

ECHOES OF MERCY.

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"I will sing of Mercy and judgment."—Psalm ci. 1.

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ECHOES OF MERCY.

The Sinner's Friend.

THE Scripture tells us that "Christ died for the ungodly." Blessed fact! It will fill eternity with praise. It is the foundation of all blessing and godliness. The love of Christ is unfathomable. When none else could save, and nothing less than His death—even the death of the cross—was needed, He willingly died in our stead: "He poured out His soul unto death." Unparalleled kindness!

The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, and the beloved Son infinitely glorified the Father in redeeming us from all iniquity. He said, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because *I lay down My life* that I might take it again" (John x. 17). What love! How perfect in every aspect! God's love manifested in not

sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up for us all ; and Christ's, the good Shepherd, in giving His life for the sheep. How blessed ! While we were yet sinners Christ died for us. The Prince of Life tasted death. His soul was made an offering for sin. He bare our sins in His own body on the tree. He loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour. Wondrous grace ! The Holy One made sin and made a curse for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Is it any marvel, then, that the adorable Sufferer cried out, " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " Precious mysteries of redeeming love ! Who can fathom the unsearchable depths of the cross of Christ ?

Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than the necessity of Christ's death—even the death of the cross—for our redemption. Every saved person knows this. Our Lord told Nicodemus that the Son of man *must* be lifted up. He also said, " The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world ; " and " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." How blessed, then, is the divine fact that " Christ died for the ungodly."

He is the sinner's Friend, because He was the sinner's Substitute. Praise God—

“The atoning work is done ;
The Victim's blood is shed !”

But though Christ, the bearer of our sins, died, it was not possible that He should be holden of death. His flesh saw no corruption. Having purged our sins, God raised Him from the dead, and crowned Him with glory at His own right hand in the heavenlies.

Reader, is the death and resurrection of Christ nothing to *you* ? Have *you* taken refuge in Him as the only hope set before you ? How can you possibly escape the coming wrath, if you neglect this great salvation ?

H. H. S.

The Gospel in Alaska.

A MARVELLOUS story of redeeming grace has been sent to us, which we feel sure will interest in no small degree the readers of *Echoes of Mercy*.

There now lies in the Federal Prison of M'Neil's Island in America, an Alaskan Indian, Kebeth by name, undergoing a life sentence for

the murder of a young Englishman and his wife under the most extraordinary circumstances.

We are told that when "the sentence of death was pronounced, and Kebeth was led away to await execution, every one in the court-room, including the honourable judge on the bench, was affected to compassion. Seamed and grizzled miners, who had held unflinching rôles in bar-room fights, where pistol-shots punctuated profanity, hurried away to hide feelings they would not willingly betray. . . . Even the stoic Indians and Eskimos were, in some instances, moved to tears."

After the trial a great expression of public opinion was made in his favour. A petition was presented to the late President M'Kinley, one of the last public acts of whose life was to sanction, by the signature of his name, the commutation of the sentence to imprisonment for life. This took place on 16th November 1900.

The Attorney-General when he presented the petition to the President for his signature, stated that when Kebeth planned and committed his awful crime, he was "only an unenlightened, unchristianised savage," and that "as soon as his conscience had been enlightened by the moral teachings" of Christianity, "he made im-

mediate disclosure and confession of his crime, and submitted himself to the hands of the law, to abide its judgment."

Kebeth, we are told, was a famous hunter, and roamed all over the mountains, seas, and ice-fields of the northern and Arctic regions. Fearless to the last degree, no dangers daunted him. Neither snows, nor blizzards, nor Arctic bears, nor human wild beasts in the shape of godless gold-diggers, could intimidate him. In fact, so much was he himself an object of terror, that even the most reckless of the white men, or Kablonas as they are called, treated him with "discreet civility."

Of recent years, Skaguay, with its drinking dens and dancing halls, had monopolised much of his time. It was there he spent the money obtained in his hunting expeditions. It was there, too, that in the riches of God's grace, he learnt the story of redeeming love which brought him as a captive to the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Early in the autumn of 1899, Artikoor the Silent, a kinsman of Kebeth's, met with his death while on a hunting trip up the coast. As skilful a hunter, and equally fearless as his friend, Artikoor at the same time exercised a whole-

some and restraining influence upon Kebeth. It was he that would urge him to retire to his Indian camp, before the vicious life at Skaguay had involved his leader in too serious crimes.

However, on this occasion, Artikoor's advice was unheeded. The attractions of the godless city were too strong for Kebeth, and one day, without further word, Artikoor sailed away in his small canoe without his friend. He was never more seen.

No sooner did Kebeth become aware of his friend's departure, than, according to the evidence of all, he became restless, and sometimes almost dazed. One day an Indian brought the tidings that Artikoor had perished. Pieces of his canoe had been picked up on the beach of Lynn Canal. Kebeth was moved to frenzy. That he had been wrecked was an idea too foolish to entertain. Was he not master of the storm? Did not the Kablonas know that Artikoor had gold? There could be no doubt Artikoor was murdered. And according to all the laws and traditions of the savage tribe, Kebeth must be the avenger of his death.

Before undertaking what he considered his bounden duty, he repaired to his native village, there to consult the "shaman," or priest of his

tribe's heathen rites. "Within thirty sleeps," the prophet replied, "the murderer will return." Consequently, Kebeth, with a band of chosen followers, repaired to the spot where the last remains of Artikoor had been found. They had not long remained there hidden, when a young Englishman and his wife, residing at Skaguay, were seen approaching in a little boat. No sooner had they landed, than with savage yells the Indians were upon them. There and then both were murdered, and their bodies buried in the sand.

Well satisfied with his achievement, Kebeth returned to his native camp, and related the details of the awful murder. "Go back," said the shaman, "to the city of the Kablonas, for greater things yet shall Kebeth do."

Back to Sagquay accordingly Kebeth went, not to do greater things, but to learn how great things the Lord Jesus Christ had done for him. The following extracts from an American journalist relate the marvellous change from savage and heathen darkness to the light of Christianity:—

"One night, as the lights of the saloons of Skaguay began to gleam, to lure wayward feet, Kebeth and his hunters were attracted by the

sounds of singing and the beating of tambourines. . . .

"As the Indians gazed, the strange company paused, knelt on the unpaved streets, and *prayed*. Then Adjutant M'Gill, of the Salvation Army, began to address the crowds that had gathered. . . .

"His text was Barabbas, and he told the story in language that a wayfaring man, though an Indian, might not err therein. . . .

"'Who would not rather die with Christ than live with Barabbas? Men of Skaguay, what master do you serve?' . . .

"Kebeth was visibly affected, but whether by the exhortation or by the music, he could not tell. The music, however, was not strange to him, for the 'kelyau,' the one musical instrument of his people, is, in truth, a tambourine. Even the tunes were not new, though the words of course were novel. . . .

"'God's mercy,' he heard the leader say, 'is wider than the sea. Come, men of Skaguay, renounce your sins and follies.

"'You get some gold, dug from the mud,
Some silver ground and crushed from stones ;
Your gold is red with dead men's blood,
Your silver black with oaths and groans.

“‘But know that, though your hands are crimson with crime, they may be white as snow.’

“Several responded to an invitation to step forward, Kebeth among them. A policeman of Skaguay, believing the Brown Bear full of strong drink, thought to avert a race riot by putting him out. ‘Let him come,’ cried the preacher, extending both hands. ‘What is your name?’

“‘Barabbas,’ replied the hunter.

“‘Glory be to God who saveth even to the uttermost,’ exclaimed the preacher. They prayed together, and together they mingled their tears.

“That night Kebeth went home rejoicing. The defiant joy he had felt as a savage, glorying in a murder commanded by the customs of his people, had been supplanted by an ecstasy such as he had not felt since the first years of his budding manhood.

“His men, fearing their leader had become possessed, had returned home and were holding a council when Kebeth returned. He glanced at them benignantly, knowing what was in their minds. As he knelt to adjust his blankets of deerskins and furs, he said something which sounded very much like ‘Hallelujah.’ . . .

“His followers, disturbed and mystified, held a secret session, to which the leader was not in-

vited—a revolutionary performance, without precedent in the record of their nomadic association. Kebeth's conversion to Christianity was costing him his dominion over savage flesh and blood.

“Then Kak Klanat spoke addressing the leader. ‘You know,’ said he, ‘that we are your friends, your slaves. In my home on the Island of the Four Mountains, they say Kebeth has bewitched his hunters. Where you go, we follow. But now you adopt the white man's mysteries; you turn priest. Kebeth, the Swift, we worship, but must I remind our brother that it is unlawful for an Aleut to kneel at the shrine of two shamans?’”

“‘Your shaman is my shaman no more,’ said Kebeth. ‘In his lips he wears labrets of bone and porphyry. My lips shall speak glad tidings.’”

“The news that the Brown Bear had turned lamb and entered the Christian fold astounded Skaguay, and, in consequence, the Army's audience the next night congested the streets.

“With sudden inspiration, Kebeth addressed the crowd. In short sentences, picturesque with imagery, he told his story.

“The Skaguay crowd will not forget the ‘testimony’ and exhortations of the Indian, but, unfortunately, no faithful record was kept of its

rugged eloquence. Only the memory of its power remains. Some nights he would tell them, as no man had told it before, the story of St Paul's experience, and would add, 'I, Kebeth, called the Brown Bear, an Indian known to you, a man of sin, have seen that Light, and heard that Voice.'

"Knowing his former reputation as a bad and reckless Indian, no man dared tell him he was insincere, nor was there such belief. . . .

"'With that wild Aleut converted,' one miner was heard to say, 'Skaguay may be represented in heaven yet.'

"But Kebeth, though he was making a great hit, was sorely troubled. His crime haunted him, and finally he broke down and confessed the whole horrible story to Adjutant M'Gill, who indeed had feared that some such revelation was impending, and was not unprepared. The night that Kebeth had come forward, saying his name was Barabbas, had not been forgotten, but he had hoped that it was the metaphoric trend of the native's mind rather than the presence of appalling crime that had prompted his adoption of the title.

"Acting upon the Adjutant's advice, Kebeth recited the details of the murder to United

States Deputy-Marshal Tanner, and led that officer and Judge Sehlbrede and a posse of citizens to the burial-place of Burt Horton and his wife. Snow had fallen, and the shores of Lynn Canal were covered to the depth of ten feet, but the hunter led them without a misstep to the spot.

"Attorney-General Griggs, in his official statement of the case, says that the hunter, at the time he made his confession, and when he led the officials to the place of tragedy, and throughout the ensuing trial when his testimony was complete and self-accusing, had no other expectation than that he would be executed for his crime. 'He frequently stated,' adds the Attorney-General, 'that he desired to suffer death as an example to his people, with the hope that it might tend in the future to better their condition and prevent them from committing similar crimes.'

"Kebeth hoped that his execution would fully expiate the crime, but, of course, a trial was held, and his accomplices brought to justice. They were gathered from the four corners of the Arctic. They invoked much money and considerable influence in their defence, and tried desperately to shift full responsibility to their fallen leader, who, while more than willing to

assume the whole blood-guiltiness, could not keep them in their cross-examination, from betraying their complicity in the crime.

“The court-room during the trial was crowded by Indians and Eskimos from all parts of Alaska. The fame of the leader, his marvellous conversion, and his sensational disclosures were absorbing themes even among the white population. . . .”

The story of Kebeth, the Alaskan Indian, is indeed a striking one, illustrating afresh the all-conquering power of the gospel of Christ. Let it be Saul of Tarsus, the self-righteous Pharisee, or Kebeth of Alaska, the degraded savage, “there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek (or, heathen): for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For—

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. x. 12, 13). ED.



“The Great Terminus.”

MY wife and I having seated ourselves in a train at D——, I inquired from two fellow-passengers if we were right for W——. “Yes,” was the reply, “W—— is the terminus.”

After thanking the lady who answered for her information, I said, "It is well for us to know we are right for the Great Terminus, is it not?"

For a few moments there was silence. Then the other passenger said, "It is difficult to know which is the right way, for there are so many."

"I was just thinking," I said, "what a blessing it is that God has not left us in doubt, for Jesus Himself said, '*I am the Way,*' and not only did He say, '*I am the Way,*' but He said, '*I am the Door,*' which makes it very clear, for just as you entered this compartment by the door, so are those saved who enter by Jesus, who is '*The Door.*' '**FAITH**' (which is trusting or believing) is the step through the door. His death upon the cross purchased the ticket, which gives us a righteous title to go to be with Him for ever."

"There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we **MUST** be saved" (Acts iv. 12).

"By **ME**, if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John x. 9).

Having arrived at their destination, I handed to each of them little gospel books, and entreated them to rest only in Jesus, who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

If the reader has had the same difficulties, may we assure you on the authority of Scripture that there are not many ways, nor are there many means by which this great terminus of Eternity can be reached.

Blessed be God, He is waiting and longing to save poor guilty sinners, His gospel is sent forth to *whosoever* will, but salvation can only be had in ONE way—through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who “died for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

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

A. S.

A Bad Lot. .

WHILE staying at a watering-place lately, I made some inquiries one day of an elderly man who was occupying one of the numerous seats, as to various localities. To my surprise he answered in rather an insolent tone. I then offered him a tract which he took, asking sarcastically, “Oh, is this an almanac?”

"No, it is a tract," I said.

"A tract," he said; "what's that? I never read anything but the newspaper and the almanac."

I told him that the tract was about the Lord Jesus Christ, at which he said—

"Oh, who's He? Does He live in H——? I never heard of Him."

I said: "The Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven, seated at God's right hand. Do you mean to say you have never heard of Him—how He left His home in glory and came to this world to seek and to save the lost; and how 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever (that means you and me) believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life'?"

Then he told me that in H—— there were "a lot of mighty righteous people," which led me to reply that the Bible, which is the Word of God, tells us that all our righteousnesses are but filthy rags; that there is none righteous, no, not one; that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. "If these people you speak of are resting in their own righteousness," I said, "then they are lost; but if they are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His finished

work, then they are clothed in the garments of salvation, and covered with a robe of righteousness of God's providing. God alone sees into all our hearts, and Jesus Christ when on the earth said to the religious people of that day, the scribes and Pharisees, that the publicans and harlots were going into the kingdom of heaven before them, and that they themselves would be thrust out; it was the publicans and sinners who drew nigh to hear Him; it was the common people that heard Him gladly." This seemed to impress the man.

He said, "I'm a bad lot; they tell me I'll go to the bad place; but I tell 'em there's a reckoning day coming."

I said: "If you go to hell it will be your own choice; and if you do, you will there remember this day, how the Lord sent me along this way to meet you and give you this message from Him, of how He died upon the cross that you might be saved. This same Jesus who came once in grace to give Himself a ransom for us, to seek and to save the lost, was crucified and cast out of the world, but He is coming again to judge the world, and an awful day it will be for it when He comes in judgment. But God is now offering to you salvation through faith in Jesus

Christ, and His blood can cleanse you from all sin."

He said, but in a very different tone: "Well, well, I give you credit for being sincere, but it's no use your speaking to me, for I'm a bad lot. I heard all that once upon a time."

Then I said: "This is the message from God to you—'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' and the *vilest* may come."

The Good Shepherd goes after the lost sheep till He finds it, and I left this man with the conviction that he was one of the lost ones the Good Shepherd was seeking, for He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, and His word to all is, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

W. J. M.

❖

"I cannot—I will not die!"

DEATH is a very solemn thing. It is dreaded by the stoutest as well as the frailest heart. All, from the youngest to the oldest, seek to banish it from their thoughts. As a topic of conversa-

tion it is unwelcome everywhere. Incidentally referring to it once in a mixed company, several instantly protested, saying, "Oh! do be quiet, it is so unpleasant!"

But, whether unpleasant or not, nothing stays death's progress. Its icy hand is laid upon the greatest in the land as well as the meanest, upon the rich and poor, upon the young and old. The death of the beloved Queen of this country is still fresh in our minds. Her exalted position did not exempt her from its power. When death comes she must go.

The words at the head of this paper came from the lips of a young girl who was dying. The pathetic story was told me by a friend. Poor thing! she loved the world; it was all fair and attractive to her; she thought not about death. One night at a ball she caught cold, from which she never recovered. Oh! how she fought against the feeling of weakness that gradually grew upon her.

The doctor came, and looking gravely at her, he said, "My dear young lady, you will never get better; you are dying!"

"Oh, no!" she replied, "I cannot die! I will not die!"

Oh, reader, that poor girl died, and there was

not one in the house who could speak a comforting word to her, or point her to the One who would have given her life.

Death, which she so dreaded, was her just portion, because she was a sinner. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). But Christ, the Son of God, has died that poor lost sinners may have life. He has died a sacrifice for sin, and borne the wrath and punishment due to the sinner. But He has not only died, He lives again, having obtained eternal redemption for all who believe in Him, and God has set Him forth a mercy seat through faith in His blood, "to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins . . . that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). While on the one hand "the wages of sin is death," on the other "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

The sinner who comes to Christ has eternal life, and not only in this world, but beyond death, and instead of shrinking from death may be filled with joy at the thought of it. Further, the believer does not necessarily expect to die, for the Lord Himself has promised to come and

take us home (see John xiv. and 1 Thess. iv.). We are often reminded that death is in the world by the streams of funeral carriages wending their way to the various cemeteries. All who have died have either died lost or saved. Reader, how is it with you? Are you lost and afraid to die, or are you saved and glad to go to be with the Lord? W. G.

Two Solemn Questions.

“**H**OW shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation” (Heb. ii. 3). This is a pointed and a very solemn question that God has caused to be written in His Word, and it behoves all to give it their earnest consideration. Dear reader, we have heard recently of brave men risking their lives to save others from a burning building, and no doubt you would be one of those that would do all in your power to save any one from such torture; but if suffering for a short time is considered so dreadful, what will it be to suffer eternally in the lake of fire? Suppose you were present at a fire, and you saw one of the fire

escapes placed in position that those in danger might escape, you would no doubt consider them very foolish if they did not avail themselves of it, especially if there was no other means of escaping ; yet it may be that you are neglecting God's way—the only way of escape from eternal torment, which will be the portion of all those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. xx. and xxi. 27).

Another solemn question we read in Isaiah xxxiii. 14 : " Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ? " We know that many seek to evade the full force of the scriptures that speak of the suffering to be endured by those who reject the gracious call of Him who " bare our sins in His own body on the tree " (1 Pet. ii. 24). But far better face the question fairly now than to leave it until too late. The door of mercy is now open that whosoever will may enter, but " when once the Master of the house has risen up and hath shut to the door " (Luke xiii. 25), there will be no way of escape from the damnation of hell. There is a way now to *keep out* of hell, but no way to *get out* of hell. " Between us and you

there is a great gulf fixed :

so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Luke xvi. 26).

A. L. J.

"Ye Must be Born Again."

GOD has been pleased to work of late in the conversion of souls in a village in —. Several have been turned from darkness to light, and they are now rejoicing in the happy assurance of salvation and "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Marvellous indeed is the long-suffering grace of God our Saviour in this scene of iniquity and revolt against God. Wondrous, too, is it for us, once lost sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, "and children of wrath like others," to be objects of God's infinite love and mercy, and to be now His witnesses in this perishing world. May we have grace from Him to proclaim the glad tidings to sinners, "preaching peace by Jesus Christ," and may the blessed message be received by many, and by you, dear reader, if you are still a stranger to it, before that fast-approaching moment when all

the redeemed shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and enter the mansions prepared for them ; then the door of salvation will be shut for ever on unbelievers who have turned their backs upon the Saviour who now invites them to come to Him.

Amongst the conversions referred to was an interesting one, that of S., a girl about eleven years of age. She had been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by Christian parents. Dear children, beware of thinking that all is right between you and God because you go to gospel meetings, and have a praying father or mother. " You *must* be born again ; " you must have Christ for *your own* personal Saviour, and know Him as the One who bore *your* sins on the tree, who died for *your* trespasses and was raised again for *your* justification ; otherwise you are in danger of everlasting perdition, for " How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ? " (Heb. ii. 3).

S. was told one day that another girl, a friend of hers, had found peace with God. She had often heard people speak of conversion, but like many others she did not know what it meant. She vaguely thought that all those who attend meetings are converted, and on hearing the news she was much surprised, and exclaimed, " But

she was converted a long time ago!" "And how do you know that?" asked her elder sister, who herself was concerned about her soul. "Why, she has been coming to the meetings for a long time," confidently replied S. "But," said the elder one, "so have I, and I am not converted!" This proved to be an arrow from God to S.'s conscience. For the first time she saw that going to meetings was not enough; a ray of light suddenly shone into her heart; she realised her state before God, and she saw she was a hell-deserving *sinner*. Deeply moved, she exclaimed, "Why did you never tell me that before?"

A work of God began in her soul, and she was in earnest about her salvation. Do you know what it is, my reader, to feel the weight of your sins before the holy God, who is of "purer eyes than to behold iniquity"? Have you been led to exclaim, in the deep sense of your guilt and ruin, "What shall I do to be saved?" There is a blessed, divinely given answer as to what God has done for you. God says, "I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24), *i.e.*, "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). Believe on Him, and you shall be saved (Acts xvi. 30).

After going through some anxiety about her

sins, S. found peace in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who died and was raised again; she knew that His blood had cleansed her from all sin. Now she can tell her school-fellows what the Lord has done for her soul, and invite them to Him to be saved. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes" (Ps. cxviii. 23). May His name be praised for ever!

Before closing, we would urge on every unconverted reader not to turn a deaf ear to the tender, loving voice of the Lord Jesus, who calls him to come to Him, and freely offers peace and pardon to the guilty, undone sinner. May you not have to say one day, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jer. viii. 20). Come to Jesus now, while it is called to-day, as it is said, "*To-day* if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 13, iv. 7).

P. T.

Two Great Facts.

WE have in John iii. 15 and 16, two great facts—that which God's *righteousness* demanded, and that which God's *love* provided. Note the words, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in

the wilderness, even so MUST the Son of man be lifted up." What else could meet the case of lost, ruined sinners? Absolutely nothing or no one. Like the Israelite bitten by the fiery serpent in the wilderness of old, so we all have suffered from the effects of sin.

The remedy was simple ; so simple that it was available to the poorest as well as to the richest amongst the people. They had but to look at the serpent of brass, which Moses lifted up on a pole, and whoever looked was cured. This was not a work requiring years or months, it could be accomplished in a moment. So one look of faith at the Son of man, Jesus lifted up on the cross, brings life to the soul. What a wonderful fact it is that the Son of man, the One who should be set as man over all the works of God's hands, the One who as Son of man will sit upon the throne of judgment, has been lifted up as a crucified Saviour on the cross ! There was no other way : God was so righteous, and all men were sinners ; none could take up the case but a spotless victim. That "must" stands as an eternal proof that God never gives up or abates His holiness and justice.

But in verse 16 there is no "must." Who could say God "*must*" love the world? Who could have suggested to Him to send His Son?

No, no, this could not be ; the gift comes *free* and unasked, as an expression of the heart of the Giver. Well we can understand how the traveller, crossing a dry and trackless desert, must long for a stream of pure water where he can quench his thirst and supply his wants. At last he comes in sight of an immense river—how natural that he should desire to trace out the source from whence its waters come. *God* is the source from whence life and salvation come—*He* loved, *He* gave. How different this is from the false thought that God is a severe Judge : no, He is a God of love, and He has given the very best gift, His only begotten Son. The gift is worthy of the Giver ; and the result of such a gift is worthy of both. The mighty work accomplished on the cross, where the Son of man was lifted up, has so satisfied every requirement of a God of justice, so glorified Him in all that He is as a righteous and holy Being, that now His love can flow forth without let or hindrance to the most unworthy sinner who believes.

Nothing can be more simple—the wayfaring man, the humble peasant in his cottage can understand it. God has bound together “believeth” and “hath everlasting life.” Take God at His word, He is worthy to be trusted ; let God be true, if every one else is a liar. F. G. B.

"Has He Come?"

MARY M——was the child of Christian parents. Her home was in the Australian bush. Naturally she was of a stiff, proud spirit. She had, however, learned from the lips of a godly teacher in the country Sunday school she attended, of the second coming of the Lord Jesus to take His people out of the world to Himself. No doubt she would also have learned much concerning His first coming in the centuries long past.

She would have been taught how that Jesus had left His bright eternal home above to come down to this sin-stricken world. That when He was here, what love and compassion moved Him to go about doing good to all, and finally led Him to Calvary and the cross with all its pain and shame, and there to suffer for sins, once, "the just for the unjust," and "to give His life a ransom for many."

Mary would no doubt have been well instructed in the present and eternal value of Christ's death and atoning sacrifice, which has such virtue as

to wash us from our sins, and to bring us into the blessed presence of God even now, and to fit us for the many mansions of His Father's house.

All this she would have been taught, but it appears to have been more the solemn truth of Christ's return to take His people to Himself that fixed itself, by the Spirit of God, in little Mary's heart.

The kind teacher had told her young scholars that Christ might return at any moment, and that only those who were "ready" would go in to be for ever with Him when He came, that then the door would be shut and for ever closed to all who had neglected to obtain that which was essentially necessary to have in order to enter into that festal scene (Matt. xxv; Isa. lv. 1-3).

She had told the children that, being a Christian herself, she would be taken away from them; and that those who had fathers and mothers who also believed in Jesus, would lose them and be left behind in the world, unless the children had also taken Jesus for their Saviour.

All this truthful and faithful warning did not fall upon careless ears, for now Mary, hitherto coldly indifferent to it all, began to be very

much concerned indeed about the state of her soul. Was *she* "ready"? she questioned with herself. If Jesus came, would *she* be really left behind?

Now it so happened on an occasion, that Mary's mother had been called away from home, leaving the father and the other children alone in the house, and that meanwhile Mary herself had gone on some errand to a distant farmhouse, and was not aware of her mother's absence from home. It happened also that her father, coming home from his work on the farm, and the evening being fine, had, after tea, taken the other children for a stroll into the bush.

Coming home after her errand was accomplished and not finding a single soul about the place, poor Mary was filled with intense concern. Her anxiety increased to excitement which knew no bounds.

She searched each room of the house, the barn, and outbuildings, all to no purpose. She "coo-eed." Loudly she called for her father and mother! She called for her brothers by their names, Willie! Walter! but in vain. Wildly she ran to a near neighbour to see if, perhaps, they were there, but no—no one could tell her anything of them.

Oh the fear and dread that seized poor Mary's heart! Could it be that Jesus had come and taken them away? Has He come, and shall I be left behind? Oh the horror of it!

But it was not so. Jesus still tarries while the long suffering of God waits as in the days of Noah, not willing that any should perish.

The door of mercy and salvation is still open. As yet is heard the kind invitation, "Come unto Me," of Jesus. "I am the door," said He; "by Me if any man enter in *he shall be saved*" (John x.).

Have you come in by that door, gentle reader? Come in ere it be too late. At His invitation, come in!

Soon after, Mary's father and the rest of the family returned home, to the great joy and delight of her heart. But the lesson was not lost upon her. Her cold pride had received a rude shock, and soon after she poured out the sorrows of her heart in the willing ears of her Christian teacher, to whom she told of the terror that had seized her at the thought of being lost for ever. Now she has given her heart to Jesus, and trusted Him with the eternal salvation of her soul. May you, reader, do likewise!

A New Year's Appeal.

WE are just on the threshold of another year, and we feel constrained to lift a warning voice to those who are still unsaved.

Time is quickly passing on. Dear reader, pause and think one brief moment; consider where you are going. We beseech you to decide for Christ *now*. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Leave it not till to-morrow, for "we know not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1). The Lord Jesus Christ might come, then you, if unsaved, would be *left behind*. Oh! awful thought—too late! too late! Or you might die, and what then? "After *death* the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27).

Have you not *one* thought for the One who has done so much for you?

Does your business and your pleasure take up all your time? Have you *no* room for Jesus?

Again we solemnly ask you to pause and think.

The Lord Jesus will not plead for ever, soon the day of grace will be ended. He says by the mouth of His servant Paul—"If thou shalt *confess*

with thy *mouth* the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe* in thine *heart* that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou *shalt* be *saved*" (Rom. x. 9).

In time of deep distress and sorrow the Christian has One to turn to who will not only pity as a father ("Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him," Ps. ciii. 13), but comfort as a mother ("As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," Isa. lxvi. 13).

None can help as He helps. No one can love as 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!"*

Try Him, trust Him, you will find Him "as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. xxxii. 2).

Enter this New Year with Jesus ; take Him as your own Saviour. He will never let you go ; you will never perish, no one can pluck you out of His hand (John x. 27, 28). If you refuse Him, the solemn words in John xii. 48 will apply to you :

"He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him : the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

G. M. B.

I will fear no evil.

[The following touching account of a triumphant departure was given to us by one now herself with the Lord. To have Christ with us when we pass through death's dark valley, we must come to Him as needy helpless sinners before that moment comes, as come it must for all, if the Lord does not come before. Let this bright death-bed scene be compared with the joyless uncertainty and dread forebodings of those who near the unseen world without a Saviour, and each ask himself, Is it not better to belong to Christ than to the world?—ED.]

IT was towards the end of the year 18—we were informed by telegram of the sudden illness and expected death of a dear sister then residing in France. What added to our grief was that the beloved one, with her husband and family, were without Christ, unconverted.

Two of our family, J—— and M——, went over to her at once, and found the medical opinion very unfavourable. The disease was of such a nature that it must end in death, and he thought soon. Many were the prayers sent up to God by vast numbers of the Lord's people on behalf of this sick one that she might be brought to a saving

knowledge of Christ ere taken from us. A special interest seemed taken in her, and her family knew that she had often been under conviction of sin, and had tried to stifle it, more (we believe) from fear of what an open confession might entail than anything else; as she often since told us, she felt herself a sinner, saw hell open before her, and felt truly miserable. She also told us she had tried by prayers and ordinances and sacraments to obtain peace, without getting it. How true, God has *no* pleasure in sacrifices and offerings for sin—nothing but the blood of Christ (Heb. ix. and x.).

So far was prayer answered that in a fortnight after she was taken ill she was enabled by steamer to be brought to London, and although it seemed to threaten a storm in some parts of England, the sea in crossing was a perfect calm, a great thing for her. On arrival the very best advice was procured, the first doctors in London consulted, but one after another only told the same sad story that her days were numbered.

Dr A——, the family physician, was more sanguine than the others. He attended her to the last, and used every means to prolong life, when the disease could not be stayed. Prayer was offered up unceasingly, reading and explaining

the Word—the Epistle to the Hebrews amongst the rest was read to her by A——, who had lately been reading Bellett's "Musings on the Hebrews."

This greatly cleared the way as showing the dear sufferer that all earthly priesthood was completely done away with, that all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are priests, and that Christ is the only High Priest. That all *earthly* temples and sanctuaries are done away with, and that God seeks those to worship who worship in Spirit and in Truth, *His* presence making the sanctuary. Also it was explained to her that the Word says, "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life," so that we ought to know *here* whether we have it or not.

She listened to and grasped at the Word, saying, "Go on, read more," and oh, praise and thanksgiving to our God and Father of mercies! for before long she was brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus. She found peace while reading 1 John v. 9-12.

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a

liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

She said it went with a pang to her heart that she was making God a liar, believing man's word (a human priest) instead of God's Word.

Oh! our hearts were full of praise and thanksgiving to our God for His marvellous love to us and to her, she seemed so clear and decided, believing simply that Christ died for her, and that he that believeth *hath everlasting life*.

She said it was wonderful that six sisters should meet in heaven! Her next thought, and ours too, was the confession of this to her husband, who was so kind in attending to her bodily wants, but was still in the Roman Catholic Church.

The Lord might well have said, "O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt," but we were, and she too, fearful of the consequences of a confession; but prayer went up, and one night, when very ill, that passage in Romans x. 9, 10 pressed so on her conscience, until she felt constrained to send for her husband and tell him all—that she was now converted and had found

peace and happiness through simply believing in Jesus Christ for salvation.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. x. 9, 10).

He had remarked before that his wife looked as though a load were off her mind, he could not account for it; but when she told him, soon after, he said to one, “Well, I do not care what she calls herself, so long as she is happy.” He very kindly used to read the Bible to her at her express wish, but still the anxiety for the children was great.

She spoke to her nurse and to M—— (a servant who had been with her for years), told them that when death came nothing but Christ could satisfy. His blood alone gave her peace—no prayers, no forms, no churches, no priests, and that no absolution of man was of any effect—Christ and Christ alone, and they must let *all* go and cling to him. She said to her dear sister M——, “How *can* you walk about, and see souls trusting to churches, and prayers, and forms, without telling them what a precious Christ you have? Oh, what a precious Saviour He is! and

you are told to confess with your mouth—how can you keep it? I don't wonder at A—— W—— now; I would do the same. He well knows he is told to confess with his mouth, he knows all are in danger, and he values his precious Saviour. Oh, do speak for Christ!"

After a little sleep, she said, "Christ never turned an anxious soul away yet; Oh, no, He is waiting to receive; how precious a Saviour!" She said: "I remember when I arrived in England from abroad (three years before her illness), A—— W—— spoke to me about my soul. I was cut to the heart, and could have cried all day, but my proud heart would not let me say much to him—how that precious, precious Jesus has followed me, and has striven with me, and I have striven against Him, and He would not leave me! What wondrous love! I don't deserve it, I can't believe it."

Then she said, "I am filled with happiness; it is joy, it is peace, it is Christ!" As these words came out she was quite exhausted. She then said to another sister, J——, "Can you be quiet when Christ says you are to confess with your mouth;" and then sent a message to C—— (a brother-in-law) to say Christ alone would serve him at death, to lose

no time in coming to Him ; then said, to be sure and tell her mother-in-law that she died in the true faith, which is Christ ! and Him alone, no forms, no churches, no priests, *no man*, none but Christ ; tell her “ she ought to confess to her sons that she *knows* that she is saved, and that no forms will save them ; no church, nothing but Christ : His precious blood, we want nothing else at death, and nothing else before, but Christ and His Word, no church (so-called). Oh, the freedom ! the freedom of getting out of bondage ! What freedom Christ is ! Why don't all see it ? ”

She was very weak and quite exhausted after each sentence. Oh ! what unbounded mercy the Lord was showing the dear sufferer. She lingered altogether about eleven months, and we may well say they were months of great mercies amidst all her sufferings. . . . Our hopes were often buoyed up with the idea that after all the dear one might be spared to us, as at times she gained strength and appetite ; but *she* never anticipated perfect recovery. . . . So little did she, that at a later period, when the nurse she brought over was obliged to leave, she said she did not trouble herself about it, although so sorry to part with her, as her kindness and unwearying patience

had been great ; but she said, I may not live to require another.

Dear G—— suffered from extreme weariness and at times pain and sickness. How little we who are in health know what these weary hours, are. Her husband, by kindness and attention, helped to soothe them for her. During these months she was visited, too, by some Christians who broke bread with her in remembrance of the Lord's dying love, which she greatly enjoyed. She often said she only cared to see those Christians who spoke to her of Christ ; some she named as not caring to see a second time, as they did not speak much of Jesus.

Although our hopes were often raised, we were summoned to town on the 9th of September, and found her near her end, but truly happy in Christ. On seeing A—— she said : " I am just like that little hymn—

‘ Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.’

What could I do if I were obliged to bring anything of my own? *Nothing but clinging to Christ.*" " Well, dear," A—— said, " the best of us, after almost a whole life of service, can bring nothing at last, can only exclaim, ' Mercy from first to last.' "

G—— said, "The only thing that troubles me is my not having spoken more of Christ to the unconverted" (few have to reproach themselves less on this point than she, for she spoke to nearly all she saw).

In being asked if she was rejoicing in hope, she said, "Oh, yes, each time I am brought lower I am happier, Christ is more precious to me. I have had temptations, but they are all gone now."

She also said: "I could not think why I did not die when I was first converted, but now I see it—it's because I know Christ better now. At first I was just happy and rejoicing because my sins were forgiven, but now I am more drawn to Christ—know Him better."

It reminded me of the difference in 1 John i. 12, 13. Little children know' their sins forgiven—father's know Him who was from the beginning—for surely she had made rapid strides in the heavenly race in ten months. Then she said how true that little hymn is we used to learn as children—

"O that will be joyful, joyful,
When we meet to part no more."

She seemed to long for the Lord's coming; not that she feared death, but loved the idea of

all meeting again. She had been rather troubled at hearing a Christian say she feared death, and said she determined to ask every believer she met if they feared it, and was greatly pleased with the answer of one of her sisters, A—— S——: "Fear death? No! I never think of *death*! It is only God's messenger sent to usher me into His blissful presence."

September 14, dear G—— said, "Not a bit of fear, no fear, perfect love casteth out fear; no fear, not a bit."

On repeating a passage of the Word to her, she said: "Yes, it's all very sure. I can look death in the face without any fear. I am weary, weary, but it will be all right when we get up there—no trouble, no heat, no pain. Jesus will take care of me, I know."

On being reminded how near we were to Jesus, she said: "Oh yes, quite true, the Lord thought us so part of Himself that He said to Saul, 'Why persecutest thou Me?' Oh yes, that is precious."

September 16, she was very ill; we thought it her last day here. She spoke to all around, warned M—— (the servant) about her soul again, charged her to meet her in glory, told her she never would unless she came to Christ,

"You must believe He died for you, M——, for your sins." She told us how kind M—— had always been, done her duty well, and to remember that.

Then to her nurse (a fresh one): "Am I to meet *you* there? Do you believe in Jesus?"

"I hope so, ma'am."

"*No*," she said, "it won't do to hope. **I know.** Do you believe you are a sinner? Yes, all have sinned. Then if a sinner, Jesus died for you. Do you really believe it? He that believeth hath everlasting life."

Then she asked her doctor if he would meet her. He replied, "*Yes*."

"You do believe in Jesus, Dr A——, do you not?"

"*Yes*."

She then spoke of her brother who was abroad, wondered if he would be saved and his wife, said how Satan occupied him with his business and the world. "It will all be of no use when he comes to die. When he comes to be like me, nothing will do *then* but Christ. Oh, how vain everything else appears, nothing will do for a death-bed but Christ." She regretted, too, that his wife was so taken up with the world.

"Oh, how vain all the world is when death

comes." Then to her sister A——: "Don't let me ever see you shed another tear about your husband, his soul will be saved. I have prayed and thought much of him, and Jesus *says* yes! Don't you trouble any more." Then, as if she had a glimpse of glory, she said: "He has a mother there and a sister, and his mother's prayers will be answered, and he'll be there. I see it all as plainly as if I were seated up there, and he there too. He loves the world now, does he not? How strange Satan should be able to occupy people's minds with different things to keep them off Christ, but he'll be saved; it will come all at once." Then as if talking with the Lord, she pleaded so earnestly for his soul to be saved. Then said: "Yes, it will be all right. Jesus says, whatever we ask we shall have. Tell him I thought of him, I prayed for him, and that nothing but Christ will do on a death-bed."

Then turning to a Christian present, she said: "Don't you ever fear death. When it comes Jesus will be with you, don't fear it. He is with me and will be with you." At another time she said: "*Hush!* Jesus is all round." She told her sister M —— that her gift was to awaken souls, or, as she expressed it, to make them feel un-

comfortable. "Yes, M ——, years ago *you* sent me those lines—

‘Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.’

and I used to make up my mind not to read it, but felt obliged to take it out of my pocket when alone and read it over and over, and used to feel so *miserable*. Yes! You used to go on at me and make me feel uncomfortable. You can do that. I have prayed that I might go to sleep and waken on Jesu's bosom, but it's not the time yet." She thought it so wonderful she should be saved, said she never cared for Jesus, and to think we are to have *such* a place!

A—— said, "Yes, God loves His Son so much, that's why He gives us such a place."

"Ah," G—— said, "it's all right up there, all rest."

At another time she said: "Did you say it was death? It's not death, death is the beginning of everlasting life to the believer—it's *very sure*, none surer than I am. All is real rubbish down here when we get one glimpse of glory."

A—— said, "Yes, Paul said *all* was dung and dross compared with Christ."

G—— again said: "It's only one step, a step

and we are there, just a step. You will be there, A——, yes, *and* your husband!" (that is the husband she mentioned as being so sure of his conversion). "Tell me more of the Lord's coming."

To her sister M——: "I don't think any one can enter into what our Lord felt when He said, '*I thirst.*'"

From the 28th to the morning of the 30th M—— was the only sister there—her husband there also.

M—— sat up with her—nurse lying on a sofa in the adjoining room. Dear G—— said; "How sweet that we have it all to ourselves." Poor thing, from extreme restlessness she did not sleep at all. . . . She was suffering acute pain, and exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy on me," but immediately checked herself, saying, "I must not say that—Thou hast shown me unbounded mercy, yes, and love beyond my tongue can tell. All praise to Thy precious name, my Saviour. How sweet that name *my* Saviour! more grace to bear it I ask." . . .

The morning light came in, and all was peace. M—— said, "Are you glad to see the light, dear?" "Yes, for it's another night gone, and this can't last—I am quite at peace and rest; dear M——, lie down, you look tired."

. . . Perfect peace flowed in and joyful assurance. She said, "It is more than I could bear, Jesus has filled me." She said she saw Him waiting to receive her, and she longed to go; not a doubt, not a fear. "Oh," she said, "come, come, my Beloved; let me not be left any longer here, after such a sight! Oh, come, take me; the sight is too much—I am impatient now to go—a poor sinner, what unbounded love! all by simple faith in Thy beloved Person. Not one I want now but Thee—not a doubt, not a fear. Heaven is where Thou art, 'tis true. Oh, such assurance is joyful."

M—— left her for awhile, and on returning to the room found M—— (the servant) there, and G——, quite exhausted, saying, "I can say no more, M——; I am going straight to Jesus, and can do no more for you."

The nurse seemed to wish her to say more, and said, "You have suffered greatly, but we all have our trials; mine have been great."

G—— replied: "Trials and sufferings not turned to good use are awful; the trial is sent in unbounded love and mercy to warn you, and you *reject* it, and you *can't* make a good use of trial without *first looking to Jesus*. Oh! don't talk to me of sufferings; the Lord has been loading me

with blessings, unbounded love and mercy, O precious Jesus !”

Her husband used to read to her daily, but she was too weak now to hear a whole chapter. She lay all that day holding her sister M——’s hand, her voice very weak. She said little, but M—— could hear her carrying on, as it were, communion with the Lord, saying, “Jesus, Jesus, oh, yes, oh, yes—I am thine—Thou art mine, and nothing can divide us.” She said to M——, “Oh, if you had had such a sight as I have, you would not wish to be here one moment longer—all that A—— S—— said to me is quite true—no fear, all is peace.”

M —— asked if she might sit beside her that night. She said, “I should like it, but your poor body will be worn out. I would not let you, but that this is the last night here—this restlessness is all of death—my dizziness of eyes is all of death—we shall have our last night to ourselves—this is the last night ever I will require it.”

M—— replied, “Dr A—— said your pulse was stronger.” “Well,” she said, “he need not tell an untruth, but he does not know. This is the last night here, and we will have our last night to ourselves—it is but a little time here—

read to me a bit." M —— read different parts of the Bible, then read the hymn—

" Oh, patient spotless One,
My heart in meekness train,
To take Thy yoke and learn of Thee,
That I may rest obtain.

Jesus, Thou art enough,
The mind and heart to fill,
Thy life—to calm the anxious soul,
Thy love—its fear dispel.

Oh, fix my earnest gaze,
So wholly, Lord, on Thee,
That with Thy beauty occupied,
I elsewhere none may see."

The third verse dear G—— repeated after M——, saying, " Yes, Lord, fix *my* earnest gaze so wholly on Thee!" Later in the evening M—— read the verse again to her, but dear G—— stopped her, saying, " I don't need that now "—as much as to say, my gaze is fixed !

Dr A—— came soon after and said a great change had taken place, pulse much weaker. He was told the remark she had made, that that would be her last night. He said, " How strange—quite true." M—— told Dr A—— of the sight she had of the Lord, and that she had said if we had had such a sight we would not wish to

remain here. He said, "Tell me it again," the tears falling. "Ah!" he said, "depend on it she had a sight worth dying to get."

Nurse asked M—— if she was afraid to stay with her sister alone at night. "How can I be afraid, Jesus fills the room," was M——'s reply.

The doctor thought at times she was unconscious, but no, whenever the name of *Jesus* was mentioned she answered.

About 11 o'clock on the morning of the 30th she opened her large dark eyes on M—— wide, and said, "M——, dear, I think you would like to hear me say once more that I am at perfect peace, have perfect assurance through simple faith in the precious blood of Christ—me, a poor unworthy sinner; it's not a nice thought having my head put under ground, but I am happy, having Christ I have all."

Again she lay a long time without saying much, but extremely restless. She said, "Keep constant in prayer for the Lord to take me quickly, I am longing to go, but *this*, this is my trial to linger here—patience."

When her sister J—— arrived and sat by her she said: "J——, dear, so glad to see you. I *am* sensible, dear." Perhaps she had heard some say she was unconscious. Again she looked up

and said to J——, "Keep constant in prayer for the Lord to take me." She said little after that, but at times she was heard saying, "Yes, yes, precious Jesus, quite sure ; yes, yes."

She quietly breathed out her last at 9.45 P.M. on Saturday 30th September, 18—.

* * *

Théroigne de Méricourt.

THÉROIGNE DE MÉRICOURT was the daughter of a French peasant, and was born about 1762.

She became one of the celebrities of the terrible first Revolution in France—a Revolution which involved the massacre of over a million human beings, from the King to the lowest in his realm. Théroigne figured variously amid these scenes of carnage : she was a public singer, a democratic speaker, a prisoner, a martyr, and was finally exhibited as "the Goddess of Reason." Then in 1793, when others obtained the ascendancy, she was publicly flogged, and at last went mad. For twenty years she was con-

fined in an asylum. Think of it! The woman who had posed as the *Goddess of Reason* was *bereft of reason*. This is the government of God. It is said that during her lucid intervals she used to repent, and to utter heart-rending lamentations. If this be true, we may be sure they were not uttered in vain: "*Whosoever* shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Such a woman may well be forgotten, you will say; but, incredible as it may appear, her story has been woven into a play which is now being produced at a French theatre to interest and delight a pleasure-loving people. Could anything show more plainly the true character of the world and of these last days? "Men shall be . . . despisers of those that are good . . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God . . . of corrupt minds."

Do not say, This has only occurred in Paris; alas! in London, kindred or worse plays are acted, and few bow the head in shame.

Théroigne's life was anti-Christian and an open shame, she was an unbeliever in the Bible, and so became a moral wreck floating over the ocean of licentious sin and folly, without chart or compass.

We must make our choice, reader. When

the Saviour was brought before Pilate, he asked "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" Let us repeat it, What will *you* do with Jesus? If you choose Him as your Saviour and seek to follow Him, you *cannot* have the world too; if you elect the world, you *cannot* have Him. "No man *can* serve two masters" (it does not say, would not *like* to).

You see what the world is coming to—iniquity and profanity are dressed up by the devil, and turned into an enthralling amusement, and the *end* of these things is *death*.

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

Christian, you who have chosen Christ, or been chosen of God, go a step further; learn that the cross of Christ has made a gulf between you and "this present evil world" (Gal. i. 4).

"Thy cross has severed ties which bound us here,
Thyself our treasure in a brighter sphere."

And you who are still of the world—what is it all leading to? How will it all end? Is there a God? You cannot in your senses deny it. You would need to deliberately silence the voice of reason, let alone that of conscience, to deny the existence of God. But if there is a God, can He tolerate sin in His holy presence? And what

must the end be of those who live their lives in utter disregard of Him and all His claims?

But, thank God! there is a Saviour too. A holy, spotless Man, who gave His life a sacrifice for guilty sinners. He was God as well as Man, and thus His death has an infinite value. You may be saved and forgiven if you simply put your soul's trust in Him and His finished work.

* * *

Have you started on the heavenly journey? You cannot reasonably expect to reach heaven at last unless you start on the road that leads to heaven.

How many thousands have passed into eternity during the year that has just fled! How many thousands now alive and well will be laid in their graves before this New Year has expired! The reader may be one of the number, and therefore we beseech of him or her to start **at once**. But what is the road? The answer is plain—

“Jesus saith . . . I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me”
(John xiv. 6).

A. H. B.

"Put on the Brake!"

SO said poor Davis in his delirium, the reckless driver of the Royal Blue Line flyer, as he lay a-dying. But it was an awful accident nevertheless, the most serious disaster on the Central Railroad of New Jersey during the last quarter of a century; an accident which resulted in 112 "killed and injured."

The express was flying along at a speed of sixty-five miles an hour, little heeding the fact that a disabled train was blocking the line ahead. Every precaution had been taken by the company to avoid accidents. A special system of block-signals was in use, which worked well, both before and after the awful disaster. The night was clear and the driver could see two miles ahead; the track, too, was as straight as a line for a distance of eight miles. An approaching engine-driver would see a green light, if the line were occupied, three-quarters of a mile before the main danger signal, which shows red.

All was in working order, and yet utterly regardless of the warning signal the express dashed past the red light and in a few minutes

ploughed into the rear of the stationary train, telescoping three coaches and scattering death and destruction all around:

The victims were of "moderate means," we are told. This may be true so far as earthly possessions are concerned, but can any words convey the priceless value of their never-dying souls? In one instant of time hurled into eternity, and passing from the presence of one another into the very presence of God. The suddenness of this is terrible to contemplate. I fancy the reader says, "I hope such a sudden end may not be mine—I should like time to prepare."

But, friend, whoever you may be, rich or poor, your end must come, and it may be just as suddenly. Riches will not buy off the King of Terrors, or procure for you one moment of time. Is not this one more of the countless warnings sent to each one of us by a kind and merciful God? Does it not sound afresh in the ear, and deep into the innermost soul of the reader—Be ready, yes, **be ready?**

To be *getting ready* will not suffice. If those unfortunate victims of this fresh disaster had been like many of our readers, only just *getting ready*, their case would now indeed be awful ; of

all hope bereft, and for ever to lament their fatal folly in neglecting God's great salvation.

Reader, do not delay—do not put off for one single hour the decision of this momentous question. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved (Acts xvi. 31); receive Him by faith as your own personal Saviour, who died for your sins, and rose again for your justification; then confess Him as your Lord, follow Him as your guide, and serve Him as your Master.

But what of poor Davis, the engine-driver? As they extricated him from the wreckage of that terrible smash for which he alone seems to have been responsible, he confessed that he saw the red danger signal, but dashed past it *thinking* that it would turn to white. "What madness ever possessed the man!" I think I hear the reader exclaim. He saw the red light, and yet utterly disregarded it! He *thought* it would turn to white! What ground had he for so thinking? Oh, what culpable folly! What foolhardy recklessness!

Yes, reader, you can see it clearly in his case, but are you not just as foolish, just as mad? You are flying along as fast as time can carry you into a boundless eternity.

Put on the brake!

Take the book of God into your hands, and on bended knee ask God to show you what road you are travelling on, and where that road will lead you for eternity.

“Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat” (Matt. vii. 13). Are you still on that broad road? Make no mistake, it is the road that all are travelling on, until God’s converting grace turns us to that narrow way of a personal faith in His beloved Son.

“As many as received Him, to them gave He power (or right) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John i. 12).

A. H. B.

Be not Deceived.

“Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.”

IN what an awful and solemn way was this word brought home to us in H.M.S. N——, while cruising one night in the West Indies.

A few of us who composed that ship’s company, whom God in the depths of His love and mercy had brought to the knowledge of

Himself, used to gather on the upper deck in the evening and sing praises to the God of our salvation, and seek to win souls for Christ.

Among others who seemed to be deeply exercised was a young marine, whose name I will not mention, suffice it to say that he desired to be known as one of us, saying that he believed in the Son of God. Shortly after that, however, his conduct aroused suspicion, and having occasion to go down on duty into the fore-part of the ship, the writer of this narrative heard some terrible imprecations and cursing in a voice that he recognised as belonging to the young marine. Going into the next compartment he saw with sadness that it was indeed so.

In the evening we went up on deck as usual, and he came amongst us. We sought by the Word of God that night to lay upon his conscience the awful sin he had committed, exhorting him to repent. He burst into tears, and seemed indeed sorry for what he had done, but alas! the seed had fallen on stony ground and found no root in his heart. He fell away, and one dark night on the silent deep, there was a plunge, he was seen no more, for he "sank as lead in the mighty waters," until that day when the "sea shall give up its dead."

Beloved reader, this narrative is true ; is it not solemn ? Religion apart from Christ cannot save the soul. Saving faith refers the soul to a dying Saviour and to a living Saviour, to one who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification (Rom. iv. 25). Come, weary soul, come, find peace and joy in believing.

For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God " (Eph. ii. 8).

W. S.

Just as I am.

THERE are still to be seen in some parts of England the low-thatched cottages of former days, built partly of clay, and often on a slip of land taken off the roadside. In one of this description has lived for some years an old woman, of whose conversion and closing days I wish to tell you.

When first we came into the neighbourhood and used to pass her striding along with her spade and garden-basket over her shoulder, we used often to wonder who she could be. But when she and her husband removed into the

little low-thatched cottage, with its gay flowers, so lovingly tended by her hands, our acquaintance began. Others besides ourselves sometimes dropped in to have a word with her, for she was unlike any one else, seeming to belong to a former generation, with its old-time habits and manners. Yet, over her and her dwelling there was one shadow! She never could speak with any certainty as to her soul's safety, and though confessing God's goodness and care over her in temporal matters, there was no clear answer with regard to eternity.

So the years passed on, the last four somewhat sad and lonely; for she had laid in the grave her "old man," as she called him, and age and infirmity were lessening her former activity.

Then came the day—only a few weeks ago—when some one said, "Do you know Mrs —— is very ill, and we fear she may not be about here again?" We found her indeed weak, so weak that we feared she would not be able to tell us what was in her heart. After a time a relative, sitting by her side, said: "It's a good thing aunt is in the right way." Hearing her assent, we said, "And when, Mrs ——, did you get into the right way?" "Only a few weeks since," she said, "perhaps five or six. I had striven

and struggled for years for the peace I had not found, and when this illness laid hold on me, I thought, 'Who can help me, but God Himself?' so I said—

'Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come !' "

These lines were repeated so slowly, so feelingly, just as she had said them when they went straight from her weary heart into the ear and heart of the Lord Jesus. She went on: "And when I had said it, peace and joy came to me *at once*." Then she added in the quaint language she always used, "I only rue that I did not come to Him long before, but we're so *hard-hearted with Him*."

As we stooped to pass out of that low doorway and down the garden path between the overgrown autumn flowers, we thought of the exceeding nearness of the Lord Jesus to the sinner, we thought of the wonderful reality of His promise, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out," and of His immediate response to her venture on Him.

All the long, weary years of doubt, distrust, and seeking *in herself* for peace might have been

ended long before, and I relate it to you, dear reader, that whether young or old, rich and unsatisfied now, or burdened with sin, you may be encouraged to venture on Jesus *now*, as dear old Mrs — did only a few weeks ago, and find Him *as near* as she found Him, and as true to His promise, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

We went in again before the end came, and spoke together of the will of the Lord, for she said she would "like to be taken, but the will of the Lord be done, He will do the best." We said, "He sometimes tries faith." "*I think we try Him!*" was the emphatic reply. G. S. B.

Two Beginnings.

"**H**E began to be in want" (Luke xv. 14). Yes, for he had "spent all" that he had, not to say wasted it. Much had been committed to him, and there was nothing left.

"He began to be in want." That was after living in pleasure for a season, after a luxurious sowing of wild oats, after lust which had brought forth sin; then want stared him in the face.

This was like Adam of old time in Eden, like the steward who had wasted his master's goods, and like many a youth to-day who hopes that the pleasure which he seeks after so vehemently will endure for ever. Alas, no! it is a coffer rifled all too easily, a well whose bottom can be reached all too speedily.

And then? He will reach the land where "no man gave unto him." If to begin to be in want be bad, what must it be to go on in want for a lifetime? But God can and does speak to such, and in His mercy He takes means to bring home the prodigal sons and the starving banished ones.

Hear the story of one.

The pleasures young Mr R. was seeking were those of human reason, the "intruding into those things which he had not seen, vainly puffed up in his fleshly *mind*." There are many who do likewise. They would not perchance stoop to "riotous living," but unless the mind and intellect be subject to God, it becomes the tool of the devil and leads a man as far astray as do coarser pleasures. All the scientific theories about creation (evolution, Darwinianism, and the like), the unbelief in miracles, in inspiration, in atonement—what is all this but man setting his reason

in the place of God? This will lead to the same land—the place where want begins and reigns, where no man gives, a thirsty land where the fresh springs that are in God are unknown.

Mr R. was there, though as yet perhaps he did not know it. He was gentlemanly and companionable, related to a dignitary of the Church, connected with the most evangelical, *but* he was an unbeliever and away from God.

Faith, alas, is not hereditary. God must speak to a soul Himself, and He does so often in the most unlooked-for ways, and He knows how to bring to nought the pride of man.

Mr R. was in the habit of making periodical visits to friends in a country town, friends who were otherwise minded to himself. He used to distress them greatly by saying that the only use of Sunday to him was to write his letters and make up his accounts, for in those somewhat ancient times Sunday was not generally a day for dinner parties or bands or excursions as now. So *they* used to attend church, and *he* used to retire to his room and his desk.

One Sunday, when thus employed, he was startled by a loud sound as of a rap on the desk. He could not account for it, and presently returned to his occupation. To his surprise in

a few minutes another and a louder rap was heard quite close to his hand. This time he sprang from his seat and closed his desk. He had the conviction that God had spoken to him. He abandoned his whilom mode of life, took to reading his Bible, and in due time became a believing and earnest Christian.

His friends could rejoice for and with him now : "they began to be merry" (Luke xv. 24). They began what is to continue in heaven and never to end. What a contrast ! "Began to be in want" ! "Began to be merry" !

In the later years of his life it became Mr R.'s habit to take lodgings once a year in that same country town so as to be near his old friends. On the last occasion the day came for his departure, and he was to catch the boat-train for the Continent. As the hour drew near his landlady went to his door and knocked. "Sir, the time is going, you must not miss your train." No answer. She opened the door. Mr R. was upon his knees, and she withdrew. At the last moment she went again, and induced him to go to the station, but it was with a lingering step which struck her.

He caught his train and travelled in a first-class compartment with two gentlemen. Arrived

at the terminus they called the guard. "Guard, this gentleman looks so pale we think he must be ill." *He was dead.* God who had spoken to him in early life, and whose voice he had "perceived," had called His servant home. He was ready. He had left the testimony that he feared God—his last known act had been prayer, and he departed to be "with Christ which is far better."

Reader, which beginning do you choose? Your want, if you are not satisfied, may end now, to-day, if only you will come to the "One who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." Receive Him as your Saviour, and you will begin a joy that will never end, and end a want that otherwise will have no ending.

H. L. H.

The Egyptian and the Amalekite.

THERE are two episodes in the life of David just before he ascended the throne, that are so full of gospel truth and warning that we would desire to dwell upon them a little.

The throne of Israel was David's by God's

appointment (1 Sam. xvi.), and yet he was a stranger and rejected. In this he foreshadows our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He might have ascended the throne, went as the holy Victim to Calvary's cross, and was a Stranger in His own world, having not where to lay His head. Again, as in 1 Samuel xxx., we find David on his way to execute vengeance upon the Amalekites, who had taken that which he held most precious, just as Christ will visit with judgment those who reject His claims, and despise the objects of His love, proving themselves His enemies.

But it is while David is on the way to wreak vengeance on his adversaries that we find a signal example of royal clemency in his meeting with the young Egyptian. Abandoned by his Amalekite master because of his sickness, left to perish in the desert when he no longer could serve that selfish purpose, what a picture of distress and helplessness does he present! And in this he graphically sets forth the state of the dying sinner's last hours, with the claims of Christ and death before him. Satan, whom he has served in his life and health, now leaves him to die alone, and to sink into a hopeless, Christless grave. Oh! how many, with death

staring them in the face, have felt the emptiness of all they have lived for, all unavailing to alleviate the gnawing of conscience in that solemn hour, and darkness and eternal death ahead. Oh! reader, may it never be yours to pass such moments, but now, before it be too late, "repent and believe the gospel," and you will find it abundantly true as Christ has said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

But our chapter reminds us also of the exercise of a soul who finds that having sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. iii. 23), he has been brought in guilty before God, and that death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Rom. v. 12). Satan first seeks to prevent such from dwelling upon these things, and looking the issue straight in the face, or leaves him in the slough of despond in darkness and distress without a gleam of hope. Yet it is well to recall what one has truly said, that "Christ receives the devil's castaways," and this we find set forth in David and the Egyptian. Being brought to David, who had lately been so wronged by the company of whom he formed a part, the stranger tells him all the truth about himself. He conceals nothing. And from ex-

periencing the generosity of David's servants who gave him bread and water, figs and raisins, (so suggestive of God as Giver), he becomes acquainted with God's rejected king ; and from being an enemy forms part of those associated with David when he executes judgment on the Amalekites.

How eloquently this speaks of the grace of Christ, who, Himself rejected, bestows upon the poor guilty sinner who is brought to Him, and confesses his guilt, a frank pardon, a free forgiveness, and then enrolls him in the ranks of those who, having known and loved Him in the days of His rejection, will be owned by Him, and will share His triumphs in the day of His glory. May it be yours to bow to the Saviour now, dear reader, to know His blessed word, "Thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mark ii. 5 ; Col. i. 14), though it mean to be rejected by the world. "If we suffer we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 12).

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In 2 Samuel i. another personage comes before David—an Amalekite. The intervening chapter shows us the flower of Israel, and Saul their king, with Jonathan his son, ignominiously defeated and slain on Mount Gilboa. How deeply does the heart of David feel this sorrow and shame.

And how beautiful is his lament in all truth and sincerity for the sad end of the one who had behaved so treacherously to him. But the Amalekite knew nothing of David's feelings, and judging him by merely human nature, supposes that he will find pleasure in hearing of the overthrow of Saul. If additionally he can only present himself as the one who actually cleared away the barrier to David's taking the kingdom, he thinks that a place of honour and favour must be his. It is quite clear from the recital of the facts of Saul's death in 1 Samuel xxxi. that the Amalekite was not actually concerned in putting an end to Saul's life. One cannot escape the conclusion that he came with a deliberate falsehood to David, and probably that he rifled the slain of their ornaments for his own advantage.

How different is the reception of the tidings from what he had supposed. Instead of joy and feasting and revelry, David ordered mourning and weeping and fasting. The young Amalekite is then brought before David again, and his mouth avowing the guilty deed, he is met with the solemn and searching question, "How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thy hand against the Lord's anointed?" (ver. 14), and immediately by the king's command he was slain.

Let us remark that although this Amalekite did not actually put an end to King Saul, he shows clearly by the part that he acts before David that he would have done it to secure his own advantage. And you, dear unsaved reader, may think that because you were not among those who cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him! His blood be upon us and upon our children," that therefore the guilt of the rejection and death of Christ is not yours. But you and I by nature have hearts that would have acted in an exactly similar manner had we been there at the time. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God (Rom. viii. 7). The voice of the husbandmen when the Son was sent, "This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours" (Mark xii. 7), would have been *our* voice; indeed all classes of Jew and Gentile were represented in condemning Christ. God has reversed this unholy sentence, and has raised Him from the dead. The resurrection is thus spoken of as an "assurance" that God will *judge* the world in righteousness (Acts xvii. 31).

Reader, the world is an Aceldama, a field of blood, to the eye of God. The voice of the blood of Christ we may well say crieth unto God from the ground. It now speaks to the repentant

sinner who endorses God's righteous act in raising Christ "better things than that of Abel," for it speaks of eternal redemption (Heb. ix. 12, xii. 24). "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." To refuse to listen will be to be brought before a greater than David, and from Him to hear those awful words, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee;" "Thy blood be upon thy head, for thy mouth hath testified against thee saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed" (Luke xix. 22; 2 Sam. i. 16).

F. L.

Have You a Father?

"They are all gone aside."—PS. xv. 3.

"Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee."

—ISA. xliv. 22.

"He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my Father."

—PS. lxxxix. 26.

SUFFERING and misery are the lot of mankind. Even our poets sing to us of "the orphanage of earth."

Faded flowers, autumn leaves that carpet the ground, heart-rending farewells marking the departure of train and steamer—these are the echoes we hear on every hand, telling of distress and disappointment.

And yet the counsels of God divulge quite another picture—even an enduring spring-time of “natural affection” that nothing should disturb.

But “they are all gone aside,” they have turned away from happiness. Man has severed his link with a beneficent God, and is lost on a troubled sea. Instead of attaining to the independence he sought, he has found himself at the mercy of “the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves” (Ps. cvii. 26, 27). Had he only remained obedient, his lot would have been a joyful one on the “mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense.”

Where are *you*, reader? Perhaps you hardly know how to answer this question, so let me do it for you. If you have not heard with the ear, and listened from the heart to the voice which calls, “Return,” you are still among those who have “gone aside,” you are like an abandoned orphan; a pitiful lot indeed! Who will come to your aid? The sword is suspended over your head, and no kind father is at hand to ward off the blow.

Listen, then, to the account of one who had a kindred experience. Last year a young girl was suddenly condemned by the physicians to suffer

a terrible operation. Lest she should be unduly alarmed, she was, however, kept in ignorance of her fate until the last moment, and her family invented excuse after excuse to explain her removal to the town where the famous surgeon resided. Believing that she was only there to be near her grandmother, the poor child offered no resistance until the moment came for her removal to the hospital. Then her terror knew no bounds, communicated itself to all around her, and unnerved every one. But suddenly, to the surprise of all, she became calm and even smiling. What did it all mean? Outside the door, she had heard—*her father's voice!* Unable to reach her sooner, he had just arrived to be present at the operation, and she had recognised his voice. "Oh, I'm not afraid now, my father is there," she had exclaimed in rapture. "Do what you like, father is here!" And as under the influence of the soporific, she became unconscious, she whispered, "What a boon to have a father!" How many times this has been repeated since her restoration to health it would be difficult to say; the memory of the agony is swallowed up in blissful remembrance of the value of a father in danger's hour.

And you, unhappy one, "turned aside" from

an eternal Father, and with no protection from the fate awaiting you, a fate far more serious than an operation which *may* be successful? There is no uncertainty about the *death* to which you are condemned. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Yes, death is before you even as the operation was awaiting Louisa. "And after this the judgment." But listen : As surely as she heard her father's voice—a life-giving voice to her—so surely may you hear the word "Return" uttered by a divine voice—the *Father* who seeks you in order to save you. "Return . . . for I have redeemed thee," "not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot ; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter i. 19, 20). "Return," then, without doubt or fear, for the Saviour has said, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." "Return" to infinite grace, to a perfect work accomplished for the sinner, and then you will reply, "Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation."

"There's not a craving in the heart
He does not meet and still ;
There's not a wish the heart can have
Which He does not fulfil."

"He is Coming."

ON a wall of the room in which I am writing, hangs a picture which has often arrested the eye. It depicts a lake surrounded by snow-capped mountains glistening in the sun; one or two barks are sailing on its waters; while on the shore an old castle peeps out between some poplar trees.

Less than a month ago a Christian entered the room; he, too, was attracted by the painting, not because of its beauty, but on account of its associations, for the old castle belonged to the village in which he had lived as a boy. "I was born there twice," he said; and the following account of his second birth, given as nearly as possible in his own words, may interest my readers.

"One fine summer day," he said, "about sixty years ago, I was sitting on the doorstep of my father's house, basking in the sunshine. I cannot have been more than seven years old, yet I remember well the surpassing beauty of the scene—the deep colour of the lake—the brilliant blue of the sky—the dazzling whiteness of the

snowy mountains — the gorgeous tints of the landscape. I enjoyed it all with the happiness of a child. But as I gazed upwards I suddenly perceived something moving at a great height, far up in the sky, almost as if in the clouds, yet it seemed to be slowly, very slowly, descending towards me. It was so far away that I could not distinguish what it was, and like a flash the thought came, 'It's the Lord Jesus! He is coming, and I am not ready.'

"My mother was a Christian, and had taught me from the Scriptures that the Lord Jesus might come at any moment.

"Filled with terror, I sprang to my feet and rushed into the barn, closing the door behind me. Throwing myself on a large heap of hay, I buried my face in my hands, and cried between my sobs, 'Lord, save me; I am lost; pardon my sins; Lord, save me.' For a quarter of an hour I cried thus in an agony of fear. All was silent outside, and as I listened I said to myself, 'What can be happening? What is it? Oh, if only the Lord has not come?' My heart was beating violently, and I trembled all over, and strained my ears to listen for some sound. There was none, and as the silence continued I began really to hope that after all the Lord had not come, so summoning

my courage, I crept on tiptoe to the door. But just as I was about to open it I heard a noise of many feet rushing past, and quite distinctly the words reached me, twice repeated, 'He* has come down behind the castle; he has come down behind the castle.' Ah! I thought, it is actually true, the Lord *has* come, and I shall be left behind, and once more I threw myself on the heap of hay and cried with redoubled energy, 'Lord, save me; forgive me, O Lord; have mercy on me.' My heart beat faster than ever, and all hope was gone.

"For many minutes I reiterated my cries for mercy, not daring to raise my head. When I did, all was again silent outside, so once more I ventured on tiptoe to the door, and slowly opening it, I looked out into the old familiar street. All was as usual, and with a sigh of intense relief I stepped out, and soon learned that it was a balloon which had been the immediate cause of my terror, and that it had descended behind the castle.

"But it had been God's way of speaking to me, and His work had begun in my soul. From that day I date my conversion. I became a child of

* *N.B.*—In French the same pronoun is used for "he" and "it."

God, but it was only some years later that one morning, as I was walking to the vineyard, I really found everlasting peace."

Dear reader, so great was the anguish of that little boy, that sixty years have not sufficed to efface it from his memory. Grown up now into an elderly man, the whole scene is as vivid to him as if it had only happened yesterday, but he can thank God that if the Lord Jesus came to-day to fetch His own, he would no longer have to flee in terror from His presence, but would rise up with joy to meet Him in the air.

And now let me ask you, what are *your* feelings after reading the foregoing account? That child had one quarter or perhaps half an hour of agony, and even then he cherished a faint hope that there was still time for the Lord to save him. But what could equal your anguish and despair if in one moment of time your last chance of salvation were gone, and you entered upon an *eternity* of misery. The Bible says, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the *last* trump, for the trumpet *shall* sound," "the Lord Himself *shall* descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God." It will be useless then to cry for mercy, for the door will be for ever closed

against you, and your doom of everlasting misery in company with the devil and his angels will be sealed. I entreat you to think of it, and to let this incident be a warning voice to you, not to trifle with your *eternal welfare*.

You may perhaps be one of those who say, “We’ve been told so often that the Lord is coming, but it never happens; we can wait a little longer, and be saved like so many on our deathbed.” You forget that the Lord Jesus has only delayed His coming out of longsuffering to poor sinners, not willing that any should perish. He is “not slack concerning His promise”; He is waiting in grace for you to repent and come to Him in all your guilt and wretchedness. His heart is yearning over you, but the day will surely come when He will rise up and shut to the door, and woe betide you then if you are left to stand outside.

Let me once more ask you, if the Lord came to-day, would you be among those who will be terror-stricken at being left behind, and not only terror-stricken, but filled with bitter remorse at all their lost opportunities; or would you go up with joy and gladness to meet your Lord in the air, and to be for ever with Him in the Father’s house, there to praise Him with all the redeemed

multitude who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? "The coming of the Lord draweth *nigh*."

LORD, our hearts are burning
For the glorious day,
When, at Thy returning,
All shall own Thy sway.
Chains shall break before Thee,
Mighty King of kings,
Angels will adore Thee,
While creation sings.

Tender loving Saviour,
Lamb that once was slain,
Saints will through Thy favour
Never weep again.
Gently Thou wilt lead them
Where the river flows,
On its banks to feed them
In divine repose.

Prince of life and glory,
Shine before our eyes,
And let Calvary's story
Sound through earth and skies ;
Lamb of God, receive us
To yon peaceful shore ;
Come again, Lord Jesus,
Reign for evermore.

Extracts from an Old Letter.

HERE is a letter yellow with age. It was taken out of an old-fashioned desk, in a still more ancient cupboard.

It is from a mother to her son, aged nineteen, and is dated January 6th, 1825. It was written in the days when there was little gospel preaching to the class to which this lady belonged, and when tracts and penny Testaments were unknown; but in spite of all that, God was true to His word, and "he that seeketh findeth" is exemplified here. The first object of the letter was to inform the son of the death of a young relative about his own age, and then the anxious mother sought to arouse him to a sense of the uncertainty of life, a topic to which *we* may well take heed.

"You will have heard e'er this reaches you of the severe loss this family has sustained in poor *young A*—. He met with a severe fall, . . . and expired on Wednesday. Poor Lord A— was sent for express, but was not in time to see his dear son alive. . . . I cannot compare my

grief with those whose nearer affinity to him rendered him still dearer, but I assure you I am much afflicted. . . . Oh, my son, what trials we are all called to endure in this world of misery ! But if these trials are made a *right use* of, they will bring us to God. I hope this will be the effect upon his brother, and may I not hope that such an event may have its due weight upon your mind, my child ? The Almighty sometimes takes these means of showing *to the young* that *they* are not safe from His powerful hand any more than the old, in order that they, too, may *prepare* for death. This lovely boy was in all the bloom of health and youth this day month. I cannot express how this event has brought my thoughts to my own dear boys, so nearly his age. What should I do if any of you should be cut off with as little thought as he was ! Let me beseech of you to take this subject into your *most earnest consideration*. Let a mother's prayers be heard—listen to the voice of a blessed Saviour who is 'more ready to hear than we are to pray.' Let me never have the bitter pangs for the soul of a child of mine that I have for his. I think *that* would kill me ! Indeed, my son, it may appear nothing in health to put off the day of serious thought, but you *see*

the uncertainty of life even to the youngest. The Almighty sends these afflictions as a kind Father to awaken and rouse the minds of other *young* people, to force them to see an *instance* of His power if they will but make use of the warning voice.

“W—— is deeply impressed with this blow—he says that henceforth he shall feel differently to what he has done, and that he shall begin to prepare his mind for any change at any age—he sees that death does not only overtake the *prepared and the aged*, but the *young and unthinking*! Surely it is worth a consideration that there is an ETERNITY of happiness or misery for us all. It is true that Scripture tells us that the right road is full of difficulty, that it is a narrow path, but the way to destruction is broad and easy. Oh! then, my beloved child, *choose* the right road. Say your prayers, read your Bible. (the New Testament in particular), then you will find comfort and direction for every situation in life. It must comfort you to peruse the Scriptures, for there you will find that there is forgiveness for your mother who confesses her *great sins*, and there read that our Saviour ‘came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’ He says so Himself,

and that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance. Surely these comforting promises must give you joy, my child, if you believe me to be sincerely penitent, which I really believe I am, but I must add that it is not *any one sin alone* that I repent of; I consider that my *daily omissions* alone are enough to shut me out of heaven if it were not for the blessed atonement of our Saviour. He came 'to seek and to save that which was lost,' and *He will save me*. Let any person compare his own thoughts with what they should be—that is enough to condemn him—all is sin, but there is mercy. 'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins'—but He also says, 'Whosoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in His own glory and in His Father's.' Yet how much ashamed we all are of any little feelings of religion that we may possess.

"Forgive me, my dear son, but this is not an opportunity for *me* to neglect. Oh, that dear A—— had listened to the little efforts I was ever able to make to draw his mind to religion, but I never could, and he died without the name of

God in his mouth or a prayer passing his lips !
I will now cease, for I must cease."

Thank God that we can add that the recipient of this letter was given to his mother's prayers. He became an earnest Christian in his youth, and joined his prayers to his mother's, both being answered in a striking way by the conversion of most of the family.

* * *

Acts Ten, Forty-three.

AT the close of a gospel service recently, where the power of God had been felt in no small degree, I entered into conversation with a young man of a very refined and gentlemanly appearance.

Quite a number had been visibly affected, and not a few had apparently decided to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts, and to confess Him with their lips.

Noticing that this young man lingered as if loath to leave a spot where the Spirit of God was producing such blessed results, I inquired how matters stood with him. He was not saved—he

owned it frankly. Did he not realise his danger? Oh, yes. He owned that it was all true: that he needed a Saviour, that he might have that Saviour on the spot: that he need not leave the hall without Him—all this he readily admitted.

"Then will you not trust Him to-night, before you leave this place?" I asked.

"No, thank you, not to-night," he replied, and that in the most polite and courteous manner.

"But why not? There is no reason on God's side why you should not be saved. The atoning work has been finished on the cross, and the Lord Jesus Christ is a Saviour both able and willing to save you *now*, straight away. Besides, there is danger in delay; you don't know what a day may bring forth; you may not have another chance;" and so I kept urging him to decision, there and then.

"No, thank you, not to-night. Please do not ask me to decide this to-night. I don't want to be unkind or offensive; I quite appreciate your kindness; I hope you understand me, it is from no motive of resentment, but please do not ask me to decide to-night;" and so he went on.

It was a strange case, and not knowing what next to say, I ventured, "Isn't your mother saved?"

With this, the dear lad fairly broke down, and commenced sobbing like a child. "No," he gasped out, "mother's not saved—father is. Oh, do pray for mother ; pray for me too."

Back of all this there lay a history which I did not feel justified in reviving, but there was a touch of genuine human feeling which could not fail to strike a chord of sympathy.

"Well," I said, "the Lord knows all about that, and if you were only saved yourself you would be a help to your mother. But tell me, *why* do you not want to decide to-night?"

By this time the hour was advancing, and having left the hall, we were walking down the street together. "I once made a profession," he said, "about two years ago. It lasted for a little while, but I went back completely, and I don't want to repeat this again."

"I understand that," said I, "and I give you credit for a perfectly right and just feeling. You do not want to bring dishonour upon the Lord, and discredit upon the gospel—isn't that so?"

"Yes," said he, "if I were to say I was saved, nobody would believe me."

"What made you think you were saved two years ago?" I asked.

"I had been attending some revival meetings, and felt very happy."

"Was that all? Supposing I had met you two years ago, and asked you upon what your hope of heaven rested, what would you have replied?"

"Oh, I felt very happy. I was sure I was all right."

"But, my dear fellow, what scripture had you to base your faith on?"

"Oh, I hadn't any scripture particular," said he.

"Then I understand it all now," said I; "you were trusting in your feelings; these were merely passing emotions. In order to satisfy the demands of your own conscience in view of judgment to come, and in order to silence the attacks of Satan, the great adversary of your soul, you must have the Word of God to rest on. One line of that blessed, living Word of God will silence Satan, and produce a peace and rest of soul which all the happy feelings in the world could never give, and, thank God, which all the dismal feelings could never rob you of. I can tell you one verse—there are multitudes, but this one will suffice for the moment—which can give you assurance if you just simply believe it as God's own announcement to yourself."

The hour was late, and my young friend, hurriedly taking his watch from his pocket, said, "I can't wait, I have only just time to catch the last train. Where is the verse?"

As he was running down the street I called after him,

"Acts ten, forty-three."

From the distance he replied, "Acts ten, forty-three—thank you so much."

We have never met again, and in all probability shall never do so until we meet around the Lamb. There was such a hearty ring about "Acts ten, forty-three—*thank you so much*," that I cannot doubt if I had been able to look in upon that young man before he turned in for the night, I should have found him reading attentively:—

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

And now, reader, will you not do the same? Perhaps you may have been committing the same mistake as our young friend. You, too, may have been trusting to your feelings instead of in the Word of the living God. Sometimes you have felt bright, and then you thought that all was well; more often you have felt down,

and then you feared that you were deceiving yourself. You, like this young man, have been hitherto on the wrong line. Give it up and turn to God's Word. See what He says: "To Him give all the prophets witness." Who is this "Him"? Is it not the Lord Jesus Christ, "whom they slew and hanged on a tree," but whom "God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly"? (Acts x. 34-48). Read the whole passage attentively. All the prophets of the Old Testament bore witness of Him, and the whole Word of God is pledged to the truth of what follows, that "through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."

Can anything be plainer? Christ has died and has risen again from the dead; God Himself has raised Him—there is no doubt of this, "witnesses chosen before of God" have borne their testimony to this greatest and most certain fact in history. None but those who wilfully and foolishly close their eyes to the plainest and most convincing evidence can doubt that Christ is risen from the dead.

"God raised Him up the third day."

So fully and perfectly had God been glorified by that stupendous work of atonement wrought out at Calvary, that He Himself has raised

Christ from the dead ; and He now declares that
 “ through His name

whosoever believeth in Him

shall receive remission of sins.”

Reader, do you believe in Him ? In your head of course you do, for in that sense there is not a demon in hell that does not believe (Jas. ii. 19). But do you honestly in your heart believe in Him ? Do you believe that Jesus at the cross was charged with your guilt, that He there was wounded for your transgressions, and that He there suffered for your sins ? If you do, then the whole testimony of Scripture, the united witness of God’s own Word, combines to establish the fact that your sins *are forgiven*.

Is not this better than mere happy feelings ? Is not faith in the plain statement of God Himself a firmer foundation to rest on ? is it not a rock that cannot be moved ?

The believer in Christ can look up into heaven and say, “ As long as God’s word is settled in heaven (Ps. cxix. 89), as long as God’s Son is seated on God’s throne (Acts x. 43), as long as it remains impossible for God to lie (Heb. vi. 18), *just so long is it absolutely certain that my sins are forgiven.*”

Will not this assurance of forgiveness produce

happy feelings? Certainly it will. The one who, with humble faith and calm serenity, can add his "Amen" to those blessed words put into his lips by the Spirit of God:—

"In whom we have redemption through His (Christ's) blood, the forgiveness of sins,"

can open his mouth in praise "giving thanks unto the Father" (Col. i. 12-14).

Then no longer trust in your feelings, but trust in God's Word. Reverse the order—instead of feel and believe, let it be

believe and feel.

Many other scriptures might be referred to in proof of what we have here sought to lay before our readers, but we leave to the earnest inquirer the happy task of searching them out for themselves.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

A. H. B.

"To God from Idols."

MANY years ago I was told by a lady of much refinement and considerable means, how the Lord had turned her from the gay frivolities of this world, to trust in the living God through

Jesus. The record of this may help one similarly situated, or others.

This lady's well-appointed home was handsomely furnished, and with a full complement of servants and carriage at her command, her life was easy, so far as exemption from toil was concerned. Her husband was kind and much attached, while affectionate sons and daughters were growing up around her, thus bringing much natural pleasure to the heart.

God, in His mercy, then stepped in on that worldly scene, and in His own perfect ways brought a blessing in disguise. For there came a time, when of that large family one and all were laid aside with scarlet fever. They were carefully tended by a skilful doctor, so that, with the blessing of God, all recovered with the exception of one, a girl who had been long delicate. She was then just entering her teens, and was somewhat deaf. No wonder then that she had become her mother's special care, and also might have been justly called her favourite. That dear mother, however, was so affectionate and kind that she could only be loving to all.

God touched a tender spot, that her thoughts might be raised to Him in the sore distress of her bereaved heart, when her beloved child was

taken. Alone, by the corpse, she sat all night in an agony of mind, only broken in upon, towards morning, as her eye lighted on a Bible in the room.

"Ah!" she thought, taking it up, "if there is comfort anywhere I shall find it here!" In a nervous hap-hazard way she opened the Book at the prophecy of Isaiah ii. 18: "And the idols He shall utterly abolish." "Yes," she exclaimed, "God has taken my idol!" and hard thoughts of the all-wise One filled her mind in her sorrow.

Gradually, however, the light shone in from on high, and this precious soul saw, what in nature's darkness she could not, viz., that she had been found out—"Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. xxxii. 23). "The entrance of Thy words giveth light" (Ps. cxix. 130). Thus had the heart of this suffering worldly mother been detected by the light of God on a page which she might never have scanned but for her bereavement. Her heart's cherished idol had been taken, and she could only own to herself the justice and wisdom of God in this.

"Line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept," became her portion, until she learned from the Scriptures, by the Spirit's teaching, her true state before

God. A sinner needing a Saviour soon found that a gracious Saviour was seeking her. As her understanding thus became enlightened, her heart got a new Object for its adoration. Like Mary of old, she then could say, “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour” (Luke ii. 46, 47).

This was the happy state of that dear soul when I first knew her, and it was her joy to talk with me of our crucified, risen, and returning Saviour. By that short grave, where rested the dust of her beloved child, we spoke together, with full hearts of a love above and beyond that of nature. Now her dust rests there, and her spirit is with the Lord she loved “till He come.”

G. W.

“Under His Wings shalt thou
Trust.”

VERY few brave men would not be willing to admit that they have known what it is to be afraid.

It has been related of one of our soldiers who was sent out with his regiment to

South Africa, that during his first engagement—a terrible one—seeing his comrades falling around him, and knowing that at any moment a bullet might find its billet in him, he threw himself on his face and called aloud on God, “O God, cover my head in the day of battle!” Yet this man was a true Christian, and the “after death” had no terrors for him. God heard him, and made his act the means of bringing other men to fear God; and he will never forget, “Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.”

An American officer was on board an ocean liner. Hearing singing one Sunday he went below and found a man seated at the piano with a few gathered round him, singing—

“Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high!
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last.”

Ah, those lovely words! But the voice—that man’s grand voice—where had he heard it before?

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee !
Leave, ah ! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me !
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring ;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing."

The last two lines brought back the memory. Waiting till the hymn was finished, he accosted the singer. "Pardon me, sir, but were you on *sentry* duty during the war?" he asked, mentioning the time and place. "Yes." Then the questioner related that he too had been in the American War, but on the other side, and he told how on a certain night he had been on duty *scouting*. In the darkness he and his men had got suddenly into the vicinity of a sentry, and had even seen his figure outlined against the sky. "We watched you," he said, "and just as we were about to fire, we heard singing, and paused. You sang the first verse of 'Jesu, Lover of my soul,' then the second verse—but when you came to 'Cover my defenceless head,' I could stand it no longer. 'Guns down, boys; we'll go home,' I said. Do you remember it?" "Yes ;" and then it was the turn of the astonished singer

to relate how on that evening a feeling of darkness and horror had come over him at the thought of his possible danger, and so he had expressed his feelings to God, and *prayed* in the words of the hymn he had sung, though with no knowledge that any one heard him but God. And now this same God had brought these two Christians together to make *one* of them still more aware that we have to do with One who hears and answers prayer, and probably to make *both* increasingly value the covering granted to every saved sinner—a covering such as the prodigal found awaiting him in the “best robe,” for there is a worse danger that we need to hide from than death of the body. Adam and Eve learnt this when as sinners they were afraid to meet God, and so they hid themselves, or tried to do so.

Many years ago a school girl lay on her bed one night. A revival had been going on, and many of her companions had been saved and sheltered by the blood. This one was not sure whether she was or not ; at all events she was very unhappy and felt that God’s eye was upon her, and that He could see her many sins. She could not hide them from Him, and she knew that she could not enter His holy presence if they were upon her.

"Where is the robe to cover,
And hide my sin from Thine eyes?"

A teacher came and sat beside her, and inquired what ailed her. When she found out, she gently whispered, "He hath *clothed* me with the garments of salvation, He hath *covered* me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. lxi. 10). This was enough; the school girl saw (though perhaps *we* should not now choose that verse to teach it) that Christ was her righteousness, and that her many sins were covered up from God's eye by Him—they are *really*, we know, blotted out, *gone*. When Christ, the Son of God, was on the cross, God laid our sins on Him (Isa. liii. 6), and He put them away for ever, and then rose from the dead and went up into heaven without them. That night the girl knew that instead of seeing her sins, God saw Jesus, and she felt as if the garments of salvation were all around her.

"Then from the house of His treasures
God brought a robe most fair,
Such raiment of glory and beauty
No angel in heaven might wear."

Yes, only sinners, sinners like the prodigal, can be covered with the "best robe," and if you, dear reader, are weary and burdened with sins, you may now have the "garments," the "robe"

(Isa. lxi. 10), which the Saviour died to purchase for you, and which will endure and hide you when others will be calling to rocks and mountains to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. Oh, beware of putting it off.

“Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin ;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the Fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee ;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.”

H. L. H.

The Poor Wise Man.

(ECCLES. ix. 13-18.)

THERE are many wonderful things told us in the Bible, and often put in such simple words that a child has no difficulty in understanding them.

I wonder how many of the readers of this little magazine have considered the simple yet wonderful story told us in these few verses in Ecclesiastes. God is very gracious to us, and in His Word has caused to be recorded these

narratives, that they might be like pictures from which we may learn great and important truths.

We read in the fourteenth verse that "there was a little city, and few men within it." Now, what is that the picture of? I can fancy I hear some one say, "Well, I am sure it cannot mean this world, because it says a little city and a few men within it, and this world is very big, and a great number of people in it." Nevertheless I think it does mean the world, and when we compare our earth with the other worlds that are circling round our sun, and that shine so brightly on a clear night, which we often hear people speaking of as little stars, but many of which are really planets, worlds a great deal bigger than our earth, we must own that the earth on which we live is a very "small city" after all; so I think that we shall not be far wrong if in this little city spoken of in Ecclesiastes we see a picture of our own earth.

And we learn that a "great king came against it." Who could that be? At any rate it is a picture of some one very powerful, and who must have hated the city and the men that dwelt in it very much, or he would not have taken the trouble to "besiege it," and "build great bulwarks against it."

There is only one that hates us and this earth like that, and that one is our great enemy, Satan—a very powerful, cunning, and cruel enemy, and who would have easily overcome us if we had been left to fight against him alone. Oh! dear reader, beware of Satan, and ask God to deliver you from such an enemy, and His Holy Spirit will point you to the One who has overcome him, and who will give you the victory.

“Now there was found in it (the city) a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city.” This surely was just what the city needed, and has there been in the world one that I can recognise as this “poor wise man”? Ah! yes, indeed; who was it that in Isaiah liii. is spoken of as “despised and rejected of men”? It was Jesus, the Son of God and Son of man. Jesus says, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head” (Matt. viii. 20). Yes, dear reader, when Jesus was here He was indeed poor, and we read also the reason why He was poor—and surely such love should break the hardest heart—for it says, “That though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich” (2 Cor. viii. 9). And in Proverbs viii. it

is the same Jesus that is spoken of, and there He is spoken of as Wisdom; so I am sure that this "poor wise man" is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, He who came down to deliver us from the power of Satan. And how did He do it? Look in the Epistle to the Hebrews, for there we read about Jesus again; it says of Him, "That through *death* He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14).

Now, I would speak very personally to *you* who have taken up this magazine, to perhaps just casually glance at what is inside it: Have *you* felt the power of Satan against you; have you felt the power of sin, and longed to be rid of the terrible burden of *your* sins? If so, have you asked in simple faith this wonderful Saviour to deliver you from Satan, and from your sins? If not, go into your own room alone, and pray that simple yet ever effectual prayer of faith, "Lord, save *me*," and He will, for God cannot deny Himself, and Jesus has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

W. E. W.

Wanted—A Home.

SUCH is the title of a book which caught the writer's eye in the catalogue of a circulating library ; the title, no doubt, of a novel — one of the innumerable volumes of fictitious literature by means of which "the god of this world" seeks to engage and "blind the minds of those who believe not" at the present day.

"Wanted—a home," the need, surely, of every sinner out of Christ ; your need, reader, if you have not believed the gospel—that wonderful message of love and grace concerning God's well-beloved Son, Christ Jesus, the Lord. There is a home prepared in His Father's house for all who believe in Him. You may be like the wandering prodigal in the far country, either wasting your substance in riotous living, or poor and in want, but, nevertheless, away from home. "All that is in the world" (the "far country"), "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16). If you do not feel actually in want now, you will

ere long, for "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof" (1 John ii. 17).

The wages of the citizen of the far country (Satan resembles that citizen) cannot satisfy; in fact, the "wages of sin is death," so that your case is hopeless—you are not only away from home, but you are lost. We would then earnestly direct you to the Word, and ask you to read of the delight of all heaven in the home-coming of one repentant prodigal (Luke xv.). "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." You have sinned against heaven and in God's sight, and are not worthy to be called His son, but He has made provision by which any broken and contrite sinner may be forgiven and brought with joy and *feasting to the Father's house*. "It is meet that we should make merry and be glad," we hear the Father saying, "for this My son was dead and is alive again, was lost, and is found."

Perhaps you will ask, like Nicodemus of old, "How can these things be?" How is it a righteous God can bless the ungodly sinner who comes to Him in this way? Because God's righteous claims on account of sin have been perfectly met. The Lord Jesus Christ has been

here as a man. He came to do God's will. He came to restore to God the glory, due to Him alone, which we as sinners had sold into the hands of the enemy. He came, also, to reveal to a world of ruined sinners the wonderful fact that "God is love"—

"Came from His bosom, knoweth all
That in that bosom lies ;
And came to earth to make it known,
That we might share its joys."

In coming to do the will of God, the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His most precious death, wiped off the stain which the enemy sought to cast upon the eternal glory of God ; and God has been glorified as to the whole question of sin. A full testimony has been given at the cross as to God's thoughts about sin, and there it was shown that no trace of sin can ever enter the divine presence. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity. Sin, wherever found, must be met by divine judgment : all this comes out in the cross. It is there that sin was fully atoned for. It was there the Lord Jesus took the sinner's place, sustained the judgment, paid the penalty, answered every question, died, and vanquished every foe, and rising from the dead He has ascended into heaven and taken His seat on the

throne of God, where He is crowned with glory and honour, as the divine and glorious Accomplisher of the entire work of redemption. God can now come out in richest grace to all; and all who believe will have their portion with the Lord Jesus in the Father's house for ever.

Listen to the words of love and comfort which were addressed by the Saviour to His own whilst in this world: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . In My Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John xiv. 1-3). Are you in want of a home? Here you have it. Will you not come home now? The Father's welcome, the kiss of forgiveness, the best robe—all that He has to bestow—present and eternal joy may be yours now if you but bow to His blessed word.

"Oh what a home! but such His love
That He must bring us there
To fill that home, to be with Him
And all His glory share.
The Father's house, the Father's heart,
All that the Son is given
Made ours—the objects of His love,
And He, our joy in heaven."

Knocking.

(REV. iii. 20.)

LO ! He stands—the blessed Saviour—
Knocking, knocking at thy door ;
While He lingers, open quickly,
Lest indeed He knock no more.

Thinkest thou, apart from Jesus,
Thou art rich and needest nought ?
“Wretched,” “blind” and “naked,” art thou,
When of Him *all* might be bought.

He it is who bids thee purchase
Gold of Him and raiment white,
Eyesalve too, that in thy blindness
He may make thy darkness light.

Should the Lord soon cease His knocking,
Should the Saviour go away,
Oh ! how awful to discover,
'Tis too late—He could not stay.

When those solemn words are spoken,
“Let the righteous righteous be,”
“Let the filthy still be filthy,”
Then *which* will be said of thee ?

Now He knocketh at thy chamber,
Now His blood can cleanse thy sin ;
If thou dost not open to Him,
Nevermore will He “come in.”

Reliance and Assurance.

TRAVELLING one morning to King's Cross, my only companion was a very old gentleman. His snow-white hair and tottering frame told the unmistakable story that he was nearing the end of the journey of life. The kind expression of his face drew one's heart towards him, and remembering that every soul born into the world is born to live for ever, I longed to know if he were *sure* that his sins were forgiven, that Christ was his Saviour and heaven his home.

Leaning towards him, I remarked, "You are very old."

"Yes," he replied with a pleasant smile, "I am ninety-four."

"Ninety-four years old," said I; "that is a very long time to live in this world, and it is certain you will not be here another ninety-four years. Can you tell me where you are going when you leave this world?"

Eternity with all its realities seemed to flash before him as he slowly said—

"I have THE FAITH OF RELIANCE, but not

THE FAITH OF ASSURANCE."

His *words* proved that he had not been indifferent, and the *manner* in which they were spoken declared how he longed for the *assurance* the gospel brings.

He had seen himself a sinner in the sight of God, knew that only the work of Christ could save him, but like many others to-day, had been taught to be "always at the cross," and that no one could be *sure* in this world; that "it is presumption to know" and "humility to hope," for all must wait until the judgment day.

Important as it is for the eye of faith to be "at the cross," *i.e.*, to see Christ as a sacrifice for sin, yet it is not well to always stay there, for Christ is now in heaven, and it is to Him God would direct every eye.

He came from heaven. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). He went to the cross and *finished* the work of redemption, shedding His own precious blood which "cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). That precious blood of atonement met all the claims of the throne of God,

against whom we have sinned ; it also meets the deep, deep need of the sinner.

It needed a *man* to die for men, but the Scripture declares He was more than *man*. He was God, the Son—hence the eternal efficacy of His blood. God raised Him from among the dead, and exalted Him to His own right hand, a “Prince and a Saviour,” and He is now “preaching peace by Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all.”

On the cross He took my sins and bore the judgment due to me, but He is now in heaven without them. Where then are my sins? The answer is : “I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins” (Isa. xliv. 22). Christ “was delivered *for* our offences,” that we might be delivered *from* them, “and was raised again for our justification.” “Therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. iv. 25 ; v. 1), for He has “made peace through the blood of His cross” (Col. i. 20). God points to Christ in glory, who finished the work which was needed by man, a work accepted by God, and which saves the poor sinner. The consequence of believing is, “their sins and iniquities will I remember no more” (because they were

laid upon Christ). "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation (because Christ came into condemnation for him); but IS (not shall be) passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that YE MAY KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life" (1 John v. 13).

To rely on His work alone for salvation, and then say we are not *sure* of having been forgiven, is to call in question the value of the atoning work of Christ, and to deny the abiding efficacy of His precious blood. The moment I lay my hand upon His sacred head (Lev. i. 4), *i.e.*, accept Him by faith, all the value of His work is put to my account, and I stand before God accepted in all the preciousness of Christ. Gōd lavishes His blessing upon every believer according to His own appreciation of the Person and work of His beloved Son. Measure out to me the value to God of that sacrifice, and I can then measure my acceptance—this we can never do, for God alone can sound the depths of Calvary and tell the value of that work; but in the presence of such amazing love we can, like one of old,

exclaim : " What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me ? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord " (Ps. cxvi. 12, 13). And with a joyful, satisfied heart, at peace with God, we can return " thanks unto God for His unspeakable gift " (2 Cor. ix. 15).

A. T. P.

Prayer Answered.

A FRIEND of ours, Mr F——, was wintering abroad for his health. He had the blessing of souls at heart, and the service of his Master was dear to him.

His spare strength was employed in seeking out those to whom he might speak of Christ, and he soon came across Mr S——, a dear old Christian who was glad of some one to sit beside him and commune of better things. On one occasion Mr F—— found him full of joy at the receipt of a letter from his son in Australia, which told of his recent conversion. For this the aged father had long prayed, and he was deeply moved at this happy answer to his

prayers. Mr F—— was able to tell him much about the neighbourhood in which his son resided, having visited the country, and he promised that he would himself write to the son. This he did. He gave him news of his father and friends, and especially pointed out to him from Scripture the wonderful bond of union there is in Christ, which, though at a distance of twelve thousand miles, could draw hearts together.

Before many months had elapsed, dear old Mr S—— had departed to be with his Saviour; Mr F—— had left the country, and yet no answer had come from the absent son. A year later the following letter arrived, which is here transcribed in the hope that it may encourage others to pray for their unconverted relatives, whether far or near; to show, too, the help that a letter written to distant and often lonely Christians may be.

“DEAR FRIEND,—Your kind letter of 2nd March 1894 is before me while I write. The feelings I experienced on receipt of it were mixed, surprise and pleasure being uppermost—pleasure that a stranger should take such a kindly interest in my father, and surprise that

the fact of my being a Christian should so interest that stranger, twelve thousand miles away, as to induce him to write to me in such a brotherly spirit to encourage me in my new-found joy. It made me think what a strong bond of love true brotherhood in Christ was, that it extends all round the world. It is not confined to the narrow limits of this place, but is universal.

"And how have I returned your confidence and kindness? By not answering your letter.

"This is scarcely what you would be led to expect from one who professes to do the will of God. I will not make any excuses, as I feel I should only be insulting you and Jesus, whom I have learned to love. He knows my heart, I cannot deceive Him. I have asked God to forgive me, and I now ask your forgiveness for His sake.

"Reading your letter has made me think how careful a Christian should be to lead a consistent life. On the strength of my letter to my father you take it for granted that what I stated therein was true, hence your letter to me, and I, while praying God to help me to lead a life in accordance with my profession as a Christian, am guilty of the very sin I have been struggling most

against—inconsistency—by not answering your letter. . . . I am no scholar, but I feel that you, having Jesus in your heart, will be able to understand me. . . .

“Since receiving your letter my dear old father has gone to join my mother—their spirits are with the Lord, where they are waiting for me. It is such a pleasure to me now that I was able to tell him before he died that I had accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, that I had been born again, and that their prayers for me had been answered. I know it was a comfort to him to know that their children had begun to come into Christ’s fold. God will answer true and faithful prayer, and I believe it is only a matter of time before my brothers and sisters will be converted. God in His mercy has taken father and mother, but has left me to pray for them. Will you, dear friend, join your prayers to mine for them, that they may soon be led to accept Christ, and for myself that I may be kept in the simple faith of Jesus Christ? I am so glad that I know that Jesus is mine and I am His *for ever*, for He says, ‘None shall pluck them out of My hand.’ I tell you it’s a grand feeling to feel quite safe as to the future. I used not to like to think of eternity, and if it came across my mind

I used to dismiss it as quickly as possible, but now things are different, and I have lost all that uneasy feeling about death. I know now that if Jesus should come to-night, my wife and I would be glad to welcome our Saviour. Yes! my wife is also a Christian now. She was always a good woman as the world calls good, but she was an *honest* unbeliever, I mean a sceptic. You would be surprised how many young colonials, if not altogether sceptical, in their hearts look upon religion in the same way as they look upon socialism. There is none of the reverence we find in the old country. Such was my wife, but now by the grace of God she too has come to acknowledge Jesus Christ as her Saviour and Master. I may tell you one day how it happened. God's ways are wonderful. People say miracles do not happen nowadays—well, perhaps not; but I know in my short experience of Christian life, we have had some remarkable answers to prayer. I suppose the world would call it a coincidence.

“Dear friend, I must thank you most sincerely for your kindness to my father. I may never be able to thank you personally, but I can pray for you.

“I must tell you something about ourselves. . . .

We have more than enough . . . but we have something far above all earthly riches, an indisputable title to eternity with Jesus Christ. . . . May God bless and keep us.—Yours in Christ,
“J. S.”

Here ends this interesting letter, which shows how God by His Spirit can lead His children into the enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel wherever they may be found. “He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (John xvi. 14).
M. F. C.

The Serpents of St Lucia.

WHILE cruising in the far west in the year 1883, H.M.S. N—— dropped anchor in the harbour of St Lucia, one of the most beautiful islands in the West Indies. There the orange, lemon, yam, bread fruit, and cocoa nut abound, indeed almost every kind of tropical fruit is found in this pleasant island. When thinking of it one is reminded of the lines referring to the island of Ceylon :

“What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o’er Ceylon’s isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.”

This is sad, but true. Yet this cannot only be said of Ceylon’s isle, but of every spot on earth where beauty magnifies the glory of God. Yes, St Lucia is a lovely island, but on its fair surface thrive the most venomous reptiles that the earth produces. They are found in the grass, in the paths, in the trees, and woe to the man or woman who walks out of the town after sunset.

There are flying serpents too, so called because of their habit of twisting their tails around the small branches of trees, whence they drop upon their victim, driving in their poisonous fangs. Others again await their prey coiled up in the long grass.

But the species of which I am about to relate a sad incident, with deadly subtlety lies in wait for the poor negro as he toils among the sugar canes. In the shades of evening it frequents the paths by which the labourer returns home after his day’s toil, and springs upon its victim. Death in two hours is the inevitable result. Then it will return on the eighth day to feed on

corruption. How much it resembles that old serpent (the devil) whose fangs dealt death and destruction in Eden's fair garden; the effects of whose poison you and I, reader, inherit in the shape of a fallen nature, of which death and corruption are the result. But blessed be God there is One who has "brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel."

But to proceed: upon one occasion I went on shore to see a dear friend, who related to me the following incident:—

Far from his residence there lived a poor negro with a large family, whose wages for his toil from sunrise to sunset were only seven shillings per week, which in great measure accounts for what happened. When at work in the plantation one day, a large serpent suddenly reared itself and darted at him, but he sprang aside and the snake only succeeded in striking the toe of his boot. Thinking no harm had been done, he hastened home. Soon symptoms of snake poison appeared, and he died, none suspecting the true cause of death. In these islands the negroes are very poor, and in this case, there being but this one pair of boots in the family, they went to the next who took the breadwinner's place, with the same result, until

five or six in the family had succumbed to the deadly poison. 'At last suspicion fell on the boots, and on their being cut to pieces it was discovered that a fang of the serpent had been left in the toe of one, which, protruding far enough to graze the skin, had thus dealt destruction to that family.

And now, dear reader, of what shall I use this as an illustration? We read in Genesis iii. that through the serpent's subtlety our parents fell; henceforth in nature and practice man became a sinful creature alienated from the life of God, and from then until now the myriads who have been born and have passed off the scene, have been exposed to the poison from the fangs of the serpent in Eden. This has been the inheritance of us all. We have a fallen nature. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon *all men*, for that *all have sinned*" (Rom. v. 12). Yes, ye fallen sons of Adam's race, this is our legacy bequeathed from the Fall. But is there no hope? Yes, blessed be God for His unspeakable gift, there is. Oh listen, ye wanderers—listen, you "who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters," ye that fear not the tempest's roar nor

the bursting billows—listen, ye men who plough the mighty deep :—

“**Salvation is of the Lord.**”

The peerless Son of God said when on earth, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that *whosoever* believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John iii. 14, 15). O ye daughters of Eve, ye sons of a fallen race, would you be free and have a portion for your hearts and salvation for your souls? Would you lie down in pastures of peace and be led “the quiet waters by”? Come to Him of whom it is written, “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with *His stripes we are healed*” (Isa. liii.). O ye tempest-tossed mariners who “see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep,” “who reel to and fro, and stagger like drunken men” in the storms of life, come, find rest by faith in the precious blood of Christ, that cleanseth from *all* sin, and learn, in the words of the poet, to say :

“My bark is wafted to the strand
By breath divine,
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine.

One who has known in storms to sail,
I have on board ;
Above the raging of the gale
I hear my Lord.

Safe to the land, safe to the land,
The end is this ;
And then with Him go hand in hand,
Far into bliss."

W. S.



Memories of the Past.

THE world was awake, and the daily toil had started. Men were working on buildings, shops were opened, trains were in motion, and millions of hearts and minds were occupied by this or that as I made my way across the fields to a small cemetery at A—. It had been showery, but on arriving at the place mentioned the sun burst through the clouds and the rain ceased.

The scene of life and activity through which one had just passed was indeed a great contrast to this quiet one. Here was a spot that spoke to one's heart of many who had lived their past in this huge world, and had left it—in other

words, had gone from time into eternity. Within the gates of this cemetery many were now beginning to assemble who seemed not to be sorrowing as they that have no hope, but with quietness and assurance, as they conversed one with the other while awaiting the arrival of one they once knew. To her, though so young, this great change had come—the *call* from time to eternity.

Solemnly the remains of this young woman were carried into a small chapel, and then the silence was broken by the voice of prayer, the prayer of sorrow and joy, showing that the departed one had known the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as her Saviour, and had been cleansed from *all sin* by the precious blood which He shed for sinners. Then came the hymn—

“ We are by Christ redeemed ;
The cost—His precious blood ;
Be nothing by our souls esteemed
Like this great good.
Were the vast world our own,
With all its varied store,
And Thou, Lord Jesus, wert unknown,
We still were poor.”

As we sung these words, bringing before us so vividly our Saviour as the willing victim

bearing our sins, I was overcome at the thought of His sufferings : “ *The cost, His precious blood,*” that which indeed has answered Job’s question, “ How shall a man be just with God ? ”

“ Our earthen vessels break,
The world itself grows old ;
But Christ our precious dust will take
And freshly mould.
He’ll give these bodies vile
A fashion like His own ;
He’ll bid the whole creation smile,
And hush its groan.”

I felt how true this was. The thing which so occupies our hearts and minds is wearing old and will soon pass away, but “ He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” On the other hand they who neglect so great salvation shall not escape, but will have to meet God in judgment.

“ Thus far, by grace preserved,
Each moment speeds us on ;
The crown and kingdom are reserved
Where Christ is gone.
When cloudless morning shines,
We shall His glory share ;
In pleasant places are the lines,
The home how fair.”

And thus it is, dear friend, that time is speeding on, and the coming of that One who died

for sinners is drawing nigh. He will take all that trust in Him to His Father's house on high.

“To Him our weakness clings
Through tribulation sore,
And seeks the covert of His wings
Till all be o'er.
And when we've run the race,
And fought the faithful fight,
We hope to see Him face to face
With saints in light.”

After lowering into the grave the body of this dear one who had left this world to go to be with her Lord and Saviour, this little company dispersed to their several abodes, and I also returned home with my sorrow and joy—joy that I knew Him too.

G. L.

“No Right of Way.”

THE above is the heading of a placard to warn pedestrians, that “Any one found trespassing will be prosecuted.”

A little farther on there can also be seen the following notice, “This is a public thoroughfare.” These are two totally contrary

statements, and it was this which struck the writer, and suggested this short paper.

Scripture frequently speaks of two ways, nay, we might say three, for Genesis iii. clearly reveals that there is a "No right of way," but it became so consequent on transgression. There had been a warning written over "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" to this effect—

"Thou shalt not eat of it. The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17).

We all know that Adam did not give heed to this warning, and in consequence was driven out of the garden. How solemn! Surrounded with every conceivable blessing, able to enjoy intercourse with the Lord God, Adam forfeited everything through disobedience, fell from the position in which God had set him in innocence, and by choosing the evil learnt the difference between good and evil; powerlessness to do good, together with every propensity for evil, were acquired, and at the same time the whole race was involved in utter ruin. God had to say, "Where art thou?" showing his complete alienation from God. Once outside the garden, Adam was unable to re-enter it, for "No right of way" was written there—God placing at the east end

of the Garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life (Gen. iii. 24). How that sums up our position before God! Oh! my beloved reader, if that be true, and God's immutable Word proclaims it, we are irrevocably lost, yes, lost! Moreover, without the interposition of God, we must for ever have remained so.

Do you say, Cannot I do something to recover myself? Yes, if you can pass that flaming sword which turns every way. Did you try, it would be inevitable death. Not one has ever passed that way yet, nor ever will. It is closed "for ever." What a tremendous problem to face. Man cannot solve it: he is at an awful distance from God, lost, without hope in the world (Eph. ii. 12), and powerless to remedy matters. This is solemn!

But here is something that bows the heart in adoration and worship. God acts! God so loved, that He gave His only begotten Son. Christ declares Himself to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John xiv. 6), and says that "him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). He has borne all the consequences of sin, has measured the awful distance between you and God—has been down

into death (the pathway of which you have been treading these weary years)—and He has through death opened up the Path of Life leading right into the Presence of God, where are pleasures and fulness of joy for evermore.

And now it is the precious portion and joy of believers to know that because the Blessed Saviour has opened up the Path of Life we have the “Right of Way.” This is indeed (speaking reverently) a public thoroughfare, for all who come believing will be received. But, mark you, it is believing the Lord Jesus *personally*, for He says, “I am the Way,” as also, “I am the Door.” What infinite love on the part of God, who spared not His own Son, but FREELY delivered Him up. Who can measure the love of that *precious Saviour, who knew all that He would have to go through, in order to make “the way”* for us to be brought home from that terrible distance, out of that awful position and condition, exposed to the righteous judgment of a Holy God. He bore it all instead of us.

Beloved reader, in which path are you? There are only two left, for one has been proved to be closed—the Broad and the Narrow way. The one leads to eternal joy, the other to eternal destruction. Delay not in availing yourself of

the "Way of Life." The consequences of either path are eternal.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

May it not be said of you, dear reader, as it was of some of old, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

A. H. H.



The Power of the Name of Jesus.

THE writer has just called to mind a circumstance which happened some years ago during his visiting a dying man suffering from a most painful malady, and of whose state of soul with reference to meeting God he had no previous acquaintance. On entering the room he found him in one of those paroxysms peculiar to the disease which was rapidly bringing him to the close of his earthly sojourn, and which indeed had not, humanly speaking, been a short one. His

agony was terrible to witness, and his attendant was unable to minister, by any skill or means she possessed, even momentary relief. There we stood, our hearts deeply moved with sympathy but no power to relieve.

Has the reader ever been in the presence of deep human suffering, the result of sin, from which many victims have pleaded to be relieved although apparently without hope beyond the grave? If so, he will surely be able to understand how powerless is the most skilful physician, and oftentimes how unavailing are the most scientific means to give relief. It was so in this case.

But one thing was not unavailing. Is the reader curious to know what this was? *The power of the name of Jesus.* Yes, spite of unbelief and the incredulity of the sceptic, there was a miraculous power of relief to this poor sufferer by the very mention of that name. The writer scarcely knowing what to do, and unaware that the dear man had had any previous acquaintance with it, stooped down and breathed into his ear that one word, JESUS. The effect was wonderful. In a moment a heavenly glow lit up his hitherto distorted countenance, and his lips opened with thanksgiving and praise at the mention of this blessed name, which called

to his remembrance the tale of divine love unfolded at Calvary. His pain, if still there, was utterly forgotten, yea, we believe we may go further, and say that that name had proved for the time being a healing balm to his sufferings, for shortly after the writer left him in quietness and repose.

But there is another power in that name we would draw your attention to. God has set value upon it for salvation, and the Holy Spirit has come into the world consequent upon the One who bears it having been rejected by men, but exalted to the right hand of God, giving miraculous demonstration in the perfect soundness given to the impotent beggar at the Beautiful gate of the Temple, and confirmed by the apostle Peter, who, being filled with the Holy Spirit, made the magnificent declaration to the Jewish Council (the man who had been healed, known well to them all, standing with him):—

“Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God has raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other:

for **THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN WHEREBY WE MUST BE SAVED**" (Acts iv. 8-11).

We would specially call the reader's solemn attention to this declaration, for upon it depends the most momentous issue ever set forth by God to men. "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received its just recompense of reward, **how shall we escape** if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will?" (Heb. ii. 2-4). We would affectionately ask all our readers to weigh this solemn question put by the Holy Spirit Himself, for but one answer can be supplied from the Word of God, "**They shall not escape**" (1 Thess. v. 3).

There is yet one other point we would mention—the declaration made by the prophet Isaiah, "As I live, saith Jehovah, **every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God**" (Isa. xlv. 23).

When the heavens are again opened (Rev. xix. 11) the world will see this same Jehovah

in the Person of Jesus coming, not now to be "despised and rejected of men," nor to bring salvation to those who now despise and set Him at nought, yea, who make His peerless name the "song of the drunkards," but to fulfil the divine decree, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth ; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 10, 11). The very place that witnessed His humiliation and sufferings shall be the scene of His universal power and glory.

"Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him ; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. i. 7).

Reader, how will it be with you in that day ?

"Ho ! all ye heavy laden, come !
Here's pardon, comfort, rest, and home ;
Ye wanderers from a Father's face
Return, accept His proffered grace ;
Ye tempted, there's a refuge nigh :
'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.'

But if you still His call refuse,
And all His wondrous love abuse,
Soon will He sadly from you turn,
Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn :
'Too late ! too late !' will be the cry—
'Jesus of Nazareth *has passed by.*'"

Believe and Live.

THE simplicity of Scripture is very striking. What grace to poor sinners that it is so!

When the children of Israel sinned in the wilderness, God sent among them fiery serpents, which bit many of the people, and many died.

The people then came to Moses and owned their sin, and begged him to petition God to take away the serpents.

Moses immediately responded, and God as quickly answered him, and gave him a remedy. "Make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten when he looketh upon it shall live."

Now mark the result. Moses made a serpent of brass and set it upon a pole—

"And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived."

How wonderful! How simple! But what has that to do with us? Just this. The Lord Jesus Christ said in John iii. 14, 15, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Why? "That

whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Reader, if your sins are not forgiven, you are perishing. Death eternal stares you in the face. The bite of sin is fatal, and "*all* have sinned." Before you cry, the remedy is found. Jesus was uplifted on the cross for you. Believe it and live. *All* are bitten. Many, oh, *many* are perishing eternally. Some have believed in Him and live. If you believe in Him you too shall live.

* * *

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Do you want to be LOST eternally? Then just go on living the careless, thoughtless life you are now leading until death suddenly removes you.

Do you want to be SAVED? Then come as you are, a poor guilty sinner, to the Lord Jesus Christ. But do it AT ONCE.

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

My Conversion.

ABOUT thirty-three years ago I was converted ; as the Scriptures say, I was turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

I pleased myself until I was eighteen, having no other object than this world and its pursuits, though when the thought of God crossed my mind I was miserable, because I knew that I was not at peace with Him. About this time I went to live at a business house at B—. One day an acquaintance came in to have a cup of tea. Four of us were sitting at the same table ; two were Christians, and two were not. I well remember the occasion. The chief topic of the others was the Lord and His preciousness, and their conversation caused me and my companion much merriment. The oldest of the two held up a little book, the title of which was, "My Jesus," and looking at me, she said, "My Jesus, can you say that?" I forget what answer I returned, but I could never forget it. I saw that she possessed something that I was a stranger to, and whatever it was it made her happy.

A short time after this the friend who worked with me went to a large hall at K——, where religious meetings were held, or rather where the gospel of the grace of God was faithfully preached. I noticed a great change in him. In the night on different occasions I have wakened up and found him reading the Bible. He had been truly converted. Soon after this I yielded to a pressing invitation to go and hear the gospel preached, and never shall I forget it. A black man preached, a faithful servant of Christ. I could not tell you the scripture he read, nor any of his words, but I remember after the meeting was over, when I got home, I felt for the first time in my life that I was "lost," and that hell with all its torments would be my portion. So real was all this that I could not sleep, I was afraid I should die, and knew that if I did I should be like the man who "died and was buried, and in *hell* he lift up his eyes," &c. So awful was the thought that my trembling shook the bed. My companion could not sleep either, and asked me what was the matter. I told him. He tried to console me by quoting scriptures, but there was no peace for me that night. How true God's Word is, "No peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

During the next few days, if anything, I was more miserable. I was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, a sinner ready to perish. But blessed be God! as one morning I was about to open the office, I bent my head on my arms and prayed the prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," concluding with the words, "*through* Jesus Christ our Lord." Then I saw that I was saved, and my sins were forgiven *through* what He had done. I was completely taken out of self and my own thoughts, faith had *come* by hearing God's Word, and I saw clearly that Christ had glorified God, and that it was He who had been made sin (He who knew no sin), that I might be made the righteousness of God in Him; in fact that He had done everything, and that there was nothing for me to do, only to thank God for a finished work and His great salvation, and I believed, and was *saved*. Oh, what a relief it was to my sin-burdened conscience! Joy filled my soul. I saw that Christ was my Saviour, and that God was my Father, and that I was accepted in the Beloved. I remember in the freshness of my new-found joy I hurried downstairs and told my friend that I had got it at last. "Got what?" he said. "I have got

peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and we *did* praise God together.

Years have rolled away, but like the eunuch of old, I have gone on my way rejoicing, possessed of what the world cannot give nor take away. If this narrative should fall into the hands of an anxious unsaved one, I hope that it will be a help to such an one, and that God will be pleased to use it if only to one precious soul, for remember, friend, that "except *ye* be *converted* and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." You are lost and dead in sins by nature, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, you cannot change it, you must be born again. But "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

R. A. B.

Nothing More.

FROM the cradle to the grave — what is it? Such was the question asked some years ago, by one of earth's popular men, to whom the call of death has recently come.

A natural inquiry surely, and of great moment. He put it to himself, and further, he undertook to answer it. "It is like three days at the seaside," said he, "just that and nothing more." What! Nothing more! Could not his wealth, position, influence, or power help him to arrive at a better conclusion? Apparently not. "Nothing more" was the sum and substance of the whole matter, and his lips had spoken all that he could conceive was necessary to utter on this vital subject.

Unsaved reader, let me ask you, what would be your answer to this question, were it put to you? Would it agree with the one whose "three days" are now past? Listen for a moment, I beseech you, before that grasp is felt, which neither pauper, prince, nor the most resolute of mortals can resist. Sink all your own thoughts, open your ears wide, for God speaks, and speaks to you.

"What is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jas. iv. 14).

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27).

"Nothing more!" Alas, what an awful mistake he made. There *is* an "*afterward*," and on the authority of God's infallible Word too, that Word of which He has decreed: "Heaven and

earth shall pass away, but My *Word* shall not pass away" (Matt. xxiv. 35).

Yet we cannot wonder that the words "Nothing more" should have been uttered, for with the so-called wisdom of the thinker, he declared that he knew there was no hell, and arguing the matter out in his cold practical way, he declared that it was an even chance, a fifty per cent chance, that there *might* be a God!

What an awful 'awakening it will be, if these reasonings of the human mind were clung to till the end! Why, even the devils believe that there is one God, and tremble (Jas. ii. 19). Yes, reader, one God, and only one God, and this one God is love. He has proved His love by giving His well-beloved Son, the Just One, to die for us, the unjust ones.

We are sinners in the sight of God; an evil word, an impure thought, one unjust action—yes, only one—is quite sufficient to merit our banishment from the presence of God for ever. For God is holy, He cannot look upon sin. Sin, if brought into His presence, can only meet with its due reward. But blessed be the precious name of Jesus, He has satisfied God about the question of sin and sins, for He has borne our sins in His own body on the tree.

Yes, God is perfectly and fully satisfied with what has been done. His holiness demanded a victim, His love provided one, and now glorified on the earth by this blessed One, He has raised Him from among the dead and set Him at His own right hand, "a glorified Saviour."

Reader, are you satisfied with Him too, so satisfied that you can even now, whilst you read these words, thank Him for what He has done, and rest in that finished work. He speaks such words of assurance to you—

"He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

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

Come then, with all confidence, for *all* things are now *ready*. The wedding garment is provided, the fatted calf killed, the feast spread, other guests are entering in, the house is filling fast, yet there is room, yes, still room.

Reader, are you ready? Solemn question, Are you ready? Make haste, the door is closing, and soon will be shut; and then will sound forth the fearful words, to those who were invited, but refused to come, and who, when too late, knock for admittance, "I know you not."

"Come, hear the gospel sound,
Yet there is room,
It tells to all around,
Yet there is room.
Though guilty, now draw near ;
Though vile, you need not fear ;
With joy you now may hear,
Yet there is room.

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

* * *

"The Rock that is higher than 3."

WHEN Samuel Webb was working at the bottom of a deep well at Brightlingsea some time ago, the sides collapsed, and buried him beneath some tons of earth. Relief operations were soon commenced under the guidance of a party of well-sinkers, willingly aided by the people of the place. They succeeded in remov-

ing the earth and rubbish, being encouraged by the knowledge that Webb was not only alive, but apparently not seriously injured, as he could be distinctly heard singing "Rock of Ages," his favourite hymn. He could hear the rescue party at work, for he called out, "Tell my wife that I am trusting in Jesus." After toiling for eight hours, the rescuers were able to pass ropes under Webb's arms, and to drag him out.

After an entombment of eight hours, as might be expected, the poor fellow was in a state of collapse, but no bones were broken, and recovery from the effects of his alarming adventure was not difficult. He most certainly would have been killed had the great mass of earth fallen directly upon him, but he was standing underneath a ladder when the sides of the well collapsed, and the ladder was the means of keeping the earth shored up, and thus he was able to remain in an upright position till rescued. To do this, the well-sinkers proceeded to dig a pit alongside of the well where Webb was buried, and from this pit a cross-cut was made into the well. We are indebted to a daily paper for this account. It testifies to a power which can sustain a soul in an hour of terror—even of "that Rock" which is Christ.

A happy and consistent Christian said to the writer, before passing out of this world to be with Christ: "My feet are upon the Rock, and the hosts of hell can never remove them."

How different the remark made by William Pitt, the great statesman: "I'm afraid that I have put off repentance too long to make it of any avail now."

Many, alas! are looking for that "convenient season" which, after all, is to them inconvenient. Reader, beware of trifling! Some seem to think that they can seek God just when they please. Such do not know their own hearts: the truth is, that "*there is none that seeketh after God.*" No! the seeking comes from the Saviour's side. It is He who "came to *seek* and to save that which was lost." Mark that, the "*lost.*"

We speak of castles being built in the air, and know what becomes of such structures with no foundation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."

It may be, that owing to smallness of faith, or to a lack of spiritual apprehension of what blessed results flow to the believer in Jesus Christ through His finished work upon the cross, many are not so steadfast in their stand upon the Rock as they ought to be, not "always confident," as

says the Scripture. This reminds us of what was said by the Scotch boy, when asked if he had had any doubts and fears since he had been a Christian. "Aye," he replied, "I have often trimbled on the Rock, but the Rock has never trimbled under me !"

"On Christ salvation rests secure,
The Rock of Ages must endure ;
Nor can that faith be overthrown
Which rests upon the 'Living Stone.'"

W. R. C.



My Substitute.

WHEN I was a boy at school, I saw a sight I never can forget—a man tied to a cart, and dragged, before the people's eyes, through the streets of my native town, his back torn and bleeding from the lash. It was a shameful punishment. For *many* offences? No, for one offence. Did any of the townsmen offer to divide the lashes with him? No, he who committed the offence bore the penalty all alone. It was the penalty of a changing human law ; for it was the last instance of its infliction.

When I was a student at the university, I saw another sight I never can forget—a man brought out to die. His arms were pinioned, his face was already pale as death—thousands of eager eyes were on him as he came up from the jail. Did any man ask to die in his room? Did any friend come and loose the rope, and say, "Put it around my neck, I die instead"? No, he underwent the sentence of the law. For *many* offences? No, for one offence. He had stolen a money parcel from a stage-coach. He broke the law at one point, and died for it. It was the penalty of a changing human law in this case also; it was the last sentence of capital punishment being inflicted for that offence.

I saw another sight—it matters not when—myself a sinner, standing on the brink of ruin, deserving naught but hell. For one sin? No, for many, many sins committed against the unchanging laws of God. But again I looked, and saw Jesus, my substitute, scourged in my stead and dying on the cross for me. I looked and cried, and was forgiven. And it seemed to me to be my duty to come here to tell you of that Saviour, to see if you will not also LOOK, AND LIVE.

And how simple it all becomes, when God

opens the eye ! A friend who lately came from Paris told me of an English groom there, a very careless old man, who during a severe illness, had been made to feel that he was a sinner. He dared not die as he was. The clergyman for whom he sent, got tired of visiting him, having told him all he himself then knew of the way of salvation. But one Sunday afternoon, the groom's daughter waited in the vestry after church, saying, "You *must* come once more, sir ; I cannot see my father again without you." "I can tell him nothing new," said the preacher ; "but I may take the sermon I have been preaching, and read it to him." The dying man lay, as before, in anguish, thinking of his sins, and whither they must carry him. "My friend, I have come to read you the sermon I have just preached. First, I shall tell you the text : '*He was wounded for our transgressions.*' Now I shall read——". "Hold !" said the dying man, "*I have it !* read no more ; *He was wounded for MY transgressions.*" Soon after he died, rejoicing in Christ.

When I heard the story, I remembered Archimedes running through the streets of Syracuse straight from the bath, where he had found out, in bathing, the secret of testing whether the

king's crown had, or had not, been alloyed by the goldsmith in making it, and as he ran, he cried, "I have found it! I have found it!"

Poor philosopher! you had only found out a new principle in science. Happy groom! you had found in Jesus Christ a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The clergyman who visited the dying groom was thus led to seek and find salvation.

By the late James Simpson of Edinburgh.

The Call of Abraham.

NO more interesting or profitable study could be found than the history of the times of Abraham and Lot. Indeed our Lord Himself has declared that, "as it was in the days of Lot . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke xvii. 28-30). This alone should be sufficient to quicken the interest of every intelligent reader.

The Historical Accuracy of the Narrative.

It has become popular in our days to doubt the accuracy of the statements of Holy Scripture.

The Book of God is one that speaks to every man's conscience. It gives us many a home thrust on the question of sin, and lays bare in a way we little like the hidden springs of evil in the heart. Then, too, it speaks in no uncertain manner as to judgment to come.

The Bible tells me how sin came into the world ; it tells me that I am a sinner ; it tells me that God is holy and just ; it tells me that a day is coming after death when that holy God will judge the sinner. True, it tells us also of the way that God has Himself devised whereby the sinner may be pardoned, and justified, yea, even reconciled to God—all this through the death of His dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who came "the guilty and the lost to save."

But man does not like this humbling of all his pride. He has a nature, too, at enmity against God, a nature of which he became possessed at the Fall.

If therefore some way could be found for discrediting the Bible, some ground for throwing doubt upon its accuracy, some means of weakening its authority upon the conscience, how grateful some men would be !

Here the great enemy of our souls endeavoured to make a breach in the citadel of faith. The

Pentateuch he declared through the instrumentality of learned critics is thoroughly unreliable. The times of Abraham were so remote it was difficult to prove or disprove. The Bible was the only book that pretended to record these by-gone events ; might they not all be pure fabrications ? So earnest was the zeal of these destructive theologians that all Christendom was being filled with unbelief and infidelity.

When lo ! God in His providence and great mercy brought to light by means of the excavator's shovel overwhelming evidence of the accuracy of the narrative contained in these opening chapters of Genesis.

The higher critics had denied that such a person as Abraham had ever existed, and that any such city as Ur of the Chaldees was ever built. But to-day the very foundations of the city have been uncovered, and the buildings and monuments that existed in Abraham's day, some four thousand years ago, have been exposed before the view of this unbelieving generation.

Chaldea, as we know from Genesis x., was originally peopled by the descendants of Ham, yet out of it, as we learn from Genesis xii., God called Abraham, who belonged to a Shemitic family. This to the rationalist seemed passing

strange, too strange to be true. But the explorers of the ancient ruins of Ur have brought to light bricks and tablets bearing distinctly Hebrew names, even those of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph !

More than this we learn from these ancient remains that idolatry reigned supreme in Ur, for the foundations of a large temple dedicated to the sun have been unearthed. How perfectly consistent this is with the Bible narrative, a reference to Joshua xxiv. 2 will establish : " Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (*i.e.*, the river Euphrates) in old time, Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor : **and they served other gods.**"

Yes, the Bible is absolutely reliable. Let us seek to learn the lessons it teaches.

Abraham's Call.

There in that city whose foundations now lie exposed Abraham once lived. He, too, no doubt had trod the courts of that idol's temple ; when, lo ! " the God of glory " appeared to him. Sovereign mercy singled him out even from his father's house, destined him to a glorious future

in a city whose foundations shall endure for ever, "whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. xi. 10).

The call of God's grace met with the response of faith—"He went out, not knowing whither he went."

Is not this a beautiful picture of the gospel call? Have you, reader, ever heard that call? Where are you journeying to? Time, with all its changes, its fleeting pleasures, its overwhelming disappointments, its mingled joys and sorrows, will soon have passed for you. What lies beyond? Have you heard God's gracious call through the gospel? Have you in faith responded? Have you started on the heavenward journey? Have you, deep down in your heart, heard the call of the God of all grace, inviting you to share His eternal glory by Christ Jesus? (1 Pet. v. 10).

If you have not yet, remember that He is now calling to you. Unstop your ears, and listen to His voice. "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One," so the Word of God declares (1 John v. 19), and all is hurrying on to its judgment.

"Get thee out"

is the call of God to you, even as it was to

Abraham, "and come into the land which I shall show thee" (Acts vii. 3).

But perhaps you ask, How can I know whether God has called me? Why, He is calling you at this very moment by means of this gospel magazine. Every gospel address you listen to, every gospel book you read, is God's invitation to you. Oh, how great are your responsibilities!

Then, too, remember that time is fast fleeting by. This may be the last appeal that will ever be made to you.

Decide at once.

A few months ago, while staying in one of the eastern counties of England, a strong desire came over me to travel right across country to Crewe, and see a man who lived in that neighbourhood. I had heard of him some years previously as being a Christian, but I had never seen him. *Now* I could not shake off the feeling that I must go and see him.

After a day's travelling I arrived at Crewe about 5 P.M. It was getting dusk, it had been drizzling all day; it was certainly a most uninviting night for a trudge into the country of three miles there and back. However, as I had to catch the night train at 9 P.M., I started off in

the rapidly increasing darkness, amidst gusts of wind and rain. Many a time did I stop, and say to myself, "Better turn back." But something forced me forward.

After considerable difficulty I reached the village where John C—— lived. Everybody knew him, and so I quickly found myself at his cottage door.

"Is this where John C—— lives?" I asked of the child who came to open in answer to my knock.

"Yes, sir; will you come in?"

There by the fire sat a man, smoking a short, dirty clay pipe; the kitchen was filled with smoke—tobacco smoke. His wife, an untidy looking woman, and five or six children sat about. The whole place had a neglected, uncared-for appearance. A strange place, thought I, for a Christian man to live; and a poor testimony for Christ in that village.

They all stared in silent wonder as I took a chair, never having seen me before.

"Is your name John C——?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, that is my name," the man replied.

"Do you not have meetings in your house?" I continued.

"Meetings, sir, no, what kind of meetings?" he asked in some bewilderment.

"Why, meetings for prayer, and for reading the Bible. You tell me you are John C——."

"Oh, I know what you mean now," said the man, as a slight ray of intelligence seemed to pass over his surprised countenance, "it's my father you want; he used to live here, and I think I did hear tell of him having prayer meetings in this house. But he be dead five years, and there don't be no meetings now," and again the pipe began to puff.

"Your father was a child of God," I replied; "he knew and loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and better still he knew that Christ had loved him and had died for him; and now that your father has gone, I know that he has gone to be with Christ, and he will be with Christ in heavenly glory for ever. Are you a child of God? Are your sins forgiven? Are you on your way to heaven too?"

Every eye in that little kitchen had been fixed upon me as I spoke, and now all turned and looked at the man who sat uneasily puffing his pipe.

"No, sir, I can't say as I am," was the slow reply.

"And how is it with you?" I asked, turning to the wife.

“No, sir, I’m not saved, that I know,” was her answer.

Each of the children in turn was questioned ; not one bore the smallest testimony to a personal faith in the Saviour. It was a Christless house, a prayerless house, a house where the Bible was not read.

A solemn silence followed, and again every eye was fixed upon me, as I spoke once more.

“If these cottage walls could speak, what a history they would reveal. How often has that father, who is now with Christ, breathed out his soul in prayer on your behalf ! How often has he cried to God for your salvation. And here am I, a perfect stranger to him and to you—I have travelled right across England this day, and on this dark, blustering, rainy night have walked out through mud and water to put this solemn question to you ! Oh, man, this is God’s voice to you ! In all probability we shall never meet again on this earth, but to your dying day you will never forget this night. It is no mere chance, of that I am sure. It is a solemn appeal from God to your soul.”

A strange stillness made itself felt in that village kitchen, as the man solemnly and slowly replied, “It—is—strange—anyhow.”

Reader, it was God's call to him, and this is now God's call to you. It may be the last, Oh,

"Will you believe,
And the Saviour receive?"

"To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iv. 7, 8).

A. H. B.

Nameless Graves.

"**N**OTHING is more sad than the many *nameless graves* one sees out there," said a young Colonial. "I was riding up country one day (in New Zealand) far from any dwelling, when suddenly beside the track, if track it could be called, there was a little grave outlined with white stones. Some settler's child, I suppose, who had died going up country. On board ship coming home, a man who had been in South Africa told me the same thing. Out there too are hundreds of such graves, and the impression they leave on one is very saddening—scouts who have fallen in small numbers, spies, single soldiers, lie there unknown to any one."

To *any* one, did he say? "He bringeth out their host *by number*: *He calleth them all by names*, by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; *not one faileth*" (Isa. xl. 26). Lift up your eyes to the starry heavens on a clear night; count the stars that your hand may cover if you can. The Saviour-God knows their number, He has *a name for each*, not one will lessen its light without His fiat.

"The sheep hear His voice: *He calleth His own sheep by name*. . . . I am the Good Shepherd, and *know My sheep*, and am known of Mine" (John x. 3, 14). Look at that flock of sheep: could you number them? Would you know if one were missing? The shepherd arrives—he scans the flock, his eye is acquainted with the face of every sheep—ah! *one* is missing, only ninety and nine are there. He leaves the ninety and nine safely folded, and forth he goes to seek *until he find* the one that was lost, and then he carries it home on his shoulders rejoicing.

"For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.

Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which ALL *that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth* ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life : and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v.). There are multitudes of nameless graves all over this sorrow-stricken earth. Who shall say where lies Abel, the first martyr of the Old Testament—Stephen, the first of the New Testament, and the countless thousands that have been buried between and since then ? Where are their graves ? Who has recorded their names ? By-and-by—very soon—they will hear the voice of the Son of God—to *each one* it will be audible—and they will come forth from their tombs, known and unknown of every clime. .

“ *Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven* ” (Luke x. 20). The saints who are sleeping in those “ nameless graves ”—and by a saint is meant one who has heard while on earth the voice of the Son of God and lived, or who looked forward in faith like Abel to His atoning sacrifice—these saints have had their names recorded in God’s register. Not one is forgotten by Him.

Moses was buried—there had been none like him—nevertheless he died and occupied a grave, and “no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.” Satan would have rifled its precious contents, but was rebuked for his hardihood before the hosts of heaven. God knows where Moses lies, and He knows where to find every saint who has been bought with the price that the Saviour paid. “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” Those who are alive when He comes will see them rise, and then together they will go to meet the Lord in the air. Then they will know as they *are known*.

More than this—perchance an unbeliever lies in a “nameless grave” that you wot of. He too will come forth; he will hear the voice of the Son of God—*all* unbelievers will. Ponder it, reader. If you are now away from God in your sins, think how solemn it will be after you are dead to rejoin your resurrected body as a spirit, and to receive judgment at the hands of the One who might have been your Saviour! Don’t imagine you can hide your head like the ostrich in the sand and be unseen—oh no—“ALL that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth . . . *they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*” No escape will

be possible then. *Now it is*—and *now* you may turn to God and find Him gracious and full of compassion, a *Saviour*-God. Then never mind where you lie—in the torrid zone, amid arctic snows, in your bed at home—in *any* and *every* case your sleeping-place will be known to God—moreover, *your ear* will hear the assembling shout and recognise the voice of the Good Shepherd therein. There are *no* “nameless graves” to Him or to God, for your name has been “written in heaven,” rehearsed too before the angels, and from thence “we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.”

Lord, haste that day!

H. L. H.

A FELLOW-LABOURER writes:—We still have encouragement at the Hospital and Union. A little while ago I asked an old rag gatherer who was in the Hospital how he was.

“Why, sir,” he said, “I am right internally, externally, and eternally,” and his face was all aglow with joy. He said, “Some people say, All’s well that ends well, but through mercy I can say it is well with me before the end comes.”

ED.

That Line.

WITH my stick I slowly drew a line on the sand of the cottage floor, and looking up, said, "Do you see that line?" He had watched my action, wondering what I was about, and answered, "Yes, sir." "Well, then, mark me," said I—

On this side you have

DEATH.

LOST.

HELL.

DARKNESS.

DAMNATION.

MISERY.

SATAN.

and on that you have

LIFE.

SAVED.

HEAVEN.

LIGHT.

SALVATION.

HAPPINESS.

GOD.

ON WHICH SIDE ARE YOU?

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already" (John iii. 18).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

John five, twenty=four.

WHAT multitudes of souls will be in heaven through this verse! What multitudes have passed, whilst still on earth, from darkness of spiritual vision into the light of divine favour, from the bondage of doubt into the liberty of assurance, through reading those marvellous words, spoken by the blessed Son of God—

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me,

HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and

SHALL NOT COME INTO JUDGMENT,

but IS PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE”

. (John v. 24).

Many years ago, when first I began taking part in the blessed service of the gospel, I was asked by a Christian friend to go and see a young man who was supposed to be dying, and as to whose spiritual state my friend was much concerned.

Though the incident took place long ago, yet never do I pass that country cottage without a lively recollection of my first and only interview with the dying man.

He was young, scarcely thirty years of age ; he had all the appearance, too, of having been a fine and powerful man, yet there he lay, possessed of all his mental faculties, with death in full view. Eternity stretched before him, and it seemed very near with all its uncertainty—an unknown future, and an untrodden path.

He was glad of a visit, and I soon found that he was in deep anxiety of soul. As simply as I knew how, I told him of God's remedy for sin, and the refuge He had provided for sinners in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. I read the verses in Exodus xii. that speak of the passover lamb, and the sprinkling of the blood upon the door-posts. From this I tried to show him the security of the Israelite *inside* the house, and the peace of mind which belonged to him, knowing that the blood was *outside*. God's eye rested on the blood : "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," was the soul-comforting testimony of God in view of the terrible night of judgment that was about to envelop the land of Egypt.

In like manner I endeavoured to point out to the dying man that God had provided Himself a spotless Lamb, even Jesus, His well-beloved Son ; His precious blood had been shed, and

every poor sinner that put his trust in Him was in reality placing himself under the shelter of His blood, just as the Israelite of old put himself under the shelter of the blood-sprinkled door. If the Israelite had nothing to fear because of the blood of the lamb, still less had the believer in Christ, because of the infinitely greater value of the blood of Christ. Though all seemed perfectly plain to me, yet not one ray of light or comfort seemed to shine in upon the sick man's soul.

"What is it, then," I asked, "that you are afraid of?"

He could give me no clear answer, but the fact remained that death was near at hand, and eternity was looming up before his frightened gaze.

At length I asked, "Is it the judgment day that you are afraid of?"

"That's it," he exclaimed; "I don't know how matters will turn out at the day of judgment."

"Oh," said I, "there is a verse that will just suit you." So opening my Bible I turned to the well-known words—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

He had already told me that he truly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and as far as one can judge for another, his faith seemed to be really that of the heart, so I urged him to accept as simply as a little child the results of that faith as stated by God Himself.

"If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, not only is it your privilege to know that you possess now eternal life, but according to God's own promise, you will never come into judgment at all."

He started up at these words, and almost shouted, "Does it say that?"

"Yes," said I, "read it for yourself," handing him my Bible.

"No, no," said he, "I must see it in my own Bible. Where is it?"

Accordingly out from under his pillow came the dear man's Bible, and a happy, peaceful, restful smile spread itself over his face as he read for himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and

SHALL NOT COME INTO JUDGMENT,*

but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

* See Revised Version.

Read it for yourself, dear friend, and receive it into your heart with as simple a faith as did this dear dying man.

A. H. B.

A Recent Old-fashioned Methodist Conversion.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness ; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . . For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom : but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men ; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor. i. 18-25).

WHILE waiting for a train at one of the Cornish railway stations one day in March 1898, I got into conversation with an elderly man who was desirous of knowing the best way to reach Southampton. I found that although seventy-two years of age, and his wife three years younger, they purposed leaving England in about a fortnight to visit one of their sons in

the United States, and there end their days. Like many other Cornishmen, during the last half-century he had spent much of his life in mining camps abroad, and, he told me, had made enough money in California to keep him comfortably without working for the rest of his days.

"How long," I asked, "do you expect to live?"

"'Bout five or six 'ears," he replied; "then I s'pose et will be time for me to go. A man cain't spect to live much longer than that."

"You carry your age well," I replied. "You may live ten or twelve years longer."

"P'raps so," he said; "I cain't say nothin' sartin 'bout that."

"But if you should live five or six years longer, or possibly ten or twelve years, what will happen to you at the end? Are you in any way prepared for eternity?"

Tears came into his eyes, his wrinkled face was lit up with joy, and his voice quivered as he replied: "Et is all right weth me. I've made my paise weth God. I've got a 'ome beyond this world."

"Then," I said, "you are converted, and know that your sins are forgiven, and whether your

days on earth be many or few, you are ready to meet the Lord."

"Yes," he said, "I am; bless the Lord!"

"How long," I asked, "have you been converted, and how did it come to pass?"

He went on to say: "Well, et were just like this. 'Bout three 'ears ago I was over there weth my pony and trap," pointing in the direction of a farmhouse a little distance off. "I 'addent been well for a brave while; got some-thin' the matter weth my chest which I cuddent git rid of, and et simmed to be gittin' wuss and wuss; and the farmer he said to me, 'You're very bad, Tom.'

"'Ess,' ses I, 'I'm bad, sure nuff.'

"Ses ee, 'Ef you go on like this, what will be the end of et, boy?'

"Ses I, 'I doant know, I'm sure.'

"'Well,' says ee, 'ave ey made your paise weth God?'

"'No,' ses I, 'I 'abbent. Doan't know nothin' 'bout them things.'

"Ses ee, 'Et es time you ded then. Why doan't ey ask God to save your sawl; why doan't ey gev your 'art to God?'

"Ses I, 'I never was no coward, I never was afear'd of nothin', and et doan't sim to me 'tes

fair that after I've lived sixty-eight 'ears in sin, to ask God to save my black sawl 'cause I cain't live much longer.'

"'Oh!' ses ee, 'go along weth thee. Doan't talk like that. Et ain't like that weth He et tawl. Doan't thee be afear'd to come to Him just as thee are. He wain't turn thee away, He will save thee sawl ef thee will only ask Him.'

"Ses I, 'Well, I'll think 'bout et.' And so after I had finished my business I drove off 'ome.

"But when I were gwain on the road, I cuddent sim to git what ee sed to me out of my mind, and afore very long I felt my face gittin' wet like."

Then turning to me with broken voice and with tears in his eyes, he said: "I s'pose you do know what them feelin's be like. You've been through et yourself, I spect."

"Yes," I replied, "I understand it. I am converted. Go on with your story."

"Well, et went on like that for 'bout a fortnight, and I cuddent sim to git no paise of mind night nor day. I' cuddent git no sleep much when I went to bed, thinkin' 'bout my sawl. I was in a brave old way 'bout et sure nuff, and my wife she thought I was gwane mazed.

"But one night, 'bout three o'clock in the mornin', I was so unaisy that I got out of bed, went down on my knees, and said to my Saviour that I weddent git up no more tell He gov me a token that my sins was forgiven, and that I'd made my paise weth God. Just after that I 'eard a voice speakin' to me, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee, go in paise and sin no more,' and I felt all my load were gone. I jumped up et once and began shoutin', 'Bless the Lord, my black sawl es saved. My sins are forgiven. I've got paise weth God.'

"My wife woke up and wondered what et were all 'bout, and said I was gone mazed, but et wasen't nothin' like that et tawl. 'Bless the Lord,' ses I, 'I'm a saved man.'

"And so I've gone on weth them same feelin's of paise ever since. I 'tend class mittin's and go to all the tother mittin's reglar, and when the Lord es pleased to call me 'ome, bless God, I'm ready.

"My wife, she esant converted, I'm sorry to say, though she is a first-rate scholar, and knows all 'bout the Bible as well as anybody. But I'm always spakin' to 'er, and prayin' for 'er, and afore the end comes I 'ope the Lord will save 'er sawl too."

Shortly after I parted with this interesting believer in the Lord Jesus Christ with the mutual assurance that the next time we meet it will be in the presence of the One who loved us and gave Himself for us, and who shed His precious blood to put away our sins, and thus fit us to dwell with Him through eternity.

H. K.

Revival Records.

WHO does not know the use of autumn leaves, and yet how often are they treated as of no value! They are gathered by the children to make bonfires. They are burned in heaps to obtain their ashes. They are valuable for soil when decayed. In some places they are used as bedding for cattle.

In our lives there may be some autumn leaves of the past which might be made quite as useful, in spite of the scripture which says, "Forgetting those things which are behind" (Phil. iii. 13), which does not mean that God's dealings with us, His chastenings or His mercies, are ever to be forgotten. Oh no! for "*thou shalt remember* all the way which the Lord thy God led thee

these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee" (Deut. viii. 2).

Circumstances brought to notice lately a few such withered leaves, which may yet yield some freshness for us—*literally leaves* they are, half and quarter sheets of notepaper fastened into the empty cover of an old book. They are the records of requests for prayer sent into a village prayer meeting long ago. Ah me! what histories they recall!

So much has been said and heard and written of late about prayer and the need of it, that an echo from the past may not be unfraught with blessing for us on such a subject.

As many of us are aware, the great Irish revival took place about 1859. Many crossed over from this country to share in the blessing—among them a gentleman long accustomed to the service of the Lord both in preaching to and visiting all classes. He was deeply moved by what he saw, and impressed, too, with the fact that it is not enough to preach or even pray: God would have us look for *result* and count on Him for it. He fraternised with the preachers, helped them in their work, and returned to his distant home in a country village overflowing with a sense of God's pardoning grace to sinners.

His wife, his children, his servants were all aroused. Soon the contagion spread. Those now alive can remember copying out some of the Irish revival hymns in childish hands on sheets of notepaper—for the hymn-book had hardly been completed, or at all events was not in cheap form. Scraps of song, such as—

“Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away,”

or—

“Here o’er the earth as a stranger I roam,”

began to be heard even before the day when household and villagers were invited to listen to the *account* of the Irish revival at a meeting convened for the purpose, and to learn the hymns. That night there were evident tokens of blessing, and at the weekly preachings which succeeded this one, the tokens increased.

After this the mother gathered together farmers’ daughters and others every week to read aloud to them further accounts received from Ireland and elsewhere, and some were reached in this way who would not come on Sunday.

But the prayer meeting must not be forgotten. Preaching is good, but unless accompanied and preceded by prayer, is not likely to lead to great

results. "So the Lord was *entreated* for the land" (2 Sam. xxi. 14, xxiv. 25), we read.

Before the Lord chose His disciples He prayed (Luke vi. 12, 13).

Before His transfiguration He did the same (Luke ix. 28, 29).

The fact of *His* praying caused His disciples to feel the need of it (Luke xi. 1).

Had he not prayed for Peter, his faith *would* have failed (Luke xxii. 32).

In Gethsemane, before the cross, He prayed. The disciples did *not* pray, so they could not cast out the dumb spirit (Mark ix. 28, 29), and many such-like cases are there—not only then but now.

The prayer meeting at Jerusalem to which Peter and John resorted (Acts iv. 23-33) was productive of enormous results; so was the tiny one of "two" in the prison at Philippi (Acts xvi. 25, 26), and so probably are many more in our own day, could we draw back the curtain of the future and see.

So a village prayer meeting was begun. At it were used the hymn sheets written by the children, and some can still recall the pleasure of joining in—

"I'm a pilgrim,"

but especially—

“There is rest for the weary,
There is rest for you,”

and others—time-worn, but blest to hundreds.

Those meetings were beautiful. Through the deep-set lanes we groped our way, regardless of mud, following generally on the heels of the lantern-bearer, and softly singing some favourite refrain. Little groups from different directions would converge and meet in the old-fashioned cottage with its flagged floor and rough backless benches. And then the prayers! Most who prayed are in heaven now.

The careful hand of one long since with Christ has *preserved* for us the identical scraps of paper on which the requests for prayer sent in by one and another were written.

Let us look at some of them. The first is dated 2nd November 1860, and the last 11th April 1863:—

“Prayer is requested for a young person long anxious about her soul, but unable to believe that the promises are for her. Pray that she may be delivered from the devil who she feels holding her fast.”

This prayer was answered.

November 9th, 1860:—

“In dependence upon that promise—‘Ask and ye shall

receive, that your joy may be full,' an aunt asks that prayer may be made for the conversion of her three nieces."

These three girls were all converted within a few years.

On the same occasion as the foregoing was the following, written by a young girl—

"Prayer is earnestly requested for a youth who has not given himself to Jesus. Pray that he may feel his need of a Saviour."

This is labelled, "Answered."

Again on the same day—

"Prayer is earnestly desired for a sister who is at times anxious about her soul that she may at once give herself to Jesus."

In pencil are added the words, "Prayer answered."

Then we come to—

"A wife, who herself rejoices in Christ as her Saviour, earnestly prays for the conversion of her husband, and asks the prayers of others on his behalf."

A few weeks later we find—

"The wife who requested prayer for her husband is encouraged to hope that the Lord is working in his soul. Do pray for him to-night that he may not rest till he has found Jesus as his Saviour."

The following year we read—

"A young person in distress of soul desires prayer to be offered for her that she may receive forgiveness of sins."

This was followed by—

“A young person who was prayed for under deep distress of soul asks you to join in praising God for hearing prayer and giving her peace in Jesus that same night.”

Further on is recorded—

“A girl of fourteen years of age, anxious about her soul, desires that she should be prayed for.”

The same hand adds—

“The girl left the village 25th March, converted.”

Once more and it is enough—

“Earnest prayer is asked for a son and daughter both unconverted. Also for a young man in a dying state, who is awakened but has not yet found peace.”

The last entry in the book says—

“Praise and thanksgiving are desired to be offered to the Lord for His great mercy in giving peace to that dying young man for whom prayer was asked two weeks ago.”

Some who were prayed for thus are still alive, and have been in their turn blessings to many others.

No one who realises that each one of these requests concerned the eternal welfare of an immortal soul could be weary of reading such a record, nor grudge the time spent on a theme which occupied the attention of heaven. There was “joy in the presence of the angels of God”

over each of those souls saved so long ago in that hillside village. God grant that we may none of us be less earnest than we were in those youthful days. Revivals were possible then, some of us have seen them, and they are possible still, but this kind of thing can only (Mark ix. 29) come of prayer and fasting. Self-indulgence, lack of prayer, worldly ways, all these effectually hinder the work of God in our midst. So let us remember that "now it is high time to awake out of sleep."

M. F. C.

Salvation and Communion.

IN a small town in the South of England some gospel addresses were recently given, which God graciously blessed to many.

Just before leaving there, I called on a young woman who had been interested. She at once said: "I am so glad to see you, for I want to ask you a question. When I go to your meetings and hear things said which seem so clear and simple, I always come away happy, and if any one asked me if I were saved, I should at once

say, 'Yes.' But in a day or two something in my daily circumstances tries me, and I lose my temper. *Then* all my joy goes, and leaves me as miserable as possible. Now I want you to tell me if I am really saved."

Seeing me take a Bible from my pocket, she said, "Oh, you always go to the Bible for everything."

"Yes," I replied, "I want you to rest, not on *my* word, but *God's*."

Turning to John vi. 47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life," I asked, "Is that verse true of you?"

Immediately she responded, "Yes, I *do believe*."

"Then have you everlasting life?" I asked.

Reading the verse again, she said, "*Yes*."

"How do you know it?"

"*That verse says so*."

"Exactly," said I; "you have now answered your own question from *the Word of God*."

"But why am I so often miserable?"

"Used you to become miserable when you lost your temper *before* you were converted?"

"No, it never troubled me then."

"Quite so. Your being miserable when you fail proves that you *are* a child of God, instead (as you thought) of proving you are *not* one.

What you need to see is the difference between
Salvation and Communion."

"Whatever do you mean?" she asked.

"Why, just this. Salvation depends on *two things which never change—*

the Work of Christ and the Word of God.

The former *saves* us, and the latter *assures* us we are saved. Here is a work which is eternal because perfect, and perfect because eternal—a work which the Lord Jesus Christ did on the cross when He said—

It is finished.

Nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it. Hence nothing can alter our salvation. 'For by *one* offering He hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified'" (Heb. x. 14).

As born into this world we receive Adam's fallen evil nature, which *hates God* and *loves sin*. If left to ourselves we wander further in nature's darkness, and nothing but the power of God can reach us. When we are "*born again*," a *new nature* is communicated to us (see John iii. 6) which *loves God* and *hates sin*.

Having believed the gospel of our salvation, the Holy Spirit, who was sent down from heaven at Pentecost (see John xiv. 16, 26; Acts ii.),

takes up His abode in our bodies (see 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20), and we are sealed by that Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption (Eph. i. 13, iv. 30).

Brought into this new place of relationship, we learn that God is our Father (Gal. iii. 26, iv. 6), and it is our privilege to walk as His children in the enjoyment of His perfect love, which the Holy Spirit gives us to know by unfolding the *word* which speaks of Christ, the Father's gift.

God is our Father ; Christ is our Saviour ; and the Holy Spirit is our Comforter.

When you fail, instead of looking up and enjoying the sunshine of His love, you look within and find your heart is as God said, "deceitful above all things" (Jer. xvii. 9).

Disappointed and distressed, you say : "It is no use trying. It is all over with me. *I am lost after all.*"

What has happened ? Has the work of Christ changed and the Word of God altered ? No !

You have changed.

Communion NOT *salvation* is broken. Communion is interrupted. What you need to see is how this can be restored.

Turning to 1 John i. 9, I read, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This verse speaks of *believers*, and the confession here is *not* that of a sinner going to God as a Judge and being forgiven, but a *child* going to the Father *because of the existing relationship*.

It does not tell us to *ask* for forgiveness, but "if we confess our sins, He is *faithful* and *just* to forgive."

Confession is really more than asking for forgiveness. For instance, a boy runs to his father and says: "Father, I have broken the window. I am so sorry. You *will* forgive me, won't you? I will not do it again. You *will* forgive me, won't you, father?"

But the father wisely asks, "What were you doing when you broke it?"

"I threw a stone at my brother. It missed him and went through the window."

The *whole* truth is now out. Nothing covered up. Not only the *effect*, but the *cause*. We need to confess not only *what* we have done, but *why* we did it, and judge both the *fruit* and our evil hearts—the *root* from whence it all springs. The word then is: "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from

ALL unrighteousness. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth* us from ALL sin " (1 John i. 7).

To confess our sins in the Father's ear (which is always open to His children), and not be *sure* we are forgiven, is to deny that God is faithful and just, and call in question the precious blood of Christ in its abiding efficacy.

Salvation can never be lost, because it depends on Christ's work. The *joy* of salvation, which is communion, may be lost in a moment, because *that* depends on our walk and ways.

To be a *happy* Christian two things are necessary, viz., the Word of God, and prayer. Read the Word frequently, and pray often. When you fail (as, alas, we so often do), do not wait until you retire to rest at night, but *confess it at once*, whether you are in your business or walking through the street, or you will miss the joy of the Father's love all the day.

The precious truth was new to her, but in simple faith she believed God's Word. Seeing her eternal security in Christ and everlasting relationship with the Father, also the gracious provision He has made for His failing children, her heart was filled with joy and found its rest in His love.

Tidings have recently reached us that she is

now "absent from the body and present with the Lord."

She waits *with* Him, above all the trials and failures here, for that bright resurrection morning so soon to dawn, a morning without clouds, when the blessed Saviour Himself will come to raise the sleeping saints, change the living ones, and having fashioned *all* like unto His own body of glory, will introduce us into the Father's house—never to offend His eye or grieve His heart again—but according to the Father's eternal purposes and counsels, to answer fully to His own infinite, ineffable love (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Phil. ii. 20, 21; Eph. v. 25, 27).

A. T. P.

"Thou shalt be Saved."

READING recently in this magazine the account of the dear old man who had the "faith of reliance" but not the "faith of assurance," brought to my mind a little incident which occurred some time ago, which shows that there are those who, through God's grace, have the assurance of salvation.

I was walking across H—— Heath one sultry

afternoon in the middle of summer, when my attention was attracted to a young man who was sitting reading the Word of God. I paused and said, "You read the best of books."

"Yes," he responded, "and I prove its value more each time I read it." And he then quoted the familiar words of the poet—

"Man's books with heaps of chaff are stored,
God's Book doth golden grain afford ;
Then blow away the chaff,
And spend thy time
In gathering up the golden grain."

"But why," said I, "do you value that Book? and why are you not ashamed to read it here in public?"

"Oh," he replied, "because it was from its pages I first learnt how to be saved."

"But are you saved?" I asked.

"Yes," said he; "and if you will sit down I will tell you how it happened. It was two or three years ago; I had been going on very carelessly, and was indifferent about salvation. My father and mother were not Christians, and did not seem to trouble about me. But I began to grow weary of the pleasures of sin, and of the pursuit of that which had not hitherto satisfied me. Satan, however, seemed to say, 'You have not tried this,' and 'Why don't you go in for that?'

The best is to come.' So for a time I yielded to him, though I came home night after night feeling disappointed with the continual mockery of worldly pleasure. One evening I determined to stay indoors, and took down, why, I don't know, an old Bible from the shelf, and idly turned over its pages. My eye was suddenly attracted by a verse which had been heavily pencilled round by a former reader, and I read, 'Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned' (Rom. v. 12). I said to myself, 'Can that be true? Yes, I have been guilty of many sins, so there is no doubt I am a sinner, and that surely means that I must die.' The thought troubled me. The word had gone as an arrow to my heart, and convicted me of my sinful condition. I closed the book and went to bed very unhappy. I did not sleep. I was afraid of dying because of my sins. I hurriedly dressed and went downstairs, and again opened the Bible. I gave a cry as I lighted on the words, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners' (1 Tim. i. 15). I thought, 'Then He came into the world to save me, for I am truly a sinner.' Eager for more light, I

turned over the pages, and other words attracted my attention: 'The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved' (Rom. x. 8-13). It was rather incomprehensible, for I knew little of gospel truth, but the words had taken hold of me, and I was able to rest in them. The light was only dawning, so I hastened to a 'religious' friend, whose company I had previously shunned, and asked him to explain what I had read. Many scriptures he made me read, and oh! I shall never forget the eagerness with which I drank them in. But it was when I read, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved' (Acts xvi. 31), that I said, 'I know I am saved, for God says, "Thou shalt be

saved." I sat long and listened to the gospel from this dear friend, and heard of the death of my Saviour for my sins, of His finished work, of His resurrection and exaltation to glory (Heb. x. 12), and of His coming again. From that day the blessed Book has been my constant companion ; and now I do not know what I should do without it."

You can perhaps imagine what joy it gave me to hear such a testimony. If souls in these days would abide by the plain declarations of Scripture, they would be saved the wavering experiences which are so common. You may not be able to understand *all* that you read in God's Word, but it is written for the obedience of faith, and if God declares that believers *are saved*, and He does, it is very dishonouring to Him to doubt it. Salvation is the very thing you need, for your state by nature is that of this young man. You are a sinner and under the sentence of death. Sin must be judged and punished, but here the sweetness of the children's hymn comes in—

"So out of pity Jesus said,
I'll bear the punishment instead."

It was said of the holy spotless Son of God, "Thou shalt call His name 'Jesus,' for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21).

To this end He took the sinner's place, and was made sin upon the cross (2 Cor. v. 21), and there the stroke of God's righteous wrath against sin descended upon Him. In that finished work of redemption God is perfectly and eternally satisfied, and glorified too, and on the ground of it can say of the repentant sinner, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24). Jesus has died to deliver from death all who trust in Him, and bring them home to God, and if you take Him at His word, you will be at rest and able to enjoy peace with God.

There is immense comfort to be found in the Lord's own words: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one" (John x. 28-30).

The believer is as safe as Christ is, for our place is where He is, beyond death and judgment; and for the believer to lose his salvation, Christ must cease to live, which, of course, is impossible.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii. 3).

W. G.

Sodom's Last Sunrise.

TRAVELLERS in the land of Palestine have found close to the shores of the Dead Sea traces which leave no room for doubt that there is the site of the ancient cities of the plain "which the Lord overthrew in His anger and in His wrath" (Deut. xxix. 23).

The frequent mention of these cities, of which Sodom seems to have been the most prominent in its guilt, testifies to the importance of the lessons to be learnt by their history. Nearly two thousand years before Christ the plain of Jordan presented to the natural eye a most pleasing appearance, "well watered everywhere." As it lay stretched out before Lot's covetous gaze, it looked as if it were a very garden of the Lord (Gen. xiii.). "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly," is the solemn verdict of the moral condition of its inhabitants.

The sin of Sodom was notorious.

Up from that beauteous plain ascended to the ear of God a great cry of human iniquity. The lusts and passions of sinful human nature un-

checked and unrestrained by any fear of God had turned those fair cities into a very cesspool of corruption. For a holy God to have borne any longer this awful state of things would have been an utter impossibility ; only indifference to evil could have tolerated any further delay.

“And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous ; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto Me ; and if not, I will know ” (Gen. xviii. 20, 21).

Abraham stood before the Lord. He knew somewhat of the state of things at Sodom where Lot, his nephew, dwelt, and he knew well that only one result could follow upon such an inquiry. *Sodom was doomed.*

The judgment of Sodom was just.

“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom.” The messengers of judgment were on their way, “but Abraham stood yet before the Lord ” (Gen. xviii. 22).

Were there none righteous within those sin-stained walls ? Yes, Lot was there, and he was a child of God (2 Pet. ii. 7) ; there might be others ; surely there would at least be fifty, and would a just God slay the righteous with the

wicked? Abraham knew the character of God too well for that—"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Fifty — forty-five — forty — thirty — twenty — ten? "Peradventure ten shall be found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake."

Reader, *it is true* that God is the Judge of all the earth; *it is true* that He has appointed a day in which He will judge the earth in righteousness; *it is true* that Christendom to-day is guiltier, far guiltier than was sinful Sodom. If the curtain were drawn aside for five minutes from London, Paris, Vienna, Rome, and we could see with God's eyes things as they really are in every rank of life, in every walk of society—and added to all this the crowning act of man's sin (the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ)—the wonder is that God should have delayed the day of righteous vengeance so long as He has.

Thank God there are multitudes of His people around us living lives of devotedness to Christ, and of intercession for others, like Abraham. They know that judgment is coming, and in fellowship and sympathy with the heart of Christ, by preaching and by prayer, and various

means, they are seeking to rescue the perishing. *But the world, just like Sodom, is doomed.*

How, then, will a righteous God secure His own and preserve them from the judgment? Already He has fixed the day and appointed the Judge, and all is ripening rapidly for the direful moment.

Christ is coming.

In the twinkling of an eye He will come; descending into the air He will translate His people from earth to heaven, and thus remove them from the scene of judgment.

But, reader, *the judgment is coming.* You may be careless about it, you may mock at the thought of it, you may be one of the last day scoffers, and pour scorn and contempt upon all allusion to such a thing. But God has solemnly warned you about it in His Word. He warns you again by this gospel paper. "The heavens and the earth which are now," He says, "by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pet. iii. 7).

Take the Bible and read it; read it seriously; read it with an honest desire to know the truth about these things. This you will find, that God never yet sent a prophetic warning about judg-

ment to any nation or people but what that judgment came. The histories of Egypt, Babylon, Nineveh, Sodom, Jerusalem, all testify to this. He may delay the execution of judgment, waiting to see if any will repent and turn to Him, but eventually the judgment came as sure as the warning was given. It will be so in the case of the world as now constituted.

Escape for thy life.

This was the solemn and urgent advice poured into the ears of reluctant Lot as he lingered, loathe to leave the city of his choice. Yes, "escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed" (Gen. xix. 17).

Oh, lingering soul, your danger is as great as his. Could you but stand where Abraham did, "before the Lord," you would see that nothing can prevent the outpouring of God's fiery indignation upon a guilty world which has crucified His Son, and now lives carelessly regardless of its sin.

Sodom's last sunrise.

Yes, it came. For the last time those guilty sinners saw the rising of the sun. "The sun was risen upon the earth" when Lot, just barely

escaped from Sodom, entered into the place of safety.

And, reader, the last rising of the sun will soon be witnessed by the men and women of guilty Christendom. "Exalted unto heaven" with gospel privileges, "brought down to hell" in judgment she will be.

"It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. xi 24).

Do you wish to escape that awful doom? Thank God, the way of escape is open for you, it is open for all. Still the blessed Saviour invites you to His arms of love: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But do not delay. Do not listen to the voice of Satan bidding you put off to a death-bed, or to some future time, the decision of this all-important matter.

When the unfortunate inhabitants of St Pierre, alarmed at the rumbling noises from the neighbouring volcano, were preparing to escape, the governor of the island stilled their fears and bade them settle down again, for there was no danger, yet in twenty-four hours not a trace of the city was left.

The devil tries in like manner to still the sinner's fears, but, friend, awake—

Escape for thy life.

"O Lord, once more in love appeal
 Whilst mercy still is near,
 Arouse the careless, make them feel
 Their awful need of Thee."

A. H. B.

"Be ye therefore ready."

SOME years ago a solemn scene was witnessed in a village churchyard. A funeral procession was seen wending its way thither, with not one coffin only but eleven—borne on the shoulders of stalwart village men.

The reader may perhaps wonder why so many bodies were being buried at once. A terrible gale had raged on our eastern coasts. The storm was at its height, when signals of distress were seen by the coastguard. They evidently proceeded from a vessel some distance out at sea. Willing hands were at work immediately, and brave men put out in the lifeboat. Before long the doomed ship was reached, and some of the

crew were put into the lifeboat and brought to shore.

But the work of rescue was not yet over. Once more the life boat gained the shore with its precious burden, but there were others yet needing to be saved. This time, alas! on its way to the wreck, the boat capsized, and the brave rescuers were seen struggling in the water. Something prevented the boat from righting itself, so that there was no hope, humanly speaking, for the men, and most were drowned.

The body of one man was never recovered, and only two managed to swim ashore. The rest, who so recently had been full of health and vigour, met with a sudden death. Was this the *end*? "After this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27), God's word tells us. How many were prepared for this?

Dear reader, where would you be were sudden death to overtake you? At any moment you may be called away, or Christ may come to take His people to Himself (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). Would you be ready to meet Him? The lifeboat failed in its work of salvation, but Christ never fails. God is ever ready to accept any poor sinner who knows his need, and trusts in the finished work of Christ. God grant that

each one who reads these lines may find "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

A. E.

"I shall be there: will you, Doctor?"

SUCH was the simple yet decided testimony of one well-known to us, only a few days before he left this scene to "be for ever with the Lord."

He himself felt the end was near; although sometimes the doctor thought there were hopes of his recovery. In fact, he asked that the funeral arrangements should be simple, and that a few words might be spoken at the graveside, not about himself, but of the Lord Jesus, the One to whom he owed everything; and also, he wished them to say that he had now gone to be with the Lord.

At times his suffering was intense, but in the intervals he loved to speak of the Lord Jesus and His precious things.

The Lord was evidently leading his heart—even in the midst of suffering—to look beyond it all to that eternity of bliss which awaits every blood-bought saint of God.

Amongst other things, he repeated one verse of a sweet little hymn,—

“All taint of sin shall be removed,
All evil done away ;
And I shall dwell with God’s beloved,
Through God’s eternal day.”

After repeating this, he turned to the doctor, who at the time was in the room, and said, “*I shall be there, will you, doctor?*” The doctor, alas! could not say that he would, he being a worldly man, probably indifferent about the welfare of his immortal soul. But with our aged and now departed friend and brother all was well. His feet had for many years been planted on the Rock. His trust was simply yet firmly in Jesus, the sinners’ Saviour, and it was this alone which gave him such confidence in the very presence of death.

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer’s ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”

Does the reader of this little paper know Jesus as his or her Saviour? Have you tasted even now something of the sweetness of His love—that love which many waters could not quench, neither could the floods drown? Have

you, dear reader, ever *thought* of that love?—love which brought Jesus down from heaven's brightest glory to die for sinners upon Calvary's tree? Think, dear friend, for a moment of Jesus in all those terrible sufferings upon the cross, not only suffering, as surely He did at the hands of man, but forsaken of God, "smitten of God and afflicted." And then, having thought of the terrible agony of that atoning death, can you say with an adoring heart: "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed"? C. SK.

"An Eternal Choice."

TWO brothers, having found out their sinful condition, determined to seek salvation, and prepare for eternity. They had tasted the empty and bitter pleasures of sin and the world for a season, and apparently discovered its false outside covering all too soon. But alas! after a short time the youngest might be seen mingling again with his fellow-travellers on the road to judgment,

refusing his brother's constant warning, and plunging recklessly into any and every amusement. Having accepted an invite to a ball, he refused to go with his brother to the meeting for prayer when the time for both came.

It is difficult to tell the sorrowful story of that ballroom, and the solemn word of warning which came to all in that brilliant scene. The young man stood ready with his partner—yes, ready for the dance, but totally unprepared for DEATH! And then—how awful!—you might have seen him apparently in the midst of life and health suddenly fall to the polished floor, lifeless! Oh, the reality of death! The wrath of God abideth on the unbeliever (John iii. 36), and he is already condemned, because “ye will not come to Me that ye might have life,” says the rejected Saviour, who died on the cross to bear your sins away.

Be warned, reader; procrastinate no longer when such eternal issues are at stake, but receive as the eldest brother did that very night the Lord Jesus as your own Friend and Saviour. His love is ever free and boundless, and when the span of life has spent itself, you will be ready for Him who bore your sins in His own body on the tree.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

You can search out these precious words for yourself in God's Book, the Bible. Only to-day I heard from a preacher of the gospel of a man who had for some years lived in sin and folly and drunkenness having been turned from idols (as he called it himself) to serve Jesus. When he played on his instrument the empty dance-music usually heard did not come, but that hymn beginning—

"I feel like singing all the time,
My tears are wiped away ;
For Jesus is a Friend of mine,
I'll serve Him every day.

I'll praise Him, praise Him, praise Him all the time."

Will you not join in this glad song?

E.



Taking Observations.



HOW dark would be the future, not to say the present, had we no revelation from God !

If you have made a voyage of more than a few days' duration, you probably know the meaning of "taking an observation."

At mid-day the sun is directly over our heads. If he be visible at that hour, the ship's officers are enabled to determine the position and course of the ship more accurately than by other means. But all depends on seeing the sun, and only those who have crossed the dreary Atlantic, and been perhaps for several days in a storm or without his welcome beams, can know the gloomy feeling that invades the passengers, as day after day they see the captain on the bridge vainly endeavouring to take an observation. It is to this that Luke probably refers when he says: "When neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away" (Acts xxvii. 20). They were in darkness, "tossed with a tempest," without means of shaping their course, and in danger of shipwreck!

Thank God that we have light from heaven that we can order our steps according to His Word, and that we know our way. We need not "grope as if we had no eyes," nor "stumble at noonday as in the night." "The Dayspring from on high has visited us," and has given us light.

Not only was the Lord Jesus here as the

Light and Life of men—a light which shone in darkness—but God has given us His Word to be our compass and chart. “Thy Word is a light.” “All Scripture is profitable for instruction.” May we not despise it! May we not forget to take observations!

King Josiah came to the throne at Jerusalem in dark and evil days. Idols had been usurping God's place. But one day the news came from the High Priest: “I have found a book!” (2 Chron. xxxiv.). It was passed from hand to hand, and at last it was read before the king. He rent his clothes, he took heed to it, and there was peace in his days.

Some twenty-five years later, Josiah's son Jehoiakim was on the throne. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, and He bade him write His words in a roll of a book, and caused them to be read in the ears of the people. The words were words of judgment. Then the chief ones said: “We will surely tell the king” (Jer. xxxvi.) So the book was carried in to the king, who sat before the fire. When a few pages had been read aloud to Jehoiakim, he took the roll, and with a penknife he cut it and cast it into the flames. That man had the burial of an ass. It is a question for us all to-day.

Will we give heed to God's Word, and shape our course thereby, or will we cut it up, and cast it away? Either God's Word criticises and *changes us*, or we criticise and seek to *destroy it*. Not that we can really succeed in the latter, for it is a *living* word, and "sharper than any two-edged sword." Even King Jehoiakim had to find this out. God caused His words to be re-written, and He added thereto many and sore judgments, chiefly to come upon the man who had despised His counsel and would none of His reproof.

Let us then take heed to our ways. Read Jeremiah xxxvi. H. L. H.

"My Friends the Lepers."

HE had just returned from a visit to India, and the account we heard from his own lips was so extremely interesting, that I feel sure you would like to hear a little about it too.

He had gone to that far-off land, counting neither the cost nor the distance, expressly to see the poor outcast lepers in that vast continent. For deep in the heart of the speaker, God had

implanted a real compassion and interest for the afflicted lepers in India. He had marvelled at the special way in which the Lord Jesus had singled them out as the objects of His mercy when He was on earth, and he sought to follow in the footsteps of his Divine Master.

When John the Baptist sought assurance from the blessed Lord that He really was the long-looked-for Messiah, He replied with far different poofs from what the natural mind would have suggested, "Tell John," said the patient Saviour, "*the lepers are cleansed.*" He pointed out to John that the interests of the Son of God were amongst those who were the most suffering, and who most needed Him (Luke vii. 22). And when He commissioned His twelve apostles, sending them forth to preach the gospel and to heal diseases, He specified one class of human suffering in a peculiar way as He charged them to "*cleanse the lepers.*"

This long journey, covering several thousand miles, was not undertaken by a curiosity to explore "India's coral strand," or to attend the brilliant and gorgeous ceremony of the Durbar. He went solely because he cared for the welfare of those whom he called "my friends the lepers."

After travelling three whole days through the

jungle, he reached the spot he desired. Which of us can have the slightest idea of the delight such a visit could be to these poor outcasts. For outcasts they were everywhere—loathed, shunned, and avoided by every one. The maxim of the world is ever to avoid infection of any kind, and in a relentless merciless way they were driven forth to die. To have a visitor in that isolated locality was a very infrequent occurrence, and here was one who had travelled to them all the way from the land of their great and good Empress. They resolved to give him the best welcome they could afford. Odd pieces of coloured rags were hung out as bunting, and when at last the gentleman arrived, the whole colony of lepers had turned out to greet him. His description of their poor distorted features quite baffles repetition, for the ravages of that awful disease make them almost unrecognisable as human beings. They were drawn up in two lines, the leper men on one side of the path and the leper women and little children on the other, and as he approached there burst on his ear their song of praise—

“What can wash away my stain?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!

Oh precious is the flow,
That makes me white as snow ;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus !"

What a touching scene ! What a spectacle for the angels to behold ! What grateful melody to the ear of God ! Far sweeter this to Him than any fully-surpliced cathedral choir. For the well white Englishman and the dusky diseased Indians had met on a common ground, and that the precious blood of Jesus. The out-cast Hindoo lepers and their kind friend from far-off England found a theme of sweetness to all alike in singing the praises of Him who had died for each one. His love had embraced black and white equally, so they could say together, "Christ hath loved *us*, and hath given Himself for *us*" (Eph. v. 2). Verily, for the moment, the wilderness did rejoice and blossom as the rose.

How much we read about the leper in Sacred Scripture. Leprosy was the most fearful complaint and fraught with the direst consequences to the poor victims. The holiness of God, whilst He dwelt in the midst of the children of Israel, demanded the absolute expulsion of every leper from the camp. The inexorable law concerning them was : "*Put out of the camp every leper. . .*

He shall dwell alone, without the camp shall his habitation be." It was an awful doom! Pity the poor fellow! Driven from all he loved, deprived of every comfort, with an incurable lingering disease to which nothing but a slow coming death can end its tortures. Joint after joint decays and rots off, the sight perishes, and with his head bared, exposing his deformity to all around, you listen to his mournful plaint, "Unclean! unclean!"

God is holy, God is light, and cannot have sin in His presence, and these severe measures with leprosy—the type of sin—were to impress man with the fact of his need of cleansing before approach to God is made possible. Neither rank nor royalty provided any escape from this condemnation. Uzziah, the haughty King of Israel, when smitten by the Lord with leprosy, had to forego all his purple glories, and after abdicating the throne in favour of his son, dwelt in "a several house." Nor did death even end the reproach, for he was afforded no royal tomb with the other kings in the city of David, but was buried in a field, "for they said, He is a leper" (2 Chron. xxvi. 23).

But with the birth of the Blessed Babe in Bethlehem came the dawn of brighter and better

things. A new era is introduced altogether. In the Person of His beloved Son, God had come *near* to sinful man. No longer will He hide Himself in a thick cloud and keep man at a distance. God was now manifest in the flesh, and had come down to us in our need. Good news for the lepers! Good news for you and me! It has been beautifully expressed: "Not now does He teach the leper his leprosy by setting him at a distance, but by Himself suffering the penalty of his defilement." God's purpose to-day is to make us "NIGH by the blood of Christ." In His blessed mission to this earth "*God was in Christ*, reconciling the world unto Himself." His words were the words of God, His actions were the actions of God, and He expressed to the lepers what the heart of God felt for them. Hence in the pathway of the Lord Jesus how often we find Him meeting the poor stricken leper. Every one else might avoid the poor wretch, but the Son of God was perfectly accessible to the most defiled or degraded. Did He then set aside the unalterable law of Jehovah in Numbers v. 2? Not for one instant: He always "magnified the law and made it honourable." But He attracted the leper to Himself, and then went to the cross and paid

the righteous demands of God's holiness. What a Saviour! Is He not exactly the One for your heart's need?

Have you noticed with what boldness the lepers approached the Son of God? They came so close to His blessed Person that they knelt at His feet. They feared no anathemas hurled against them nor the terrors of a broken law from those lips of grace. Their need brought them to Him. His grace attracted them to Himself. Did He shrink from such close contact with their defilement? Nay, indeed, He ever values the confidence of our hearts. Those that did not hesitate to trespass on His goodness always received the greater blessing. The ten that were cleansed stood "afar off." They asked for cleansing, and in His sovereign mercy God met them on their own ground and gave them their heart's desire. But these received no "touch." How perfect was the expression of His love in Mark i. 41, "Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand and *touched* him." He identified Himself with all the ravages and corruption that sin had brought into the world, and later on, went to the cross and bore the whole curse of it. Do you think the leper ever forgot the magic of that "touch," or the moment

when he stood in direct personal contact with the Son of God? Methinks never was a moment in his life more sacred. None but God Himself could touch the leper and remain undefiled. If even a priest's garment touched that which was unclean, it became contaminated. During the Levitical examination of a leper, the priest only "looked" on the suspected person. It was after he was pronounced healed that the priest touched the right ear, hand, and toe, to apply blood and oil.

Let us ponder for one instant the "I will" of the Lord Jesus in His response to the leper. We have such hard unjust thoughts of God, and picture Him as "an austere man," compassing the ruin of His creatures. Here we find God the Son revealing to us what was His will about the leper. "I will," He says, "*be thou clean.*" The heart of God sought the man's blessing, not his destruction. And what is the will of God to-day for you and me? Marvel of marvels, we read in 1 Thessalonians iv. 3, "This is the will of God, even *your sanctification.*" The heart of God is bent on doing us good.

Another touching thing is recorded at the close of the Lord's earthly pathway. Jerusalem was all astir for the celebrations connected with

the Passover, and multitudes were thronging into the city. The high priest owned his "palace" there, but not of him in his sumptuous luxury did the Saviour ask hospitality. No, had you been seeking Him that day, they would have directed you to find Him at "the house of Simon *the leper*." What an address for the Son of God! The law banished the leper, and doomed him to perpetual isolation. The glad tidings of God in the gospel tell the leper that the Saviour who has died for his sins has purchased even the poor body too with His blood, making it to-day, in spite of all its humiliation, a temple of the Holy Ghost, with the promise of soon changing it into the fashion of His own glorious body! What a Saviour! Can you be unmoved in the presence of such surpassing grace. If any doubt still lingers in your heart as to whether He would receive you—a lost sinner in your sins—think how the leper's Saviour treated the poor leper *and* COME!

I would only add one more detail about the poor lepers in India. Isolated they must be, and enforced idleness is also imperative on account of the highly contagious nature of the disease. Are they then debarred from the service of Him whose claims they love to own? No; for as

holy priests they may "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, giving thanks to His name." They also find that no impediment has, or ever can be, placed on their service of prayer; so they gather together for prayer three times a day, and thus serve not only the Lord but His people, as they plead with Him for their white brothers and sisters in England.

E. R. M.

GOD.

THERE *is* a God, though some may deny it, and call it superstition to believe in the unseen. God *IS*, though His existence may be ignored or neglected by many, and by others admitted in words only.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork."

All worlds throughout space—and *this* world on which we live among them—proclaim His Being. The trees did not create themselves, nor bring forth the sap that every spring rises from their roots. They have no intelligence nor skill to form their leaves or blossoms. The animals never begot themselves, nor did man—intelligent man—bring himself into being. Whosoever

thinks that all these had their being without a Creator, is far more superstitious than he who accepts the evidence of creation that there IS a God. And surely intelligent man is responsible to believe that which speaks directly to his senses and his reason, for "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, **so that they are without excuse.**"

There MUST, then, be a God, the Creator of all things, for the evidences of His eternal power and Godhead are made clear by all around us, yea by the existence of our very selves; and this leaves the unbeliever not only under the charge of superstitious incredulity but without excuse for his unbelief.

More than this, God has "left not Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness"; this is a daily and hourly reproach to him who denies or doubts the existence of a living God who is not only the Creator but the upholder of all things.

But after all, to acknowledge the existence of God on undeniable evidence which speaks to our senses, which we are responsible to use, is very

far from being the highest ground on which God rests our responsibility to acknowledge Him; for in His mercy He has given a yet surer witness in that which speaks to the conscience and the heart of man. He has spoken in HIS WORD, and this must call not only for earnest attention, but for submission and obedience. It establishes on a firm foundation the witness which creation bears to God, who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, resting that testimony and man's apprehension of it, not only on the works, but on the WORD of Him who did the works. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3).

When God, the living God, the eternal God, has spoken, a tenfold responsibility devolves on those to whom His Word has come to listen to, and accept it, and let it speak with authority to their souls. That Word commends itself as its own witness, and not only reveals God as existing before all things, and creating and upholding all things, but it unfolds His very nature—light and love—a God of holiness and grace, yet love and grace according to righteousness. Creation does not and cannot reveal Him thus, but the

written Word does, and oh ! marvellous grace, the LIVING Word, His Son in whom He has spoken in these last days (Heb. i. 2), tells out all the fulness of His heart ; He not only speaks with authority to command obedience, but with light to search the conscience and love to win the heart, even the heart of sinful man.

That same Word was given to men in their sins, revealing their lost condition, though not to leave them there, but to lift them out of it and restore them to that God whom they did not like to retain in their knowledge, nor to glorify as God (Rom. i. 21). It proves that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God ; while God who judges thus, reveals by the same Word the grace that meets men in their sinful ruined state, and displays His boundless grace in justifying and restoring all who believe (Rom. iii.). For

"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) ; and

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things ?" (Rom. vii. 32)—
even eternal glory with Himself.

SUCH IS THE GOD WE ADORE.

D. H.

"The Kiss of Death!"

SUCH is the heading of a pictorial advertisement in the *Police News*, portraying the tragic scene enacted in a busy street in C—— on the evening of Whit-Monday, when a soldier enticed a girl to kiss him, that meanwhile with one stroke of a razor he might launch her into eternity!

Much excitement has naturally been caused; many are the words of pity expressed for the victim, and execration for her heartless assassin.

Yet how many who saw the picture have seen themselves there but for the grace of God, and who lays to heart the words of our Lord, when told of the men on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and of the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"?

Happily such horrible occurrences are not common amongst us, but still the solemn fact remains, that death as the wages of sin is reigning around, hurrying thousands on to the judgment to come.

But, dear reader, there was another "kiss of death," infinitely more infamous from every

point of view, to which I would fain call your serious attention; one which the God of all grace has turned to such blessed account, that whosoever believes on Him who in grace submitted to it, receives "the kiss of reconciliation." He yielded Himself to death for sinners, and thus His God and Father can reconcile us unto Himself. The prodigal, when sick of his own ways and their bitter fruits, arose and returned, and met a welcome far beyond all his expectations or deserts; he was kissed and brought into the father's house as a son indeed.

Who then would dare to limit the boundless grace of God, now reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, which makes it possible even for the victim of this awful tragedy and her cruel assassin (like the penitent thief) in their last moments to find the peace that has been made by the blood of Jesus, and is now declared to every creature under heaven, without distinction, *all* having sinned and come short of the glory of God, as it is written, "*Whosoever* shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Oh, that all who read these lines may have their eyes opened to their own state before God as ruined and undone by sin, so that by faith

they may now receive the free gift of His grace, which is "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then, like the eunuch of Ethiopia, they may go on their way rejoicing in the knowledge that Jesus, "the Saviour of sinners," is the "Son of God."

"No wrath God's heart retaineth to usward who believe,
No dread in ours remaineth as we His truth receive ;
Returning sons He kisses, and with His robe invests,
His perfect love dismisses all terror from our breasts."

ANON.



Egypt or Canaan.

A CHRISTIAN man was dying after a long illness. He was tended by his mother-in-law. Near the end, he turned to her and asked: "Mother, are you trusting to Jesus, and ready to go too?" "I am not *fit*," was her reply. "Mother, Jesus did not die for *fit* people, nor for those who can make themselves fit; He died for *sinners*." These and other words were the means of leading the mother into the light, and she is now a believer, and ready to go if called.

To those who are approaching the goal like

this man, eternity looks very near—earth is fading, and heavenly things assume all the reality God means them to have for us. Do not lightly put aside the words of the dying—you have probably heard many of such.

“When Jacob was a-dying,” he had much to say to his sons; when Joseph was departing, “he gave commandments concerning his bones.” This means more than you perhaps realise. Both had believed God as to the future—surely to them a future for earth—their posterity was to leave Egypt and dwell in Canaan, and neither Jacob nor Joseph wished his bones to be buried out of the land of promise. They believed that Egypt was not always to be the abode of their children, they walked by faith, with their eyes on the future. Their dying words declared this plainly.

Do you believe that this world is not to be our home always? Dying men and women see it plainly for us, and they sometimes seek to warn us, and many of them, we may add, have *lived* as if they believed it. If we are not to stay here always, will you not prepare for the great change that must surely come?

Would Mr Chamberlain have started for South Africa without some knowledge of the journey

thither? Still more important would he not have deemed it to study the maps of the countries he was visiting, and to have had in his retinue personages who would be useful to him on such an expedition? Surely yes. In like manner had *you* not better make your preparations if you want an entrance into the heaven we all wish to reach some day?

Yet, wonderful to say, God asks nothing of you, but the acceptance of *His* preparations and arrangements.

“All the fitness God requireth,
Is to feel your need of Him.”

He is a Saviour “ready to save,” and He waits with outstretched arms, hands too that have been pierced for us, to receive *sinners*. He is like the father who embraced the prodigal son long before he was “fit,” when he was in rags, and who himself, from his own abundance, provided all the fitness the unworthy son required. When you know His love, His compassion for the lost, *for you*, you will be able to give “commandment concerning your bones” in peace, for you will be sure of an entrance into the Father’s house, and remember, the long (or short) journey of earth may end at any moment!

When you are in a dark tunnel, directly the

light at the exit end becomes visible, you feel you are nearing the terminus, and you forget the darkness or dread. So if you have a sure Light ahead, a Saviour awaiting you, you may be like Jacob and Joseph, "ready to depart," not wishing to live in Egypt always, but "fit" for heaven now. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet (or *fit*) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." H. L. H.

"Guilty, my Lord; Guilty, my Lord."

[The following extract from the *Irish Times* of 27th February 1875 has been in our possession for several years. We feel sure that many will read it with interest. —ED.]

"**T**HE proceedings in connection with the trial of John —, charged with the murder in October last near this town of an old man named Edward —, appear to have excited extraordinary public interest here. Yesterday and to-day the Crown Court was crowded with people to see a man who, according to the evidence of the Crown, was the perpetrator of crimes of a

desperate character. Large numbers of persons who were unable to obtain admission to the Court waited outside, in the hope of seeing him when passing through the Court to the prison van in which he was to be driven to the prison.

"Long before Mr Justice Barry took his seat on the bench this morning, every available position was occupied by persons who were curious to know what point could be raised in the prisoner's favour by Mr Buchanan, who was requested by the Judge to read over the depositions, in order to be in a position to advise the prisoner as to the course which he should adopt when called on to plead to an indictment involving his life ; but it would appear that the unhappy man was determined that no attempt should be made to save him from the consequences of his crimes, for he intimated through the prison officials that he had made up his mind, and that he would put in no plea but that of 'guilty.' When placed in the dock he looked haggard, careworn, and as one perfectly resigned to a fate that was inevitable. He was arraigned as John —, and indicted with having on the 23rd October last feloniously and wilfully murdered one Edward —, and when the Clerk of the Crown put the question, 'What say you,

guilty or not guilty?' the prisoner replied, 'Guilty, my lord ; guilty, my lord.'

"The Clerk of the Crown then asked him what he had to say why sentence of death by execution should not be passed on him ?

"The prisoner—' I say that I have been most guilty of this crime in the sight of the Almighty God, and I have to condemn and accuse myself of it, and to say that from my heart I am sorry for it. I have been bad in the sight of the Almighty God, but I hope that as my body is to go that the Almighty will have mercy on my soul, and that during the time I shall be allowed to live the Almighty will allow me to glorify Him the more, so that when it is pleasing to Him to take my soul out of this body by execution that He will have mercy on my soul ; that I shall afterwards sing in His presence among His angels and saints, and that I may enjoy Him for all eternity.'

"Mr Justice Barry then said—' John —, you have pleaded guilty to this charge of the wilful murder of Edward —. In that plea of guilty you only anticipated the inevitable result of the trial, for no sane man who would hear the evidence that should be addressed against you could hesitate to arrive at the con-

clusion of your guilt. You basely and cruelly murdered that old man from the meanest and most contemptible of all motives—the greed of gain. You possessed yourself of the few pounds which he had put together by his industry and labour. Your career has been a remarkable one. You have scarcely arrived in years at the prime of manhood. You appear to belong to the class of persons who, I am proud to say, are but little known in this country—a class who devote themselves to a persistent career of crime, just as other men apply themselves to a course of industry and honesty. It appears that you are now but thirty-one years of age, and up to the year 1864 you had been convicted and had suffered punishment eighteen times for different larcenies and for the reception of stolen goods. For one of these offences you were subjected to a serious punishment—four years' penal servitude. That time you served, and in 1864 you pleaded guilty to a charge of burglary, and for that crime you were sentenced by the presiding Judge to ten years' penal servitude, from which you were only liberated on the 1st August 1874. We then find you in the workhouse, and while there you conceived and planned the desperate act which you subsequently carried out. Having,

I believe, while there, heard of the solitary condition of this old man, Edward ——, and that he was in the possession of some little means, availing yourself of that knowledge you contrived a plan by which you effected an entrance to his little cottage, and murdered and pillaged him. For that crime you now stand at that bar; but that is not all. With your ill-gotten booty you betook yourself to Belfast, where you spent that money in a manner almost as bad as that in which you had acquired it. Wishing then to replenish yourself with others' money, you, on the 19th November, attempted a most daring robbery, and accompanied that robbery with violence which nearly caused the death of two persons—certainly the death of one person. While you were under arrest in connection with that crime you were, through the acuteness of a police officer, recognised as the person who was charged with the crime of murdering Edward ——. I am not one of those who can—and I do not envy those who can—look without feelings of pity and awe on a fellow-man about to receive the doom that consigns him to a violent and ignominious death; but I own that in your case, those feelings must be largely mixed with feelings of gratitude that you were so soon arrested in your career of

bloodshed and crime before others, like the unfortunate old man Edward ——, had fallen victims to your murderous hand. I have been informed, and I have heard with satisfaction, that you have listened with attention to the religious ministrations of some excellent persons who have with a holy zeal devoted themselves to the task of your tardy conversion. I hope that that conversion will continue to the last, and will bear fruit during the period that remains to you, and that you will devote that brief period of time in an endeavour to effect a reconciliation with your God.' (His lordship here assumed the black cap.) 'It only now remains for me to pass upon you the dreadful sentence of the law. The sentence and judgment of the Court is, and I do adjudge that you, John ——, be taken from the bar of this Court, where you now stand, to the place from whence you came, the common gaol of the county of Sligo, and that on Wednesday the 24th March you will be taken to the common place of execution within the walls of the prison in which you are confined, and that you be hanged by the head until you are dead, and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul!'

"The prisoner then put his hands together, and raising them, spoke in a sort of fervent

rhapsody, probably the result of intense remorse for his crime. He prayed that the Lord might have mercy on him and have mercy on every soul present, and grant to all sinners that mercy which had been afforded to him. He believed in the true God, whose blessed Son had shed His blood for him, and to whom his soul was as precious as the soul of the greatest king. He thanked the Almighty for giving him such comfort and consolation and courage to confess the heinous crime of wilful murder.

"This terminated a scene which was regarded as one of the most unusual and impressive that could be witnessed in a Court of Justice.

"After the prisoner had uttered his last words he descended the steps of the dock, and was soon after conveyed under escort to the county gaol."

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Do we not see in the above case a marvellous instance of the grace of God? No one who has learnt his own lost and ruined condition will find fault with the God of all grace thus plucking an unworthy sinner as a brand from the burning. All may not be guilty of the same sins, but each one is a sinner, and guilty before God; each one

needs a Saviour, and, thank God, there is a Saviour for all who will own their guilt and trust in the precious blood that cleanseth from *all* sin. Does that word "all" seem to be too comprehensive? Thank God that He says "all." The precious blood of Christ can wash even a murderer, and make him "white as snow," and that same precious blood is needed by the most refined and moral member of society. Nothing more is needed by the vilest who honestly confesses his sin in the sight of God, and nothing less will do for any, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Each one who enters the bright glory of God will have but one song to sing—"Thou art worthy . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood" (Rev. v. 9).

Murders and suicides have become alarmingly frequent of late ; the lust for money, drink, and various forms of vice have led to the perpetration of these awful crimes which increase with the growing unbelief in God and His Word and in a future state which mark the times in which we live. An awful responsibility rests upon those religious teachers who have sown unbelief of the Bible broadcast through the land.

Should any of our readers be tempted to

doubt, we would earnestly invite them to a daily reading of the Scriptures.

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word” (Psalm cxix. 9).

A. H. B.

“Who is a Christian?”

THE above words, posted about the city of S—, announced the subject of an address to be delivered (alas!) from the pulpit of those who deny the very essence of Christianity, viz., the incarnation of the Son of God.

Nevertheless, is it not a question of the utmost importance, and one which calls for the serious consideration of every thoughtful person?

In seeking for an answer, where shall—nay, where can we turn with certainty?

Only to one source—and that a divine one—the Word of God. According to Scripture there are at least three things which mark the Christian—

(1.) He has life—eternal life.

(2.) He has now as a present portion the forgiveness of sins.

(3.) He is indwelt or sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Before quoting a few passages as to the possession of eternal life, it would perhaps be well to cite one or more showing our *need* of life; and first we would call attention to the following well-known words from the mouth of the Lord Jesus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God;" and "Ye *must* be born again" (John iii. 3, 7).

As another has said—

"By nature and by practice far,
How *very far* from God!"

But, precious thought, it was not God's will to leave us in the distance from Himself wherein sin had placed us, and so we hear from those same blessed lips 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).

Moreover, in speaking to that sinful woman at the well, we hear Him saying, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall

give him, shall be *in him* a well of water springing up into *everlasting life*."

Texts almost without number might be quoted on this important subject did space permit, but we will now refer to others which speak of the forgiveness of sins.

In Acts ii. 38, Peter, having brought home to the Jews the sin of crucifying the Lord Jesus, and in answer to their question, "What shall we do?" says, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the *remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Again in Acts x., having preached the death and resurrection of Jesus, he says, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive the *remission of sins*."

Paul, too, at Antioch, first preaches the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and then proclaims the *forgiveness of sins* through His name (Acts xiii. 38, 39); and the apostle John, in his first epistle, says, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins *Are* forgiven you for His name's sake" (1 John ii. 12).

Having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul, those who thus believe are sealed by the Holy Ghost.

In the Gospel by John the Lord Himself says, "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;" and then is added, "But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 38, 39). Again we read, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, *and shall be in you*" (John xiv. 16, 17).

When the Lord Jesus was glorified (Acts ii.) the disciples "were all with one accord in one place. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (see Acts ii. 1-5). Again, in chapter x., "While Peter spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word."

In Galatians iii. 26, we read, "For ye are all the children (or sons) of God by faith in Christ Jesus;" and then chapter iv. 6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

And now, dear fellow-traveller to eternity, we would in closing commend the foregoing scriptures to your serious attention, praying that God may make them a blessing.

C. SK.



“Are You Guilty or Not Guilty?”

SIN is an awful reality, and ever since the fall of man has filled the world with misery and sorrow. It is found everywhere, and dwells in every human heart. Sometimes it displays itself in hideous form, and bursts forth in crimes that fill the world with horror. But in every heart it dwells, and manifests its presence by sinful thoughts, as well as words and deeds.

By nature there is no difference, as says the inspired Word of God, “**for all have sinned** and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. iii. 23). Grace only it is that makes us to differ. “There, but for the grace of God, goes Rowland Hill,” said that earnest seeker of lost men and women as he beheld a wretched murderer led forth to execution.

Conscience for a time may slumber, but how

terrible will be the awakening at the day of judgment for all those who refuse to own their guilt in the sight of a holy God! And, "**Be sure your sin will find you out.**" Man may cover up his sin from the eyes of his fellow, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom each one has to do.

Four years ago a terrible crime was perpetrated, one of the most cold-blooded murders that has ever shocked the feelings of this generation. For four years the murderer with callous indifference walked over the grave of his victim, a grave which he had dug with his own hands close by his dwelling. For four years that awful secret was locked up within his own breast, but at length, in the government of God, the finger of human suspicion was pointed at him. The prisoner pleaded "not guilty," but so overwhelming was the evidence against him that he was condemned to death, whilst maintaining his innocence to almost the very last moment of his life.

A scene such as has rarely if ever before been witnessed took place at the scaffold, we are told. With pinioned limbs, bandaged eyes, and adjusted rope, the condemned man stood for one brief moment awaiting the withdrawal of the

bolt. Suddenly the chaplain of the prison steps forward, and in earnest tones puts the question, "Are you guilty or not guilty?"

A solemn silence supervened, and again with greater earnestness the question falls upon the ears of that man whose eyes are closed for ever to all earthly sights, "Are you guilty or not guilty?"

Firmly and clearly comes the answer, "**Guilty,**" and in another instant the speaker has entered his eternal abode.

What in that brief moment passed in the soul of the condemned man, God only knows. What led him in that last word of a misspent life to own the guilt that up till then he had sought to cover, we know not. A sudden glance into the future, a sudden and tardy recognition of the fact that he had to do with One from whose presence he could not flee, it may have been—but the law had done its work. *The guilty man was condemned, and the just sentence was executed.*

Oh, yes, sin is a reality—an awful reality ; but with God there is forgiveness. God in grace can do what the law is utterly unable to accomplish. The law can never clear the guilty, a human judge can never justify the criminal ; but, wonder

of wonders! a holy, righteous God has found a way of justifying the guilty.

All the world, the writer and reader included, has been brought in "**guilty before God.**" A plea of "Not Guilty" can never avail with Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire; indeed, the sinner's only chance for eternity is to honestly take the guilty sinner's place, and claim the sinner's Saviour.

"I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and **Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin**" (Ps. xxxii. 5). And again, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9).

How unlike is this to the law! The law can only condemn the guilty, but a Saviour-God can justify the guilty sinner who believes in Jesus. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. iii. 20), but the sinner who believes in Jesus is justified freely by God's grace, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth, a propitiation through faith in His blood." Yes, a crucified Christ is the propitiation or mercy-seat, that is, *the place of meeting* between a holy God and a guilty sinner.

"I meet my God in Jesus Christ,
And fear and terror cease."

Come, then, dear reader, no longer delay to take your place as "guilty before God." If you would know His saving mercy and justifying grace, come to Him through Jesus Christ, owning your guilt and confessing your sin, and you will not be cast out. The Lord Jesus Christ, by the sacrifice of Himself, has met every claim of God's righteousness, and exhausted every stroke of His just wrath against sin, and now faith can sing—

"The wrath of a sin-hating God
With me can have nothing to do,
The Saviour's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

A. H. B.

"If I only knew."

"I SHOULD not mind dying, if I only knew where I was going."

So said an aged lady to her friend, and indeed nothing can be more serious than the position of one in her case, and the pity is that more do not feel as she does about it. To be nearing the end of a long journey with

no certainty of a welcome at the end of it! Friend, would you care to take the risk?

Every one, however, is not in the same lamentable state; the Bible describes quite another attitude of mind. Speaking of the "time of my departure," Paul says, "I am now ready"; and again, "Having a desire to depart" (2 Tim. iv.; Phil. i.). You may say that he was an apostle and you are not, but he had not always been such; moreover, in his expressions of certainty, as you will see, he associates other believers with him, which shows that they ought to be sure where they are going.

"We know . . . we have a building of God . . . eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1). "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves" (1 Thess. v. 9). If you "are saved" (1 Cor. i. 18), you will live with Jesus when you leave this world, and if you "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" you *are saved*.

The last few hours in the life of that wicked man who was on a cross beside the Lord Jesus, give us a striking example of what we are saying. He had been one of the worst of men—a thief,

a malefactor, and probably a companion of the murderer Barabbas, and he was dying for his own sins. He had sinned his crowning sin by railing at the Son of God. *Could* such a one be saved? Yes, even he, else why did the holy Saviour die, "the Just for the unjust"? God worked repentance in his soul, and turning his dying eyes on the Lord he said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, *To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise*" (Luke xxiii.).

Would it have been presumption had he proclaimed aloud, "I know where I am going—I am going to heaven with *my Saviour*"?

Oh, be comforted, doubting one. Trust to the same precious Saviour who died for you, and you too may have the same assurance. God means you to have it now while you are alive, and to be able to thank Him for it *before* you die, if die you do.

John wrote his beautiful gospel that you might "*believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that *believing* (not doubting), you might have life through His name" (xx. 13).

He wrote his epistle "that you may *know* that you have eternal life" (v. 13). Those who have

eternal life possess the life of Christ which belongs to heaven, and they will dwell there with Him for ever.

H. L. H.

"Sight for the Blind."

PASSING along one morning through a busy Glasgow street, a line on the bill of one of the regular daily papers caught the eye of the writer. It declared in bold clear print: "SIGHT FOR THE BLIND—REMARKABLE STORY." Wondering what this "remarkable story" could be, I went into the next newspaper shop, and on looking through the paper found a long paragraph under the heading: "DARKNESS TO LIGHT." It was indeed a remarkable story, and undoubtedly true.

It told how a man, blind from birth, and now thirty years of age, had received his sight at the Ophthalmic Institution. He had evidently regarded his blindness as incurable, and was passing his time in his native village as best he could. His other senses had evidently be-

come much sharper through the kind providence of God, and it was very wonderful to read of the number of things he could do though blind. However, the time was soon to arrive when he would receive his sight, and thus it happened :—

A medical student went to stay in this village, and in due course learned about this poor man who had been blind from birth ; and being no doubt interested in his case, he arranged for him to be treated by the surgeons at the institution. The result is that the young man, who scarcely a month ago was quite blind, has now been discharged in full possession of his sight. I am sure he has good cause to remember the brave and skilful surgeon who performed the delicate operation, and who was thus the means, in God's hand, of giving him his sight.

The newspaper account further related that the blind man had been healed in time to see His Majesty the King, as the Royal Procession passed through the city during the recent State visit to Scotland.

As I thought about this story, the case of the blind man recorded in the ninth chapter of John came before me. He, too, was blind from birth and was of age before he received his sight. The wonderful thing about his case, however,

was, that although he was only a blind man by the wayside, he had the blessed Son of God as his physician ; besides which, for his simple testimony to the Lord Jesus, he was cast out of the synagogue. The King of kings had come to His own, and they had not received Him. He whose right it was to reign had not been royally acclaimed and honoured. No, he had been rejected ; but in spite of all He could notice a blind man by the wayside, and could stay to deliver him from his woe.

But, dear reader, there is a far more serious form of blindness than his, and it affects ALL men and women born into this world, not a few only. Until saved by grace, *all* suffer from having BLINDED MINDS. The Scripture distinctly states that "the god of this world (Satan) has *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" (see 2 Cor. iv. 3-6). People who believe not have *blinded minds* ! This is the only thing that can account for the hardness and indifference of people's hearts. They have heard the gospel many times, and are acquainted with the plan of God's salvation, but they still either neglect or reject the Lord Jesus

Christ who is waiting even to-day to receive weary, heavy-laden ones.

There is no other story so remarkable as the old, old story—that sight-giving, life-giving story of Jesus and His love.

The touch of faith, though it may but reach the hem of His garment, instantly removes the blinding scales of Satan.

“Just as I am, poor, wretched, BLIND,
SIGHT, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come !”

Dear unsaved reader, go direct and go at once to Jesus for sight, life, rest, and peace, and all “these flowers of deathless bloom” will be yours.

The attitude of God’s heart of love is toward *all*, that they might be turned from *darkness to light*, and from the kingdom and power of Satan to Himself.

“Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”
(Rev. xxii. 17).

A. M. S.

“In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare ; but the righteous doth sing and rejoice” (Prov. xxix. 6).

"Just too late."

WHILST staying in London a short time ago, I suggested to my companion a special trip to Westminster to hear Big Ben strike twelve o'clock. Accordingly we started in excellent time (as we thought) to be there a few minutes beforehand. What was our surprise, however, to find that the last note had just died away as we reached the corner.

"Why, how strange! I thought we had plenty of time! and how is it that we did not hear?"

Ah! only one minute too late. Yet how many there are who are fondly hoping there is plenty of time, whilst the din and roar of life's daily battle drowns the still small voice, which whispers so often of fleeting time.

Ours was but a small disappointment. *Yours will be an eternal one*, if God's voice remains unheeded. "Plenty of time" is one of Satan's most frequent and terrible delusions. Time enough for anything but this one thing needful!

I remarked to one in an important post last week, "How quickly the time flies!" "Yes," was the somewhat startling reply, "we shall soon

have to get ready for the next world." This from one who boasted of heedlessness, showed how the thought of eternity finds the sinner unprepared. It is rash folly to play with life.

"'Tis not for man to trifle—life is brief,
And sin is here.
An age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours,
All must be earnest in a world like ours."

Only a short time ago a very gifted young lady began painting these words—

"Only one life, 'twill very soon be past,
Only what's done for Jesus Christ will last."

Very soon after she went to be with her Saviour, and only the unfinished words remain as a warning to those she has left behind. Oh, do not be deluded, hasten to enter ere the day of grace be gone—no matter how vile, Jesus loves such; no matter how sinful, the Saviour seeks the sinner. Let not your timepiece strike another hour, dear reader, for even then it may be TOO LATE, your ETERNITY may be decided. Report tells of a man having lost £18,000 through delay. But "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," is the Saviour's invitation to the sinner to-day. He died instead of you; your sins deserve eternal death, but His precious blood can cleanse each spot, and make you whiter than snow if you will only come to Him.

Time is quickly passing on. Do think seriously of these things. Take Christ as your Saviour to-day—yes, NOW—or the opportunity may NEVER occur again.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" *Now* is the accepted time; you cannot boast of to-morrow.

E.

"They shall not Escape."

SOME weeks have elapsed since the awful catastrophe on the Metropolitan Railway in Paris. The train service has been resumed, and already the world has forgotten that nearly one hundred souls were then ushered into eternity. We do not know how many of them went to be with Christ in paradise, but we do know that the eternal doom of each one of them is now irrevocably fixed.

It seems too terrible to relate what passed during the brief moments when escape was possible. One of the guards in the ill-fated train gave a sad account of the utter indifference of the passengers to their imminent danger, and it is certain that many more could have escaped had they obeyed his orders.

The carriages were crowded, for many who had been turned out of the first and second trains had taken their seats in this one, and when it too came to a standstill, it was the passengers who called out, "All change here!" with shouts of laughter. Those who were not joking, were storming at the delay. The guard, perceiving that volumes of smoke were coming towards them, shouted to the passengers to alight, and other officials joined with him in imploring them not to delay. "We've already been made to get down at Barbés," was the reply, "and we're not going to do so again." Seeing that the smoke grew denser, the guard laid hold of those who were nearest to the doors and tried to drag them forth, shouting, "Get out, will you!" but in their insane folly, they only clamoured to have the worth of their tickets refunded. "By-and-by," he said, "but escape while you can." Still they would not listen, threatening him even with their

fists, and thus cruelly hindering those behind from escaping.

Then suddenly the electric light went out. This was succeeded by fearful confusion and pushing, when nothing was heard save the piercing screams of these very mockers, mingled with those of the other poor victims, until the smoke stifled their voices for ever.

It is not my object to describe what has probably been read by all in the newspapers. I merely call attention to these few facts, as being illustrative of what is going on around us daily in a world doomed to the judgment which will sooner or later overtake it unawares. Christians see the danger ahead, and believe God's Word that foretells it, but still man refuses to acknowledge it. The number of mockers and procrastinators is increasing, and warnings seem to be of no avail. "Sudden destruction" will come, and they too will be launched into eternity, where every warning will be remembered.

What can these poor creatures in Paris have felt as they struggled through the blinding smoke to reach an exit, and then fell down suffocated by the fumes, never to rise again? They sacrificed their lives, not to speak of their souls, to a few paltry pence. "What is a man profited if he

shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

What will you feel, dear unsaved reader, when, overtaken by "sudden destruction," you are enveloped in "blackness of darkness" for ever, with no chance of escape, for Scripture says, **"They shall not escape"?**

"The night cometh," but now, yea, now at this moment, there is light and life for you, everlasting life in Christ if you will only trust Him. "I am the light of the world," He says; "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He is the Saviour of all those who believe, for His blood shed on Calvary can wash away the foulest stains. Let Him change your night to day. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you, for he that walketh in darkness *knoweth not whither he goeth.*" Do you know whither you are going?

What must it have been to those mockers in the train, when the lights went out, and they found themselves in darkness and smoke unable to find an exit, unable to escape?

What will it be to the wicked dead when they are brought forth from the darkness of the tomb

to the judgment of the great day, when, as some one has said, "the wheels of burning fire of that throne on which sits the Ancient of days begin to move," and when those Almighty eyes which are as a flame of fire will search them through and through, only to discover that they stand there naked in their sins, without a Saviour?

Scripture is full of warnings, and although *you* may say now, that no one has come back to tell us that there is a hereafter, *God* has said, "Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Your unbelief is mere disobedience to God. It would be far better to be like Paul, who could say, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision," or to be like a little girl of whom I recently heard, who heeded the warning she received.

A servant of the Lord had made an earnest appeal at the close of his preaching. He had depicted the terror of those who would find themselves left behind if the Lord came to take His own. Amongst the congregation was a little girl of eleven years of age. She knew that she was unsaved, and her heart quivered with fear as she listened to the solemn warnings. The following evening, the preacher was sitting with her parents after she had gone to bed.

They were talking together of the things of God and of His Word, and had not realised how late it was. Suddenly they heard the most piercing screams, and the door was burst open by the little girl. She stopped dead on seeing them, and said, "I thought the Lord had come, and that I was left behind." Awakening from her first sleep, and hearing no sound in the house, she had thought the preacher's words had come true. "I shall never forget those heartrending screams, nor the look of terror on the child's face," said one who had been present.

Dear reader, will you not heed God's warnings lest He should have to say to you, "I would, but ye would not."

G. P. V.

THE DIVINE WARNING.

There shall come a night of such wild affright
As none beside shall know ;
When the heaven shall shake, and the wide earth quake
In its last and deepest woe !

What horrors shall roll o'er the godless soul,
Waked from its death-like sleep ;
Of all hope bereft, and to judgment left,
For ever to wail and weep !

O worldling, give ear, while the saints are near,
Soon must the tie be riven :
And men, side by side, God's hand shall divide,
As far as hell's depths from heaven.

The children of day are summoned away,
Left are the children of night—
Sealed is their doom, for there's no more room :
Filled are the mansions of light.

What an awful cry will rend the sky,
"Open to us, O Lord!"
O ye sinners, yet, ere the door be shut,
Let that cry in faith be heard.

The angels, on wing, now but stop to sing
O'er the last repenting soul ;
In this little while, though never so vile,
Christ Jesus can make you whole.

And then, in that night of such wild affright
As none beside shall know,
Ye shall calmly rest on His tender breast,
Far off from the world's last woe.

Where will you Spend Eternity?

I WAS quite recently taking a meal in the coffee-room of a hotel in one of our market towns. A party had just left who might be described as somewhat gay and fast.

"I suppose," said I, turning to the waitress, "that you get some of all sorts in a place like this."

"Indeed and you do, sir," she replied.

"And I suppose that the conversation you often listen to is neither improving to the mind nor edifying to the life. Has anybody during the years you have been employed in this service ever asked you—

Where will you spend eternity?"

Somewhat startled by the unexpected question she said, "No, sir, it is the first time that question has ever been put to me."

Christian reader, how solemn is this! Doubtless many truly converted people had passed in and out of that coffee-room, and yet never had this poor Christless soul had one word of entreaty spoken to her, nor one word of warning addressed to her.

"Pray, brethren, pray! the sands are falling;
Pray, brethren, pray! God's voice is calling.
Yon turret strikes the dying chime;
We kneel upon the verge of time;
Eternity is drawing nigh!
ETERNITY IS DRAWING NIGH!"

I urged upon her the importance of this solemn matter, telling her that it was an absolute certainty that she had eternity to spend somewhere. She owned she was not ready for heaven. "Then," said I, "if you die as you now are, it must be hell. And how awful that is!"

"It is indeed, sir, and I am sorry to say I do not think half enough about it."

Pointing her to Christ and His work on the cross as God's way of salvation for her, I left to catch my train. It was an arrow shot at a venture, and may God's Spirit apply the word spoken, and cause that this precious soul may join in heaven's redemption song.

And now, my reader, let me put this same question to you—Where will *you* spend eternity?

It may be that your mind is all filled with doubt and unbelief. Perhaps you do not believe that you have a soul; you may be one who scoffs at the thought of eternity. These sceptical views of yours are all very well in days of youth, health, and pleasure. But once let the bloom and freshness of youth have passed, and you find yourself nearer to the end of life's journey than its beginning; once let the vigour and elasticity of health give way to the weakness and weariness of sickness; once let those evil days come in which you will say, "I have no pleasure in them," then your doubts and infidelity will prove you false, and you will find yourself like a drowning man vainly clutching at a straw for safety.

Your infidelity will not avail you when you

reach the brink of death's dark river. Never has infidelity smoothed the pillow of a dying man, nor ministered one grain of consolation to the departing spirit. Give it up then, now, while you are young, and spend the rest of your time here in seeking to win souls, and lead sinners to the Saviour.

Many young men think that infidelity is a fine thing. It is nothing of the sort, but it is wretched cowardice. Many things no doubt combine to produce it. First, the enmity of man's fallen nature against God. By nature we all hate God, for God is light, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. Men hated Christ when He was here, because He was light in the midst of abounding sin. Men hate the Bible, for that Word of God is truth, and shows up to us all the sin that is in us.

Secondly, not only do men hate God, but they love sin. They are ready to give up God rather than give up sin ; they will give up Christ rather than give up sin ; they will give up the Bible rather than give up sin ; they will give up all hope of happiness hereafter rather than give up the pleasures of sin for a season.

Then, thirdly, there is the fear of man. Many

a young man will courageously risk his life upon the battlefield, who would be positively afraid to stand up in an assembly of his fellows and read a chapter of the Bible, though he and every one of them might be perfectly certain the book was all truth. It is not profound thought that produces infidelity. It is hatred of God, love of sin, and fear of man.

But God loves you though you hate Him.

“Inscribed upon the cross I see
In shining letters, ‘God is love.’”

Yes, and He so loved the world as to give His Son to die for sinners, for you, dear reader, and for me. When once the knowledge of that Saviour’s love in dying for guilty sinners takes possession of the heart, then a complete change takes place.

“He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
And sets the prisoner free.”

We receive a new nature, and whereas before we hated God and loved sin, now we love God and hate sin.

Do not be proud of your infidelity! No, no; but be filled with shame that you hate God, love sin, and fear the scorn of man.

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

A. H. B.



A Train on Fire.

“He will . . . gather His wheat into His garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

IN the recent terrible railway disaster in Paris, we are told that when the people in the train were warned of the danger they were in, and told to get out of the train, they laughed and made light of the whole matter. They refused to believe that there *was* any real danger, but thought they were the victims of a practical joke. They were incredulous when the stationmaster and guard asked them to alight from the train. The passengers thought they knew best, and declined to obey.

They stopped and demanded their money back. Some of them even threatened the guard and struck him, when he tried to persuade them to leave the train. The result was that many who might have been saved from the awful disaster perished.

We think this very foolish, but how many of us abuse those who try and teach us the way of life? How many of us refuse to listen to the Word that tells of salvation? Does it not seem absurd to you and I, dear reader, that any reasonable human beings could be so obstinate as to turn a deaf ear to the warning cry of "Fire!" and to refuse to leave the place without their halfpence? But oh, are we not, a great number of us, just as foolish? Do we not sacrifice our precious immortal souls for the trifling things the world can give us? When we are urged to forsake our sins and repent of them, for the time is short, and to flee from the wrath to come to the only true and living God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, do not some of us *laugh incredulously, preferring in our ignorant blindness to go on to certain death as these poor French travellers did, rather than turn to the Saviour for pardon and deliverance?* while others say, "There is plenty of time, I don't think there is any danger."

Oh, reader, "why *will* ye die?" You will not be able to say in the end that you had never been warned. You will not be able to say, "Why did no one caution me?" You *have* been cautioned. You have been told to escape quickly

while there is yet time, just as those foolish travellers were. Will you, like them, refuse to believe until it is too late for escape? They believed in the end. When they *saw* the flames and the smoke, then they were obliged to acknowledge that what they had been told was only too true, but *then it was too late*. Too late! How sad those words are!

Amid shrieks and groans and entreaties to be saved, all of which were of no avail, they were crushed, burnt, and suffocated.

Do we ever consider that when we refuse to accept God's salvation we are grieving the Holy One, who is waiting to take us home to everlasting life and happiness; and while we are grieving Him, we are pleasing the evil one, whose whole efforts are directed towards ruining our souls, and dragging us away to the place of darkness and despair? Oh, let us pause to consider this ere we go further.

"The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

"Who may abide the day of His coming? for He is like a refiner's fire" (Mal. iii. 2).

Only those will be able to stand in that day who have accepted Him, and confessed Him here on earth, and trusted to His saving grace that

they may be washed in His precious blood which He shed for them, and which alone can take away their sins, and blot them out of God's sight.

May you, dear reader, truly be able to say—

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!"

E. S. A. S.

"I Just Think, Wait a Wee."

THE bay which we reached had a peculiar beauty in the brilliant sunshine. High and dry on the beach lay a fishing vessel, and leaning against it stood a weather-beaten sailor. The deck of the vessel against which he was leaning rose high above his head, and going over to him across the sandy shore, he told me he was engaged in the herring fishing, and was waiting for the returning tide to float her off.

Speaking to him of his calling, and the interest attaching to it, I said, "The Lord Jesus called many of His disciples from among fishermen."

"Yes," he replied, "I know that."

"And how true it is," I continued, "that from heaven where He now is, He is calling sinners like you and me to Himself, to come to Him that we might be saved. He is the Saviour, and we all need a Saviour."

He knew that too, he said ; and when I asked him if he had found the Saviour; who in His wondrous love was seeking the lost, he professed no certainty as to this, and added, "But I never just hear like what I want, and though I listen to all that is said, it does not take hold of me."

I did not know how to reply to this, for what he listened to might not be what made God's way of salvation clear to him. There is so much afloat nowadays, and schools of doctrine which can never meet the need of anxious souls or lead them to God. They are wide apart from what is plainly laid down in His Word, as to His free grace flowing out to all, founded on the atonement which Christ has made, and they carry souls away from God. The heart of man craves after something better, something to trust to, something to rest in, to satisfy it ; it may have been so with him.

"You want to get to heaven, and you know the way, don't you ?" I now asked.

"Believe," was his brief reply.

"True, but believe what? We must have some one and something to believe in. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' And Jesus Himself said, 'I am the way.' Besides, we are all sinners, and have committed many sins, heaps upon heaps, and God knows them every one—all the sins of the past of our life, and how are we to get rid of *them*, for we cannot take them to heaven?"

His answer now was the simple word, "Forgiveness."

"Yes, but this can only be by the blood of Christ. There is nothing that can wash out a single stain or remove a blot from the conscience but the precious blood of Christ. You say 'believe' and you say 'forgiveness,' knowing that you must have faith in Christ as your Saviour, and the forgiveness of all your sins; how is it, then, that you have not found the Saviour who is seeking you and ready to receive you, and give you all you need?"

His answer was open and candid enough, and expressive of the condition of many: "I just think, wait a wee."

The sad hindrance, from whatever cause, to the *present* salvation of his soul was, "I just think,

wait a wee," for he knew he was a sinner and needed forgiveness, and that he must believe to be saved. The poor man knew his need, but he was putting off the question to an indefinite time that might never come.

"Have you a lease of life, then, as you might have of your cottage or your vessel?" I now asked.

No, he hadn't.

Why linger, then? Why put off for a single day the question of your soul before God, and put on one side the salvation full and free which God has provided? It is there for you, offered you at this moment. A future time you may not see, for we know not what shall be on the morrow. He is calling you to-day. Say no longer in your inward thought, "Wait a wee." "*Now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Be in earnest *now*, and look to the Saviour who stood in the gap for us, and who from heaven now is speaking peace to every anxious soul.

Reading was afterwards put in his way that might help to make what was but dimly apprehended clear to him; and I am in hopes that the salvation wrought out at the cross may in its fulness and divine simplicity find, through the

grace of God, an entrance into his heart, "God's easy, artless, unencumbered plan."

Who amongst us, when the need of our perishing souls was pressed upon us, has not said, "Wait a little"? God tells us in His Word of one who, though he trembled under the convicting power of the apostle's reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and *judgment to come*, yet pushed it aside because it told on his conscience too really, saying, "When I have a more convenient season I will call for thee." Did it ever come? We cannot tell; but the record of it *is come to us* with a solemn warning from God. There are many hindrances to the reception of the glad tidings which God proclaims—not on God's side, but on man's; and many pleas are brought forward to still the voice of the uneasy conscience. Youth is pleaded, and—it is time enough. Anything and everything is pleaded that fills up the daily life in its varied pursuits; and the wealth and honour of the world are so absorbing as not to admit of a halt! While what concerns us most and what conscience tells us ought to be first and foremost, and what is of *all* importance—of *eternal* importance—is too often closed with this expression, "Wait a little."

Why leave till to-morrow what ought to be

attended to to-day, that your eternal welfare may be secured? It was lately said, "Oh, it is awful to think of the endlessness of eternity." Yes! for the unsaved it is awful to think of; and this lies before each one of us, for happiness or misery—for heaven or hell.

Let us think of a salvation vast and unending, secure and stable as the throne of God, which He in love has provided, and that it lies open to *all*. All may come to Him now, just as they are, not waiting to be better, or for a supposed more fitting time, but to-day, to find the wondrous blessing of peace with God, and to be able to stand in His presence "whiter than snow."

"Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be *safe*."

M. V.

Come, Now.

WHILE on the way to preach the gospel one Lord's Day evening some time since, my attention was arrested by a striking notice, displayed in a prominent position outside a large railway station in the East End of London.

It was an invitation to a certain George M—— to return at once ; and as an encouragement to do so, a note was added stating that "all was right and all was forgiven." It was very easy to infer that George M—— had acted wrongly in some way or another, and conscious of his wrong, had departed. Equally plain was it, too, that the one whom he had wronged entertained none but kindly thoughts towards the wrong-doer, and was earnestly desirous of his immediate return to receive complete forgiveness. One could not help seeing in all this, a picture of the gospel,—the spontaneous grace of God in inviting the offender back to receive a full free pardon. How wondrous is God's love to returning ones who have sinned against Him ; the black past with all its hatred and rebellion is obliterated, and never can a single sin face the believer, for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.

Passing by the same place a week later, I looked again for the announcement of forgiveness, but it was no longer to be seen. Was it that the wanderer had returned, or was it that the patience of the one who displayed the invitation was exhausted? Such thoughts as these crowded into my mind, and I remembered that

God's invitation to the sinner must one day be withdrawn. Now, though away from Him and in our sins, He calls us ; indeed our sinful condition constitutes our only passport to His grace, and His grace is our only passport to glory.

To-day the word is—"Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

To-day the Lord Jesus says, "Come, for all things are now ready" (Luke xiv. 17).

Could anything be more emphatic? May I ask my reader if he or she has responded to these scriptures. What a slight it would be to His Majesty the King, to ignore his invitation to Buckingham Palace ; but how infinitely greater the slight to neglect the great salvation that God offers (Heb. ii. 3).

The present is the only time we can call our own.

"Time past, 'tis gone, thou canst not it recall ;
Time present-is, employ the moments small ;
Time future is not, and may never be ;
Time present is the only time for thee."

May God help the reader who up till now has

not "come" to Him, to do so at once. Soon the day of grace may close, then instead of "come" the awful word will be "depart" (Matt. xxv. 41).

C. H. B.

God's "Black List."

TO be on *man's* "black list," of which we have heard so much lately, would be very sad, for drunkenness is a vice which ruins many souls and homes in England, and legislation which aims at its suppression should be welcomed.

But to find oneself by-and-by on *God's* "black list" would be much more serious.

Off *man's* "black list" you may get provided your conduct improve; once find yourself on *God's*, and you will be there for ever, and for ever has no time-limit.

Drunkenness is *one* vice, though verily leading to many. *Any* one sin is enough to shut us out of heaven, where can dwell only those who are pure and holy like Christ. Thank God, *every* sin may be cleansed now by the blood of Christ. There will come a time however, not when its efficacy will have ceased—that is impossible, but when

God has decreed that it shall no longer avail to those who have chosen sin and Satan and death rather than life.

God's "black list" comprises many sins (Rev. xxi. 8), and is not an everyday list, nor perhaps meant to be an exhaustive one. It relates to eternity—to that time when all earthly dispensations and administrations shall have come to an end, and when everything in the new heaven and earth shall have assumed *fixity* as to people's places in the long eternal future that awaits every one. Don't deny it—you *know* down in your secret heart that it is so, and that when you die (if you die) you will not come to an end, but that your soul (body too hereafter) will continue its existence. Would you not like it to be a blissful one?

And now read the first eight verses of Revelation xxi. They describe the *most* distant period of the future of which God has told us. Yet even here He does not leave out the gospel. It is as if He were loath to close the door, albeit at the last moment. He says, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." To the very last moment God remains a giving God. If you are thirsty you may drink; but it is not safe to trifle.

"Thousands have reached that home on high,
And millions more are on the way."

Don't *you* want to be there? Christ, the water of life, is freely offered to you by God. If once He close the door you will be unable to accept His free gift, your name will have been entered on His "black list," and He will say, "He which is filthy, let him be filthy *still*."

Let us read over the text again. "BUT THE FEARFUL . . ."—that means those who are *not overcomers*, who are afraid of the jeers of the world, of being thought peculiar, who *won't* count the cost—"AND UNBELIEVING . . ." Six weeks ago some one preached a sermon on *believing*. He took his hearers through all the verses in John's Gospel on that subject, and showed how God's blessings come to *believers*. It was a wonderful list of heavenly blessings! If you take your Bible and hunt up and mark those verses (such as John vi. 29, 35, 40, 47), you, too, may become a believer, and then you may kneel down and thank Him that you will never be on His "black list," but are now passed from death to life. "AND THE ABOMINABLE, AND MURDERERS, AND WHOREMONGERS, AND SORCERERS, AND IDOLATERS, AND ALL LIARS . . ." All liars are those who have taken sides

with Satan instead of Christ, for he was a liar from the beginning.

Satan "is a liar and the father of it."

"There is no truth in him" (Satan).

"Truth came by Jesus Christ."

Jesus said, "I am . . . the truth."

You would not have put the "fearful and unbelieving" along with some of those other sins, and unless you remembered Satan's lies in Eden and ever since, you might think little of lying, but it is well to view things as God does: His balances are perfect. Now read the end: All such "SHALL HAVE THEIR PART IN THE LAKE WHICH BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE: WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH." This second death will be terrible! Four times God speaks of it. May you be saved from it! But remember, if once you get on His "black list" for eternity, you cannot be. *Now*—and, oh, thank Him for it—the day of salvation is not over, the door of mercy still stands wide open.

H. L. H.

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

"My heart is so wicked."

IN the London Hospital, just over a year ago, the writer met with a young man who was recovering from a serious operation.

After listening to the touching story of how he had been on the "danger list" for three weeks, with his parents anxiously watching, and expecting each day to be the last, I said—

"And if you *had* died, *where* would you have gone?" Honestly and openly he replied—

"I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO HELL."

"But would you not rather go to HEAVEN?" I asked.

"I *would*; I *want* to go there! I *keep trying*, but it is no good, for

MY HEART IS SO WICKED."

The last five words were spoken in a way that told how disappointed he had been, and, assured that he really desired to be saved, I said, "May I tell you a story from the Old Testament, which beautifully illustrates God's way of salvation *now*?"

He readily consented, and I continued much as follows.

From the first chapter of Leviticus we learn that when one of the children of Israel, who were sinners like ourselves, desired to draw near to God, who is holy, he was told to bring a sacrifice without blemish or spot. Having brought it, he must lay his hand upon its head, which signified identification, that is that,

HE AND HIS OFFERING WERE ONE.

The moment he thus laid his hand, it ceased to be a question of what *he* was, but

EVERYTHING DEPENDED ON THE SACRIFICE.

If *it* were accepted, *he* was accepted; and we read "*it shall be accepted for him*, to make atonement for him."

As it was then, so it is now—except that we have not to bring a sacrifice, because the Lord Jesus Christ has come—the One to whom all the sacrifices pointed—and offered Himself.

So efficacious was His work upon the cross, that no more need be offered, for "*by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*" (Heb. x. 14).

When a sinner comes and by faith lays his hand upon His head—that is, *believes in Him*, rests in His finished work—it ceases to be a question of what he is, and all depends on what Christ is, so much so that it says (Eph. i. 6)—

"HE HATH MADE US ACCEPTED IN THE
BELOVED."

Why does it not say "*in Christ*"? Because though "in Christ" be true, for He is the Beloved One, God would have us know the measure of our acceptance and enter into all that He has found in Him upon whom He opened the heavens and said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom is all My delight."

The young man had never heard the truth in this simple way before, but he received it gladly. He saw that his striving, and hoping, and doing, not only had no merit, and could not even *help* to save him, but that these very things which he relied on, were being used by Satan to keep him away from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the ONE and ONLY Saviour.

The next morning as early as possible, I went to his bedside, and asked how he was.

"Oh, nicely," he replied.

"But what about those doubts and fears?"

His face beamed, as he expressed his joy in the following words:—

"I have had no doubts nor fears since last night, when I saw that everything depended on Christ and not on me."

A few days later we parted, both rejoicing in

Christ our Saviour; probably we shall never meet again down here, but may soon in the clouds, when this Blessed One comes again to take us to be for ever with Himself (1 Thess. iv. 16-18).

Can you, my reader, join with us in saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of *our* Lord Jesus Christ, who HATH blessed us with ALL spiritual blessings (best blessings) in heavenly places (best place) in Christ" (best Person)? If not, *come* to the Lord Jesus NOW, and "have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 3-7).

A. T. P.

The Rabbit-Bag Man.

OVER the wall! It is a wicked place. Fighting, drinking, cursing, swearing—every form of wickedness goes on from morning to night, and night to morning, in that degraded quarter of the great black city of L—. A young Catholic priest who attempted to distribute religious leaflets there was driven away.

See that man pass every Friday morning ! He is a wretched-looking object, and he carries a large sack full of rabbits and game, the results of his night's poaching. Week in, week out, regularly as the clock, he plies his dishonest trade.

But God sees that man. *God loves* those wicked people. And He sent one of His children to live within sight of them.

One Friday morning she missed the rabbit-bag man. She was troubled to think of his soul.

"Mr B——," she said to her master, "can you tell me where that man that passes every Friday morning lives?"

No, he could not tell exactly ; he lived somewhere behind the ale-house—what did she want to know for? "But at any rate, my son J—— can tell you."

So she went to J——'s, and in less than half an hour was at the man's door. His wife opened it.

"I hear your husband's poorly, so I thought I should like just to come along and ask after him. Mr B——'s son told me he was not well, and so did Mr B——."

This was sufficient introduction for the wife, who said, "Oh well, come in," and she entered the wretched dwelling. The bed, such as it was, was

in the "house," as in the north they call the living-room and kitchen combined. She spoke a few words to the sick man about the Lord Jesus, who was willing to save a sinner like him, though he had worn himself out with his nearly sixty years' unsteady life. She gave him a tract; he could not read—"But my missus can, she'll read it to me. Come and see me again, lass."

She went again the next day, and as she says, "God had given him light already through the tract." She asked if they had a Bible or Testament. "No, they had never had such a book."

So she went and got a large-print Testament.

The bookseller inquired, "Do you give those Testaments away? for you have bought seven or eight—you have bought nearly all I have." Christian reader, ask God's blessing on those Testaments.

The Testament was bought, and some verses marked in it, and taken to the house behind the ale-house—"over the wall." "See, I have not time to stay now, but read these verses to him, and I'll come again." One verse pointed out was, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out;" and when this child of God went the next day, she was greeted with, "Aye, that

is a grand book you brought, we never see'd a book like it. But see, 'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out'—do you think He'd have a chap like me?"

"Yes, He will; you're just the one He died for. You see, it would be a bad job for you and me, had He not died for *all*."

"I've been a bad lad. I never was in a chapel or church except when I was wed."

"Well, it's nothing to do with church or chapel; it's just to go to God and give yourself up entirely to Him and He'll save you."

"Yes—I'm dee-ing, I know," said the rabbit-bag man, "but I'm not afraid now. The Lord Jesus has forgiven me all my sins. That *is* a grand book, my missus has been reading me out of it ever since you brought it."

The poor man lived five or six days after, and every day happier in the new-found knowledge of Him who loves to save sinners. His wife and son, too, simply believed the Word of God which had been put into their hands, and find it their greatest treasure. The son says, "Aye, it's a grand light for us—it's far grander than t' electric light." They have moved away from "over the wall"—and the language of their hearts is—

“And in that light of life I’ll walk
Till travelling days are done.”

Christians, let us awake ! “Is it time for you, oh ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste ?” This is not a tale of years ago, but of the last few months ;—not of far-off lands, but of a place like those near us all. Let us follow Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Unsavered reader ! except the poor poacher’s Saviour become your Saviour, you are lost for ever, for “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12). T. T.

“To-day or To-morrow.”

“WILL you come for a walk to-morrow ?” Such were the words addressed by a friend to a young lady who lived in the town of C——. “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,” was the reply, which, although uttered by one who “cared for none of these things,” proved truly prophetic, as the following story will show.

That night Miss S—— had just completed

her toilet preparatory to going to some evening entertainment, and having a letter written ready for the post, she thought she would seal it up and take it with her. She accordingly struck a light and sealed her letter, but on turning round to leave the room, what was her consternation to find that the match she had thrown down had set fire to her thin evening dress, and she was in flames.

Being alone in the house with the maid, who had not the presence of mind to know what to do on the occasion, she succumbed very speedily.

Dear friend, “boast not *thyself* of to-morrow, for *thou* knowest not what a day may bring forth.” You, too, may be in eternity as speedily as the subject of my sad story, and—

“Eternity ! where ?”

Oh, do not put off the salvation of your precious soul to some future morrow, which is the devil’s time ; but rather come in God’s time, which is *now*.

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

“To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts” (Heb. iii. 15).

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isa. i. 18).

E. H. G.

“He took me in.”

ARRIVING at N—— Station a few days ago, on the chance of soon getting a train for Glasgow, I found a north-bound express just ready to start. Jumping into the guard's van, we were soon flying through the country.

A most intelligent man was my travelling companion, who had served the company for thirty or more years, and as we steamed swiftly along, we conversed on a variety of subjects. At length I felt the time had come for introducing the great and all-important matters of the soul, so I handed our friend a little book entitled, **“No time to repent,”** feeling that to be somewhat appropriate in view of the dangers to which he must constantly be exposed.

The book was most courteously received, and as he held it in his hand, standing on the floor of the rocking railway van, a bright smile lit up his countenance as he remarked, “In the year 1889 I fled for refuge as a poor, lost, guilty, and hell-deserving sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ, and He took me in.”

It was truly refreshing to get such a clear confession of Christ.

We were nearing Glasgow, and my friend and brother in Christ lowered the window and waved his hand to a watcher on a balcony, remarking as he did so, "I never take charge of the London express but that friend is praying for me, and always watching to see me safe back." Ah, thought I, how little does the travelling public know what they owe of safety to some praying child of God.

"I never leave my home in the morning or at night as the case may be, but my wife says to me, 'Well, John, if you don't come back alive, we're bound to meet again in glory.'"

Reader, is there no good in being a Christian? Of course there is; you are safe for eternity, come what may. The future is all secure, but what about the present? Is the Christian less contented than the man of the world? A look at the happy countenance of my companion as he spoke of his Saviour and Lord, and of the joy and peace that had filled his soul and brightened his home since he and his wife had started together on the heavenward road, was answer enough.

Reader, we are all of us exposed to the danger

of sudden death. Why not do as our friend the railway guard, flee for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ as a poor, lost, guilty sinner, and you too will be able to add your testimony—

He took me in.

“Come with thy sins to the Saviour,
Come with thy burden of guilt,
Ready He stands to receive thee,
There thou wilt find a relief.

Haste thee away,

Why wilt thou stay?

Risk not thy soul on a moment's delay.

Jesus is waiting to save thee,

Mercy is pleading to-day.”

A. H. B.

Indifference.

“**W**OULD you not think it strange,” we said to a man a short time since, as he stood in his garden in front of his house, “if that house were on fire, and some one who was in the top story at the time made no effort to escape?” Suppose all means of exit by the stairs were cut off, the flames were speedily gaining ground, what should we think

of some one in a burning dwelling who said to the fire-escape men, as they placed their ladder against the window, "I cannot attend to you now, come some other time"?

The man to whom these remarks were made fully admitted that we would consider such an one must have lost his reason. Strange to say, while assenting to the truths of the gospel, and admitting the all importance of eternal questions, he fully avowed that he himself was still undecided—he had never come to Christ as his own *personal* Saviour. Is this not an exceedingly common case in the present day? Are there not thousands—possibly the reader of this paper amongst the number—who know that if the God in whose hand their breath is was pleased to withdraw that breath and to say, "Cut the tree down; why cumbereth it the ground?" they would be lost, and lost eternally; and yet who are prepared to treat the whole matter with stolid indifference? Or, it may be, some think they have as good a chance as other men, and so they leave the matter to fate.

There was a certain man who was rich—his fields brought forth plentifully, and everything seemed to prosper. He was prudent and astute in the things of this world; but we never hear

that he troubled himself much about the next world. He said, I will build great barns and lay up great stores, and I will take things very quietly and easily for many years to come. Alas! with all his prudence he was *indifferent about his soul*, and *God said*,

"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

Reader, may we not earnestly and affectionately press the question upon you, through the medium of this little paper. If God said to you, "This night"—not next year, or next month, or next week, but *This night*—yes—"This night thy soul shall be required of thee"—where would *you* spend your eternity?

F. G. B.

The Mocker's Doom.

"Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—GAL. vi. 7.

IT was the Club day in a certain English village, on which occasion the villagers made a general holiday, and a time of friendly greetings and family meetings. A Christian lady, endeavouring to serve her

Master, was busy scattering broadcast the good seed, in the form of gospel booklets and tracts, to those who on such occasions thronged the village for pleasure. Among many others to receive one of the "silent messages" was the Club doctor, who was a man without the fear of God before his eyes ; who openly scoffed at God, the Creator of all. After receiving it, his first impulse was to tear it to atoms, and cast it to the wind ; but on second thought he decided to take it to the Club that evening, thinking it might be a source of amusement to the profligate members.

Night came ; and the doctor was in his accustomed place at the Club, revelling as usual in sin, ridiculing with his ungodly associates the tract, the giver, and the contents : what did he care, if the tract were entitled,

"The value of the soul" ?

The god of this world had blinded his eyes, so that this life and the pleasures of sin were all he cared for. Vain man ! how little he realised that his life had almost flickered away ; as he laughed, sneered, and jested at the contents of that tract, forgetting that the all-seeing eye of God was upon him, as he drank and revelled in

his own folly, mocking at the statements of the One who gave him life and breath and being. We fain would draw the veil over such a scene of man's depravity, in that midnight carousal : for their glory was in their shame.

When morning dawned, as the sun shed its glorious light and rays across the serene country, making the landscape appear even more beautiful than before, a labouring man was wending his way earlier than usual to his daily toil, and, turning a bend in the road, he noticed a pony and gig standing without a driver ; upon further examination he saw to his horror, that by the pony's side was the lifeless form of a man ; that man was none other than the mocker of the night before, the Club doctor.

Upon further inquiries, it transpired that he had left the Club at an early hour that morning in an intoxicated state, and it was supposed that on his way home he must have leaned forward, and fallen from the trap over the shafts, thus breaking his neck, and causing instant death. What a change for that mocker, from that drunken stupor to the miseries of the lost world. Never more would he mock at God ; for

There is no infidelity in hell.

"A mere accident," our readers may say. Yes, doubtless it was an accident, but was it not something more? Was it not the hand of God, meting out judgment to a high-minded rebel? For sin is a terrible thing in God's sight, and man cannot sin against God with impunity; sooner or later his sin will be punished, and his rebellious career will be ended.

"Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

O mocker, continue not your evil course, lest in the coming great day, God mocks when your fear cometh; but, before the judgment of God overtakes you, throw down your arms of rebellion, and sue for His mercy. Remember that it is through the goodness of God that you have not been cut down in your wild career, as many have been.

In conclusion, we would remind you that sinners of the deepest dye have been pardoned by our God. Harken to His loving voice speaking to you, rebellious, and profligate though you may be. He not only warns you by saying, "Be sure your sin will find you out," but He also calls to you, saying, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" for he has no pleasure in the

death of the wicked. He gave His only begotten Son to die in your stead, that now, in perfect righteousness, He might offer you His great salvation.

“Stay, poor sinner, stay and think before you further go ;
Do not sport upon the brink of everlasting woe.”

A. G

The Power of Love.

IT is recorded in history that “when Damon was sentenced by Dionysius of Syracuse to die on a certain day, he begged permission in the interim to retire to his own country to set the affairs of his disconsolate family in order. This the tyrant intended peremptorily to refuse by granting it, as he conceived, on the impossible condition of his procuring some one to remain as hostage for his return under equal forfeiture of life. Pythias heard the conditions, and did not wait for an application on the part of Damon, but instantly offered himself as security for his friend, and, his offer being accepted, Damon was set at liberty.

“The fatal day arrived ; Pythias was brought

forth to the place of execution. Dionysius was already there ; he was exalted on a moving throne, which was drawn by six white horses, and sat pensive and attentive to the prisoner. Pythias came ; he vaulted lightly on the scaffold, and, after regarding for some time the apparatus for his death, he turned with a placid countenance and addressed the spectators. 'My prayers are heard,' he cried ; 'you know, my friends, that the winds have been contrary until yesterday. Damon could not come ; he could not conquer impossibilities. He will be here to-morrow, and the blood which is shed to-day shall have ransomed the life of my friend. Oh ! could I erase from your bosom every doubt, every mean suspicion upon the honour of the man for whom I am about to suffer, I should go to my death even as I would to my bridal feast. My friend will be found noble. He is now on his way, hurrying on, accusing himself and the adverse elements, but I hasten to prevent his speed. Executioner, do thine office !' As he pronounced the last words, a buzz began to rise among the remotest of the people. A distant voice was heard, the crowd caught the words, and 'Stop, stop the execution !' was repeated by the whole assembly.

A man came at full speed ; the throng gave way at his approach. He was mounted on a foaming steed. In an instant he was off his horse, on the scaffold, and had clasped Pythias in his arms. ‘ You are safe,’ he cried ; ‘ you are safe, my friend.’ Pale, cold, and half-speechless in the arms of Damon, Pythias replied in broken accents—‘ Fatal haste, cruel impatience ! what envious powers have wrought impossibilities in your favour ? but I will not be wholly disappointed ; since I cannot die to save, I will not survive you.’

“ Dionysius heard, beheld, and considered all this with astonishment. His heart was touched—he wept—and leaving his throne he ascended the scaffold. ‘ Live, live, ye incomparable pair,’ he cried, ‘ and form me by your precepts, as ye have invited me by your example, to be worthy of the participation of so sacred a friendship.’”

The foregoing well - known and touching story, dear reader, expresses the limit to which human love and friendship can go, for the Lord Jesus declares in His Word that “ greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends ” (John xv. 13). But I desire to draw your attention for a few moments to a “ love that no thought can

reach and that no tongue can teach," for amongst men such love cannot be found. It is a love that "many waters could not quench, neither the floods drown" (Song of Sol. viii. 7). And, mark you, reader, not for friends, not for those who had loved and who had done all that was possible to prove the sincerity of their love, but for those who were "alienated and *enemies* in their minds by wicked works" (Col. i. 21). "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were *yet sinners*, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). The utterly desperate character of those to whom God thus commends His love is further revealed (Rom. iii.): "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Their throat is an open sepulchre.

Their tongues use deceit.

Their lips conceal the poison of asps.

Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

Their feet are swift to shed blood.

Their ways are ways of destruction and misery.

Their eyes have no fear of God before them (Rom. iii. 9-18).

The state of those to whom this wonderful love of God is commended is simply abhorrent: "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it: but wounds, and bruises; and putrefying sores" (Isa. i. 6). Could anything be more repugnant, and yet such is the faithful portrait of man, whether Jew or Gentile, poor benighted heathen or polished philosopher, faithfully portrayed by the Spirit of God in the Bible. "There is no difference," and what I wish to bring before you, as you peruse these pages, is the blessed truth that God's love is commended to such as these, and, if unsaved, you are one of the company described above.

To you this love is commended, reader. How are you going to treat it? His love has been fully proved: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that *He loved us*, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10). The measure of God's love was the giving of His only begotten Son; and the Lord Jesus Christ

"Came from Godhead's fullest glory
Down to Calvary's depth of woe"

that His love might be commended to such as you—that is, told out as fully, freely, and simply as God Himself can make it. Take it now, dear reader, and render to Him thanks, praise, and worship for such a wonderful love.

“ Now this love unto *all* God commends,
Not one would His mercy pass by ;
Whosoever shall call, there is pardon for all
In the love that gave Jesus to die.”

J. S.

A Solemn Warning—A Sad Sequel.

IN December 1876 the British Channel Fleet sailed from Gibraltar, intending to spend the Christmas at Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, a voyage that under ordinary circumstances would have taken about four or five days, but, He who rules the elements saw fit to bring about that which caused it to be twenty-one days instead of four or five.

On the second or third day (I cannot remember which) the mighty deep was lashed into foaming billows by a gale of wind so furious, so terrific, that ships of twelve and fourteen thousand tons' displacement were tossed about

like cork upon its surface, reminding one of Psalm cvii.—

“They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters ;

These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.

For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths : their soul is melted because of trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end.

Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses.

He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

Then they are glad because they be quiet, so He bringeth them unto their desired haven.”

But sad to relate, there were hundreds in that fleet who knew not God and trusted not in Him—one especially to whom this narrative refers, an officer and a thorough seaman, one against whom, as to his duties, no one could point a finger, but who “feared not God, neither regarded man.” Handsome, proud, austere, and an infidel, such was Lieutenant M——, serving in the same ship with the writer.

I will now endeavour to relate what to me and others in that ship appeared a direct

warning from God, and the sad sequel seemed to warrant our convictions. The storm increased in violence to such an extent that the fleet could no longer be kept under the control of the flag-ship, so the admiral made the signal that each captain should act independently and do his best to save his own ship.

Lieutenant M——, after a weary four hours' watch on deck, retired to the wardroom, and seating himself at the table and resting his head upon his arms, endeavoured to get a little rest. Just at that moment a large skylight about twenty feet above him was forced out of its frame, and falling, struck the table within three or four inches of his head, covering him with broken glass and wood; had it struck him it must have caused instant death, as it weighed probably two or three hundredweight.

And now, my dear reader, before I relate the remainder of this sad story, I earnestly desire to bring before you a few verses from the inspired *Word of God*—

“For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. . . .

He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. . . .

If there be a messenger with Him, an interpreter, one among a thousand. . . .

Then He is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit : *I have found a ransom*" (Job xxxiii. 14-24).

This same merciful, long-suffering God has assuredly spoken to you, my interested reader, as he did to Lieutenant M——, and yet you have not perceived it ; is it then with you as the prophet declares of Israel, " The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved " ? (Jer. viii. 20). Listen to that compassionate heart pouring forth its lamentation over that same people six hundred years later : " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee ; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not " (Luke xiii. 34). This is the same One who is saying unto you, " Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest " (Matt. xi. 28). Will you not listen to His beseeching voice and accept His offered mercy ? And now, listen while I relate the rest.

His narrow escape from death made no lasting impression upon Lieutenant M——. He repented not, but turned to " his course as a horse rusheth into the battle." About the twentieth

day the storm began to abate ; then were our hearts glad, and we were enabled to get into Lisbon. The next day we prepared to refit and make good damages ; the order was given to send down from aloft studding-sail booms—a large heavy spar that is run out on the yard for setting an extra sail in light breezes. Lieutenant M—— took up his position on the fore-castle, and at the word of command the men sprang aloft ; the booms were topped, the word to lower away was given, when suddenly the foremost topsail boom slipped from the fastening made by the rope on the end for lowering, and in falling struck Lieutenant M—— on the forehead, the place which the heavy skylight had just missed. It was an awful sight, and I can dwell no longer upon it—death was instantaneous—and yet, constrained by the love of Christ, I would beseech you, if unsaved, to be reconciled to God, for it is written : “ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him ” (2. Cor. v. 20, 21).

Oh ye men who plough the mighty deep,

whose wanderings compass the world around, who say, Yet another voyage and I will coil up my ropes and anchor on shore ; let me beseech you to "boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1).

Flee for refuge, lay "hold upon the hope set before you : which hope we have as an *Anchor of the soul*, both *sure and steadfast*, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. vi. 19). God's comforting words to those who believe on His Son are, "For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9). W. S.

AN APPOINTED DAY.

God "**now** commandeth **all men everywhere to repent** ; because He hath **appointed a day**, in the which He will judge the world **in righteousness** by that Man whom He hath ordained ; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that **He hath raised Him from the dead**" (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

Missing!

FOR the last six weeks all England has been in wonderment at the sudden disappearance of a London lady. She was last seen walking down the Gray's Inn Road early in the afternoon in perfect health. Nothing can account for the fact, but since that day not a trace has been found of her.*

Her portrait has been exhibited in almost every village in the land, a full description has been given of her appearance and dress when last seen, and substantial rewards have been offered, but without result. The whole police force of the country, as well as countless private individuals, have been following up every conceivable clue, but her disappearance remains to this day a mystery.

If, instead of one individual only, hundreds and thousands of persons had as suddenly disappeared, let the reader picture to himself, if he can, what would have been the consternation of the public. No earthquake to account for it, no disaster of any kind, but silently, suddenly, and

* Since the above was written, the body has been found after two months' search.

unperceived by the rest, multitudes disappear, leaving no trace behind. If this were to happen, we can well believe that the whole civilised world would be as though stunned.

Reader, this will happen, and possibly very soon. Without the smallest doubt

Christ is Coming,

and in the twinkling of an eye He will remove from this earth all that are His ; they will be caught up in a moment into the clouds, to be for ever with the Lord. They will leave not a trace behind them, unless it be the words of warning that they had often addressed to friends and neighbours.

The story is told of a man who had often been spoken to of the coming of the Lord. It had been made clear to him that by the coming of the Lord was *not* meant death, and, moreover, that it did *not* mean the end of the world. The truth, so clearly revealed in Scripture, was understood by him. It had entered his head, but had not taken hold of his heart. One night this man sat up late ; he was reading, and presently dropped off to sleep.

He had a Dream.

He dreamt that one morning he awoke, and to

his surprise found himself alone in the room. He had not heard his wife moving, and thought it strange that she could have slipped downstairs without his being aware of it ; so, somewhat uneasy in his mind, he hurriedly dressed and went down.

No trace of her could be found ; he searched every corner of the house in vain, and what added to the mystery was the fact that the doors were locked from the inside, and every window securely fastened just as he had left them the previous night. He was standing in great perplexity ; it was still very early, much earlier than the house was usually astir, when he heard on the stairs the footstep of his son, who had always been a wild and thoughtless youth.

"Where's your mother ?" asked the frightened father, scarcely daring to allow himself to think of what might really have taken place.

But the son did not know. They both started out to search for the missing woman, but to their surprise and consternation they found themselves confronted by large numbers of people, each one seeking some lost relative or friend.

The truth so often heard began at length to be believed, and, filled with dismay, crowds rushed to churches, chapels, and meeting-rooms to see

if there might not still be an opportunity to accept the salvation so often refused, and to confess the Lord so sadly despised and rejected. But in vain. All hope was at an end ; the day of grace had passed for ever.

Reader, this was but a dream. But it was a dream of what is an intense reality. Christendom is continuing its careless way to eternity. Masses of the people live their lives in utter disregard of God. They never open the Bible from one week's end to the other ; they never bow the knee in prayer, and never enter a place where the gospel message is proclaimed.

But do not multitudes go to church ? Are there not many who are most religious ? Yes ; but how many of these are ready for the coming of the Lord ? Is it not a fact that the most intense worldliness prevails even amongst the professors of religion ? Are not the ballrooms and the theatres thronged night after night by the very people who in solemn mockery partake of what they are pleased to call the " Holy Eucharist."

God is a God of reality. It must be one thing or the other with Him. " How long halt ye between two opinions ? If the Lord be God, follow Him : but if Baal, then follow him "

(1 Kings xviii. 21). These words are as applicable in the midst of Christendom to-day as they were in Israel of old. It is not a day for indecision ; the times are too serious. All things are fast heading towards the apostasy so clearly predicted. The faith of the rising generation is being undermined, if not already completely so, by the teachers in Christendom. Firm heart-belief in the inspiration of the Bible is almost entirely exploded, except amongst the few really converted preachers still to be found in the churches and chapels. And what does this half-hearted belief in the Bible on the part of preachers necessarily produce in the minds of their hearers ? An utter indifference and undisguised contempt for what they call religion.

Nothing will arouse the mass of unconverted people around us—whether they be outwardly religious or hardened in unbelief and carelessness—**nothing but the coming of the Lord.**

When every truly converted person is suddenly removed ; when multitudes are **missing**, and no trace left behind ; when from every town and village, and from every quarter of the globe, comes the astounding intelligence that people in every rank of life are not to be found—then will the foolish virgins, the mere professors, the

Christless and unconverted church and chapel goers, rush in frantic despair to the door that so long had stood open, but now is shut for ever ; then shall they call, but shall not be answered ; then shall they seek, but shall not find. In vain to cry, " Lord, Lord, open to us ;" in vain to plead, " We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence"—we have been baptized, confirmed, and taken the sacrament ; in vain to urge, " Thou hast taught in our streets"—we have been regular attendants at our church, we have sat under the most polished and refined ministry, we have had the most up-to-date preachers, whose sermons it has been a positive intellectual treat to listen to.

Listen—" He shall say, I tell you,

I know you not

whence ye are ; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke xxii. 24-30).

Oh, friend, **the Lord is coming**—the saints will be removed in a moment. We are nearing the end of 1903 ; before the last sands have fallen, this stupendous crisis may be reached—

Are you ready ?

If not, thank God the door is still open—salvation is within your reach to-day, a full and eternal salvation, a salvation worthy of God, a salvation

wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. Why not have it? You have nothing to do but to lay down the arms of your rebellion, to bow at the blessed Saviour's feet, a captive in the chains of His love.

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and **thou shalt be saved**" (Acts xvi. 31). A. H. B.



Sporting on the Brink.

A CHRISTIAN friend in New Zealand has forwarded the *Otago Daily Times* of September 1, 1903, giving eye-witnesses' accounts of the fearful geyser disaster that took place in the month of August last.

It is terrible to read. Well do we know that uncanny district with its steaming chasms and its boiling mud-holes, to say nothing of its sulphureous vapours and its active geysers!

But is not the voice of God in this awful disaster? Will men listen and take warning?

We notice that once again a calamity has overtaken a party of Sunday tourists. Is there nothing in this to appeal to men's consciences?

From early morning of the Lord's Day, horses, guides, and tourists—working, money-making, and pleasure-seeking. Where was God in their thoughts as they started forth?

We verily believe that God is speaking loudly in these days, calling to men to recognise the folly of despising Him. It is the same in England. The Lord's Day has become the one entirely given up to pleasure. The claims of God by an ever-increasing multitude are utterly ignored; prayer, the reading of the Bible, and the recognition of God even outwardly, are rapidly departing from the life of the people. They say to God by their actions, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways" (Job xxi. 14). And yet it is He that fills their houses with good things (Job xxii. 17, 18).

Are not all the calamities that have taken place of late an appeal to men to consider their ways? Look at the volcanic eruptions of St Pierre, the railway disaster in Paris, and the rain-floods in England which have swept away whole cornfields, and turned vast tracts of fertile land into inland seas.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But **God is**, and He will make His voice heard, now in providential chastisement, pre-

sently in overwhelming judgment. In vain is it for weak man to try and explain these things by spots in the sun—

God is speaking.

And what is man doing? Sporting on the brink of his own everlasting ruin, circling like a silly moth around the dazzling flame of pleasure, which may so soon end in hopeless despair and bitter remorse.

Another lesson may be learnt from this sad accident at Rotorua. Eye-witnesses of the disaster have borne their testimony to the fact that the unfortunate victims had been duly and abundantly warned of their danger. The guide had pointed out the risk of remaining a moment longer where they were. The mother of the young ladies implored them to come away to a place of safety. But at the inquest it came out that "the girls only looked round and smiled at their mother, saying, Just a moment longer." Ah, that moment! It just made all the difference. With thundering noise a mass of mud and heated rock was thrown 800 feet into the air, and four lives full of youthful vigour and robust health were suddenly cut short, the mangled bodies being swept a mile down the boiling river.

Reader, we want you to profit by this sad and sorrowful occurrence. Should the grief-stricken relatives read these lines, we tender to them our deep sympathy in their affliction. What must it have been to have stood and seen their loved ones thus suddenly snatched from their side, and launched into the eternal world !

But if God in His mercy should use this awful occurrence to awaken any careless sinner, sporting not on the brink of an earthly geyser, but on the very threshold of hell—oh, may it be so !

Christian friends may have often warned you. Once again through the pages of this magazine we raise the alarm. Out of Christ you are in danger of eternal ruin. Any moment death may overtake you ; at any moment the Lord may come and take His people home to heaven, and shut the door. Are you still sporting on the brink of your soul's eternal perdition ? Do you smile at the warnings of God's judgment before the great white throne ?

“ And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

"And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 12-15).

Solemn words are these! Oh, dear reader, take heed to them in time.

Do you smile incredulously and say, "Just another moment"? That may be your ruin.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

Two things are absolutely certain: (1) the judgment-day is coming, and (2) the blood of Jesus Christ can now wash the sinner as white as snow (1 John i. 7).

**"Haste thee away! Why wilt thou stay?
Risk not thy soul on a moment's delay;
Jesus is waiting to save thee;
Mercy is pleading to-day."**

"Behold, now is the day of salvation."

“All Things that ever I did.”

WHO that has come to years of reflection, would like to see all the things that ever he or she did manifested in the light? Not one of us, not even the most upright, would be likely to desire such a thing—the most self-satisfied person would shrink from such a revelation.

It is rare to find a man ready to own as much as the well-known writer Mark Twain, who said in a letter that appeared in the weekly edition of the *Times* of 20th May 1899, with reference to a book he proposed to have printed after his death: “A man cannot tell the whole truth about himself even if convinced that what he writes will never be seen by others. I have personally satisfied myself of that, and have got others to test it also. You cannot lay bare your private soul and look at it; you are too much ashamed; it is too disgusting. For that reason I confine myself to drawing the portraits of others.”

As the apostle Paul said when quoting a heathen poet, “This witness is true;” and we venture to quote the words of this well-known

man, in a connection which he little suspected they would be used, because we believe it fairly expresses what a man knows himself to be in his inmost soul, whatever his outward appearance may be.

My reader probably knows that the words printed at the top of this page fell from the lips of the woman of Samaria (John iv.), and they are not the result of looking at her life's history written by her own hand, but the effect of being in the presence of Christ—*the Truth*. It is morally certain that none of us would dare write all the truth about ourselves, were we even to attempt it. He who says he would not object to another seeing all the things that ever he did, simply shows that he has never been honest with himself; but "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all"; and as surely as we live, so surely shall we have to face all the things that ever we did in one of two places—either in the presence of God in grace, or in the presence of God in judgment. What?—all the things! Yes! *all*. O God! what an unmasking that will be! If it is too disgusting to look at my private self, as I may know it, what will it be to look at it in the light of God, whose throne is the habitation of justice and judgment?

But what does this mean about facing all the things that ever we did before God in grace? That is just where the Samaritan was when in the presence of the Lord Jesus at Sychar's well. Why does she say, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet"? Because her conscience was reached by the light, and she evidently felt where she was, when she said, "When Messiah cometh, He will tell us all things." She goes to her neighbours and townsfolk with that remarkable invitation, "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did;" because she was unmasked, and consciously searched through and through in the presence of God.

That very One who was there, the Messiah, the Christ of God, was on His way to the cross to make atonement for sin. In perfect grace and in fullest accord with the heart of God He was seeking sinners; necessarily bringing to light their state of sinfulness and ruin, not to condemn them, but to save and bless, in order that that black and awful category—this disgusting sight of all I have done, and said, and thought—should never come before God in judgment, to meet at His righteous hands their due reward, because they have been blotted out by the precious blood of Christ, that cleanseth from all sin. Look at this, dear reader—

"All things that ever I did" (John iv. 29).

"Justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39).

Do you see how these things equal one another, so to speak?

"Thou hast set . . . our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance," says Moses, the man of God (Ps. xc. 8).

"Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more," says God, speaking from the mercy-seat, whereon is "the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." Such is God's way of expunging "all things that ever I did" from those infallible records—the books that shall be opened at the great white throne. They have met their judgment in the cross of Christ, and through faith in Him my soul is no longer afflicted with the haunting dread that I shall have to look at them in the light of God's judgment-seat. They have been looked at, confessed, and judged, in the presence of perfect love, which provided a means of effectually and righteously delivering me from their guilt and power; and this is the portion of all that believe!

What a different story this is to the natural thought of our hearts, that God requires us to be something, or to do something, in order to

merit His forgiveness and grace. Well might the Lord Jesus say, "If thou knewest the gift of God"—He Himself that gift of divine love, the only begotten Son whom God gave that we should not perish but have eternal life. T. R.

Who then can be Saved?

"Salvation is of the Lord."—JONAH ii. 9.

THE incident, mentioned in Luke xviii. 18-26, which called forth the above question, is worthy of our notice. A young ruler who was very rich had approached the Lord in great haste, and eagerly asked Him the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" In replying, the Lord met him on his own ground, *i.e.*, of doing; to get that for which he sought; and mentioned as a test, several of the commandments relative to his duty towards his fellow-men. To which he replied, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." Christ then said, "One thing thou lackest: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me." These heart-

searching words caused the ruler much sorrow, for he was very rich in this world's goods. Thus he was called upon to choose between retaining his wealth or following Christ, and he chose the former, causing sorrow to fill the tender heart of the Lord Jesus as he exclaimed, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Whilst the disciples wonderingly asked, "Who then can be saved?" As if to ask, "If the rich cannot, who can?" The Lord Jesus then mentions the important fact that what is and ever will remain an utter impossibility with man is possible with God.

Oh, wondrous fact! that God has in His great love to sin-ruined mankind provided a great salvation which He now offers freely to all.

I. WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?

This important question may be again reiterated for our benefit, who live centuries after it was first asked. Christ Jesus, who spake as never man spake, who was God manifest in flesh, who came full of grace and truth, answered this all-important question when He announced that His mission into the world was to seek and to save the lost. Full well He knew that man was lost, and was wandering farther and farther

away from his Creator. Full well He knew that they had all disobeyed God, and all gone out of the way and become unprofitable, and yet, in the fulness of His love, He came just where we were, stooped down to rescue us, to bear the punishment due to sins that we guilty, ruined sinners, might be saved ; saved from the consequences of our numerous transgressions ; saved from the bondage of sin ; saved from the power of Satan ; saved from the coming wrath ; saved from hell ; yes, saved to shine to the praise of His grace, through the unending ages of eternal glory.

Have you realised the solemn fact that you are a sinner? God has declared that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Let this truth weigh upon your conscience, let it enter your heart, for it is better by far to be troubled now on account of your condition than when too late. Your deep need must be owned before you can be saved. It was when the Israelites of old knew their dying condition that God announced to them His remedy, and called upon them to look and live. The prodigal son knew he had wandered away from the home of his father, ere he came to himself and retraced his footsteps (Luke xv.). The publican expressed his heartfelt need, as he looked down, smote

his breast, and from a heart burdened on account of his sins, sent a message, which winged its rapid flight into the ear of God, as he uttered the words, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke xviii.).

Do you feel concerned on account of your condition? If so, it is the first step toward blessing; you are then just in the place in which God's mercy can reach you. The One who saved the chief of sinners can save you. When you know that you are lost, Jesus saves.

"This man receiveth sinners." None are too bad for the Saviour's compassion; none are too deeply sunken in sin for Him to rescue; though sins tower as high as mountains, He will forgive. Though they be the outcasts of society on account of their crimes, He will receive. Though they be wretched beyond description, He will cause them to rejoice in His love, for He came to call sinners to repentance.

Perchance this may meet the eye of many who have not fallen so deeply into outward sin as many of their fellows, who may think that their superiority is sufficient upon which to build their hopes of eternal felicity. Such is not the case. God says to you, "Ye must be born again;"

you need salvation

quite as much as the profligate. Alas ! that while none are too bad for salvation, there are so many who consider themselves too good to accept it upon God's terms. Their righteousness is but as filthy rags in the sight of a holy God. Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners. Those who will people heaven will be sinners saved by divine grace. How is this brought about ? Does God lavish His love at the expense of righteousness ? We may ask—

2. WHY SINNERS CAN BE SAVED ?

The answer is, because God has provided a Ransom, a Substitute for the sinner. He is holy : righteousness and truth are the pillars of His throne. He saw sin in all its blackness. He did not, as man is prone to do, treat it lightly. Previously He had announced, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and, "Without shedding of blood is no remission ;" hence, to meet His just claims, and to make heaven possible for the sinner, when the fulness of time was come, Christ Jesus, God's only begotten Son, took that mighty stoop from the highest throne of glory. He came to manifest the love of God

His Father, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, that a full, free, and perfect salvation might be preached, and that sinners might be pardoned, justified, and redeemed.

“Behold the Lamb of God” in His pathway from the manger, where He was cradled, to the cross upon which He died. He was ever the joy of the Father’s heart; His whole life was ever ascending as a sweet-smelling savour to Him. But in His death, when the sword of divine justice awoke against the Man who was God’s Fellow—the Man Christ Jesus; when God forsook Him; when men and demons united to afflict Him; when that sorrowful cry was wrung from His holy lips, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” When from His pierced side the precious blood streamed forth, in that dark hour He made an atonement for sins; He suffered, the Just for the unjust; He met all the righteous claims of a sin-hating God. In the death of Christ we have the answer to the question, “Why sinners can be saved?” It is His perfect work, His great sacrifice, His suffering, His death, and the shedding of His life’s blood, which enables God to speak to the sinner in love, telling him to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved. It is in

virtue of this that the door of salvation is wide open; that all may enter in, and be shielded from coming wrath. In virtue of this sinners can receive the kiss of pardon, and be brought nigh and know that they are "redeemed by the precious blood of Christ," and reconciled to God by His death. Do you inquire—

3. HOW SINNERS CAN BE SAVED?

It is by appropriating to themselves this perfectly and wondrously finished work which has been accomplished, and by pleading the merits of it before God. Hundreds make a great mistake in thinking that they can obtain salvation by endeavours of their own. Listen to the words of Jesus, words of victory from the lips of the holy Sufferer on Calvary, words of wondrous blessing, "It is finished!" Yes, redemption's toil was completed, the only work which could satisfy God and bring the rebel sinner nigh was accomplished, and that work alone is acceptable to God.

Salvation is not of works, but by the sovereign grace of God: for, by grace sinners are saved through faith. Even were it possible for any sinner to commence to live a blameless and holy life, what about past offences? for God requireth

that which is past. God gives salvation, but He bestows it in His own way, and He will háve all the glory. Could this priceless boon be obtained by our efforts it would no longer remain a gift, but wages ; it is to him that worketh not, but believeth. "Very easy," say some. Yes, easy for the recipients of such love, but not so for the One who accomplished the work ; the sinless One who was made sin that believing sinners might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Do you ask, "What must I do to be saved?" Hear the answer re-echoed from the very throne of God : "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Believe on His Person. Trust to His work. Rest your hopes for eternity upon His death and resurrection. Believe that He not only died for sinners, but that He died for you ; for God has declared, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Blessed news for the lost sinner. Wondrous news for those who are perishing. But will God for ever wait for man to receive and obey the gospel? Will He always offer this free and perfect pardon? Has He revealed anything as to

4. WHEN SINNERS CAN BE SAVED?

Yes, the God who awakens to a sense of need, who provides the remedy, who declares as to the only way, also states the time that this great salvation may be obtained. Listen to His words : " Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." Soon God's last invitation to the gospel supper will have gone forth ; the last earnest appeal of the evangelist will have been given ; the last note of warning will have been raised ; the last call of love ; the last offer of mercy ; and then Christ will come, and the door of salvation will be closed. And then, in spite of the loving counsel of godly friends, who many times have besought sinners to " seek the Lord while He may be found," hundreds will be outside. Or perchance death, that dread visitant, may visit you ; or disease lay its fell hand upon you ; or you may be, as thousands have been, overtaken by an accident, and thus be suddenly called into eternity, dying as you have lived—unsaved, unprepared, your sins not washed away.

Oh, beware ! lest you miss the passing by of Jesus, lest you know not the day of your visitation, lest you trifle away your day of salvation. God will save you, *now*. Christ will receive you,

now. To you is the message of this salvation sent, *now.* The Holy Ghost convicts you of sin, *now.* God's time to bestow this infinite gift is, *now.* God's message of love to you is, *now* ; for "*now* is the day of salvation."

Do not wait for a more convenient season, or you may be eternally lost, and through the eternal ages bewail the folly of delay. For the Scriptures warn us, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1).

A. G.

God's Clothing or Man's.

IN a country town well known to many of us, a man was dying.

He had been moral, respectable, and industrious. Thoughts of the future, too, he had had, and valued his own opinions thereon, but the threshold of a place of worship he seldom crossed.

A Christian nurse was tending him, and anxious about him she was, for he had little time left, and she knew how solemn it is to pass into the presence of God, who "cannot look on

iniquity." His "eyes behold, His eyelids try the children of men" even here, what then will it be like by-and-by when none shall have any cloak for his sin? What we cover up now will be proclaimed then.

The nurse spoke, and she read, and she prayed, with what result God only knows—but He who can see right down into our hearts, and whose eye sees "every precious thing," will not fail to find any grain of "like precious faith with us," which that dear man may have possessed, for it is not the amount of faith which is of value, but the Person on whom our faith reposes.

"God will be near to those who have great faith, won't He?" one asked. "Bless you," was the reply, "faith is only the chain that connects you with God. The question is, who has hold of the other end? If you see God there, you won't be looking at the chain, or at your own hand either!" This is very true. So perhaps that dying man had a little faith, but a little that carried his eye off to Jesus, who is a great Saviour.

Well, he died, and after his funeral one kindly came to visit his widow who had also visited *him*, and moreover, said a prayer beside him. He was, she thought, an accredited teacher come

from God, and from him she looked to learn some news of her husband's present safety. We all like to think that our "gone before" friends are "safe in the arms of Jesus" when they leave us, but during their lifetime we are not always quite so concerned about them. Yet *now* is the only time God has given us.

"Don't be at all uneasy about your husband," this visitor said; "I am sure he is all right, he was *such a good living man*, you know."

Did you ever meditate on the story of the man who got into the presence of the king in his own clothing? (Matt. xxii.). The king had prepared a festival for his son; the service, the viands, the raiment suited to the prince's state had been freely provided—the guests were assembled, and the king came in to grace the feast. Ah, what is that? His eyes see one wearing his own clothes—perhaps his best, cleansed and furbished by himself for the occasion, but not royal clothes, for indeed to be "in kings' courts" one should be "gorgeously apparelled." The man was "speechless": no vain excuses could he make in the presence of the king.

Clothing provided by God and our own wretched rags are so different! A "wedding garment" and "filthy garments" cannot be

compared. The "best robe" and the tatters of the swine-herd will not be mentioned together. The first come from God in heaven, the latter from man in the devil's kingdom. The one who had not on the wedding garment might have been good living, but he had not complied with God's conditions, nor accepted the robe of righteousness prepared for the guests at that supper.

Dear reader, do not trust to man's dictum however high his ecclesiastical position. A good life, alms, prayers, human perfection, will not do for God, they cannot be put on a par with the blood of Jesus, which alone does "helpless sinners good."

"Without shedding of blood is no remission."

And, mind you, this good living man had given no proof of it during his life—he was not even a "church or chapel goer"—and surely no one will assert that a moral life only is enough for God—is it not written, "*Not* by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us?" (Tit. iii. 5).

Have you on the wedding garment? Can you bear the eye of God *now*? Read Zech. iii.

H. L. H.