waving, glancing in the breeze—
I see them pictured in my mind;
But *there* alone, for I am blind.
Blind, did I say? How can that be?
Since I by faith my Saviour *see,*
Exalted on the throne above,
Beaming with mercy, grace and love.
A view like this is better far
Than sun, or moon, or glittering star,
Or glowing landscape, sunny skies,
Or sight that's fair to mortal eyes.
I thank my God that He has put
A veil before mine eyes, and shut
All earthly objects from my sight,
And CHRIST revealed in glory bright.
Henceforth my word shall ever be—
Once I was blind, but NOW I see.

Dear reader, I need say but little more. R.P., beloved of the Lord, has gone to be for ever with Him whose he was. Converted from the darkness and evil of Unitarianism—chastened, not in wrath but in love; he enjoyed that which of faith he possessed. HE HAD CHRIST—his heart was satisfied. And are you now unsaved? Then you are unsatisfied. Your experience proves to you what the word of God declares in so many ways, that the world

is not big enough to fill your heart. Do you know the plague of sin? Then the Saviour, Jesus, whom God sent, is waiting to bless you, and satisfy your heart. "ONLY BELIEVE."

F.C.

DAME HALBERD

IN one of the fairest districts of a beautiful county is a little hamlet, over which lay a pall of moral darkness. Here lived Dame Halberd, a most eccentric character, holding little intercourse with her neighbours, shunning them as shunned by them. At the time of which we write her life had run the appointed span—seventy years. But God had chosen to pluck her as a brand from the burning, and to shed abroad His light and love in her dark heart.

One Sunday afternoon a little party of Christians entered the village to speak of Christ and make His worth known. They took their stand at a short distance from Dame Halberd's cottage. At the close of the preaching one of the party approached her house with tracts in his hand, when the old dame appeared at the door, brandishing a formidable staff, and screamed at the top of her voice, "Go back with ye, and read your books at home—a parcel o' cobblers and tailors. If ye come here, I'll knack your brains out!"

Surely her case would seem hopeless! But God acts in various ways, and He took means to reach the conscience and heart of this hardened sinner. Living with her was a daughter-in-law, upon whom consumption had laid its hand. A Christian gentleman, braving the dame's displeasure, entered the house to read to the dying woman, and point her to the Lord, the Saviour. The old dame did not refuse this comfort to her daughter, though she refused to stay in the room. However, curiosity having some part

in her nature, wondering what would be said, she took a seat on the stairs, where she might hear but not herself be seen.

The message seems to have had no effect on the one for whom it was intended. The daughter shortly afterwards passed away, leaving hardly any glimmer of hope to those who cared for her soul, but the word, as a nail fastened in a sure place, convicted Dame Halberd of sin. And we can only marvel at the way it was brought to pass. She who had resisted all her life was smitten down by the word which smites and heals—which wounds and binds up.

In much distress of soul she sent to ask the gentleman to come again. He gladly went, and the comfortable word which he carried was like unto seed dropped into the ploughed-up field of good soil, taking root and bringing forth fruit. Her heart had been prepared for the entrance of the word; it took root and produced joy and gladness.

In her little village, where everybody knows everybody's business, the circumstance of Dame Halberd's conversion could not be hidden long, nor did she desire it. There had been a long-standing feud between her and a neighbour. This she felt was not right in a Christian, and she went to seek reconciliation. Indeed, so noticeable was the change in her life, that the villagers asked, "Whatever has come to Dame Halberd?" A relative, a professing Christian, living a few miles distant, shook her head dubiously, saying, "Well, Mrs. ——, she was a very bad woman." A very bad woman! For what purpose did the Lord Jesus take that journey into Samaria, if not to give the living water to "a very bad woman"? For whom are the blessings which He purchased by His death? Are they not for those who present themselves "like a beggar with a wallet full of sins"?

Joy unspeakable became hers. "Happy!" said she one day. "Happy! I'm as happy as a prince!" And what was the ground of her joy—the confidence of her boast? "The blood of the Lamb,"

which continually filled her thoughts and heart. Those whose trust is in Him who shed it, know that it is the sure foundation upon which all our hopes are built.

"Loving Him that begat," she "loved those also who were begotten of Him." None were more welcome to her house than "the parcel o' cobblers and tailors" whom she had formerly driven from her door. During the brief period of life granted her after conversion—about two years—she continued happy in the joy of God's salvation.

Reader, have you been turned from darkness to light? Is the blood of the Lamb your only hope and confidence? Can you say now, from the very depths of your heart, "He is worthy"?

SEL.

BELIEVING IS SEEING

THE world says, seeing is believing. God says, believing is seeing. The world's maxim is familiar enough. Yet just as real is the truth that the man who believes shall see. Faith ever issues into vision. The man who trusts shall know.

Unsaved reader, it is right here that you are making a fatal mistake, a mistake which will work your eternal ruin. You say you will not believe until you see. You say, "Show me a sign and I will come." God says, "Come now and you will have the sign." You say you must have some experience of Christ before you will believe in Christ. But know this. You will have a definite experience of Christ just as soon as you exercise a definite faith in Christ, and you will never have it before. When you believe the light will come. Have a definite transaction with Jesus Christ, and as surely as you do this you will definitely know the salvation of God. The way to prove the truth of the gospel is to try it for

yourself. Christianity is a life, and a life cannot be verified by one who does not live it.

The doctor says to the patient, "Here is a medicine that will cure you." The patient replies, "I will take it as soon as I feel it is curing me." Will you thus dare trifle with the living God and His remedy for your sin?

How often does an itching desire for signs and wonders, proofs and evidences, conceal an evil heart of unbelief. Men do not *want* to believe the truth, and so they clamour for evidences that satisfy their own prejudices. The seat of unbelief is the *heart;* the *will* is not right. The Lord Jesus Christ said to the unbelieving Jews, "Ye *will not* come to me that ye may have life." You cannot believe because you will not. On your own head be your blood.

THE SINNER'S LOOK

GOD has looked down and seen your state, and in mercy has wrought that He may meet your misery and deliver you; and now if you want liberty and salvation He bids you look. "*Look unto Me,*" the Lord says. The Lord has had two looks at us—one to search us, a second to pity us. How many looks at Him must we take for salvation? *Only one.* You say, But I cannot see Him. He does not say, See Me; He says, Look, look, and be saved. Only seven words, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." It is the very simplicity of it that stumbles people.

LAST WORDS OF DUNCAN MATHESON

THE SCOTTISH EVANGELIST

When round my open grave you stand,
  Oh, lay me down with singing!
Of rest within the promised land
  Loud let your voice be ringing.

Sing of the rest for weary found
  O'er Jordan's rushing river,
Of garments bright and robes made white
  In glory there for ever.

On Balaclava's gloomy shore,
  By the dying soldier's side,
I've told the story o'er and o'er
  Of Christ the crucified.

In Scottish towns, o'er hill and moor,
  The gospel has been preachèd;
And by the Holy Spirit's power
  The lost ones have been reachèd.

And now the fight is nearly fought,
  The race is almost won;
'Twas Jesus who redemption bought,
  'Twas He the victory won.

Light all the lamps, I want no gloom,
  Your voices raise again;
Sing to me, friends, I'm going home
  To see the Lamb once slain.

This room is filled with angel throng,
  His chariot wheels are near;
Could I but raise my voice in song,
  Such music you would hear!

So when you bear me to the tomb,
  Praise God with joyous strain:
For soon within our glorious home,
  We all shall meet again.

M. R.

SHORT BED—NARROW CLOTHING

THESE are the days of high profession without Christ. Almost every one we meet has some kind of religion. But religion will not save, and it will not stand the test of God's inspired word. They remind one of that Scripture which says, "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than he can wrap himself in it" (Isa. xxviii. 20). Listen to the conversation of professing Christians, and you will listen in vain to hear them say one word about Jesus who laid aside His glory and went to Calvary's cruel cross, there to shed His precious blood, out of love to sinners.

Some can speak of their morality. They pay one hundred cents on the dollar, go to meeting on Sunday, and hold in their hands the Book which tells out man's lost state by nature, and redemption by the blood; yet they cannot say they are saved from the wrath to come (Matt. iii. 7). Short beds, narrow clothing, means a Sunday religion without Christ. You may be quite serious in meeting, teach in the Sunday-school, listen to a nice sermon and high-sounding music, but on the week-days you are found at the parlour-games, donations, picnics, dances, etc. Oh, what short beds for weary sinners! (Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32).

You may compare yourself with your neighbour who takes the sacrament, and say, "I am just as good as he is." Quite true; but if your neighbour goes to hell, are you to follow in his footsteps? All who are not born again are on the way to join the rich man in his awful lamentation, "I am tormented in this flame" (Luke xvi. 24). How solemn, to be going into eternity trusting to anything apart from Christ. He died, "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

Here is the testimony of one who found out her need as a poor, lost sinner. "When about nineteen years old I made a profession, got baptised, joined the church, took the sacrament, believed in

the Bible; but I was not satisfied. I went on like this for forty long years, having no Christ, no joy, no peace. I came in contact with some who were born again, and I was warned to beware of them. However, the Lord directed me to board in the same house with them. I noticed that they were fond of reading the Bible, while I would far rather have a paper or magazine. It became quite plain to me that they had something which made them happy. I had not.

"After the family reading one night, I went to my room, but not to rest. I said my prayers, as I had been accustomed to do for the past forty years, but I could not go to sleep. The truth we had been reading about that Jesus had 'made peace through the blood of His cross' came plainly before me (Col. i. 20). My false peace was gone—my soul was in danger! As I thought about what Jesus had done on the cross, the truth came home to me in power. Jesus died for *me*. I saw right there that Jesus had taken *my* place in death, and I was FREE. I got out of bed and got down on my knees, and for the first time in my life I thanked God for Jesus, 'Who loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal. ii. 20; 2 Cor. ix. 15; Rom. vi. 23).

"Next morning I went down and saw the man who had so often spoken to me of my danger and told me of the love of Christ, and I told him that I had good news for him. He said, 'What are the tidings?' I then told him that God had saved my soul from hell through trusting in Jesus, who bore the wrath of God for me on the cross. I saw that apart from Christ there is no new birth. Jesus said to a very religious teacher, 'Ye must be born again' (John iii. 7).

"Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves" (Isa. xxviii. 14-15).

A true picture of all mankind by nature is found in Rom. iii. and Ephes. ii.

How awful sin must be when it required such a sacrifice! But how great was the love of God in giving up His own beloved Son to be the sacrifice for my sins. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

J. G.

THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE

THERE is no time to lose. Delays are dangerous, and facts are stubborn things. The door of mercy will soon be closed. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh, which will close the door of God's mercy and grace that now stands widely open.

There is no time to lose. Thousands will positively be shut out of heaven, the home of homes. And why? Because they have put off the question of their soul's salvation, and let all their opportunities pass by until it is too late. WOE, WOE BE TO THEM!

Oh, the horrors of being lost! Too late for heaven! Too late! At the present moment we find that death is very busy. We are constantly hearing of first one and then another being called away suddenly from time into eternity.

Oh, that men and women would be wise, and children and young people, too, and get the vital question of their soul's salvation settled at once. To-morrow may be too late.

"The wages of sin is death." And after death comes the judgment for the unsaved and unbelieving. Then eternity, that long, long time—limitless—fathomless. God's warning voice sounds again in your ears, "Prepare to meet thy God."

But there is no time to lose. "Behold, he cometh with clouds and every eye shall see him," etc. The awful storm of God's judgment and wrath will overtake men, and the day of the Lord

will come as a thief in the night, when there will be no place to hide from Him.

THIS YEAR MAY BE THY LAST.

THIS MONTH MAY BE THY LAST.

THIS WEEK MAY BE THY LAST.

THIS HOUR MAY BE THY LAST.

THIS VERY MOMENT MAY BE THY LAST.

Then all is over! But where shall you be in eternity?

R. S.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

Trere's a song in the air—
There's a star in the sky—
There's a mother's deep prayer,
And a Baby's low cry.
And the star rains its fire while the Beautiful sing.
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

There's a tumult of joy
O'er the wonderful birth,
For the Virgin's sweet Boy
Is the Lord of the earth.
Ay—the star rains its fire, and the Beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

In the light of that star
Lie the ages impearled;
And that song from afar
Has swept over the world.
Every hearth is aflame, and the Beautiful sing
In the homes of the nations that Jesus is King.

We rejoice in the light,
And we echo the song
That comes down through the night
From the heavenly throng.
Ay—we shout to the lovely evangel they bring,
And we greet in His cradle our Saviour, the King!

J. G. H.

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